

# Ards and North Down Borough Council

## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2030

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL- SCOPING REPORT

(Incorporating Strategic Environmental  
Assessment for the Preferred Options Paper)

March 2019





This Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report has been prepared by the Shared Environmental Service (SES) in conjunction with the Ards and North Down Borough Council.

## How to Comment

The Preferred Options Paper (POP) public consultation period will last for 12 weeks, during which time you are invited to submit your comments on the POP and associated documents including the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping and Interim Reports. **The consultation period will start on 28 March 2019 and end on 20 June 2019 at 5pm.**

All documents will be available to view on the Council's website: [www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

The POP document and accompanying supporting documents will also be available to view in hard copy during normal office hours at the Council's offices:

The Planning Office, 2 Church Street, Newtownards BT23 4AP

Bangor Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor BT20 4BT

Your comments on the POP document and supporting information (including the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Interim Sustainability Report) and other associated documents are invited). Comments can be submitted by the various means below:

By email: [planning@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:planning@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

By post:           LDP Team  
                      Ards and North Down Borough Council - Planning  
                      2 Church Street  
                      Newtownards  
                      BT23 4AP

By web: response forms are available at [www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

The POP and supporting documents can be made available upon request in other formats, and alternative languages where possible, by contacting the Council's Planning Office using the email or postal address above or by telephone – 028 91 824006.

Through the course of this consultation period (during **April and May 2019**), there will be a series of public engagement sessions, during which you will have opportunity to view the POP document and supporting information and engage with members of our Local Development Plan team. Details of these events are set out on our webpages at [www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk) and advertised in local press.

Following the 12 week consultation period responses received will be assessed by the Council. A summary of all representations received will be presented in the form of a Public Consultation Report. This report will detail the strategic issues raised in the consultation responses. All representations will be held on a database which will be used for the preparation of the Local Development Plan in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016. It should be noted that your responses are public documents and may be disclosed following receipt of a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The Public Consultation Report will be published on the Council's website and will also be considered during the Independent Examination of the Plan Strategy.

## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

### Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan

Ards and North Down Borough Council extends to 73,556 hectares (735 km<sup>2</sup>). The Borough has an extensive coastline approximately 185km long (115 miles) from Belfast Lough to the north, extending along the outer Ards coast with a land mass extending as a peninsula around Strangford Lough. The Borough consists of seven District Electoral Areas and on Census day 2011 the population was approximately 157,015, which was 8.7% of the Northern Ireland total.

Approximately 72.6% of the population is urban-based, being located in the five main towns of Bangor, Comber, Donaghadee, Holywood and Newtownards. The remaining 27.4% of the population is split between the existing villages, small settlements and the open countryside, with the latter accounting for some 14.4% of the total population.

The most recent population projections, published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)<sup>1</sup> in April 2018, estimate that the population of the Borough is expected to grow from 159,593 in 2016 to 164,004 in 2030 - a population increase of 4,411 or approximately 3%.

The Council has a key role in meeting the needs of residents who live and work in the Borough through the provision of services directly, or with other partners. To support this key role, the Council has a Corporate Plan 2015-2019, with a strategic vision to make the Borough *'a place to be proud of which is more prosperous, vibrant, healthy, sustainable and where people enjoy an excellent quality of life'*. The Council wants to make the Borough *'the best place to live, work, visit and invest.'* Integral to delivering this is also the Council's Community Plan 2017-2035 – *'The Big Plan'*, which aims to create positive outcomes for everyone in the Borough.

The Local Development Plan (LDP) is required to take account of regional policy. The primary aim of the Regional Development Strategy, the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement is to further sustainable development. Therefore, it is vital that the LDP facilitates development in a manner that enables our social and economic priorities to be pursued, while ensuring that our built and natural environment is appropriately managed, both now and for future generations.

### What is Sustainability Appraisal?

Sustainability Appraisal is a statutory process incorporating the requirements of the European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001) ('the SEA Directive'). A Sustainability Appraisal is being carried out alongside preparation of the Ards and North Down Borough Council LDP. Local Planning Authorities use Sustainability Appraisal to assess plans against a set of sustainability objectives. This process helps to evaluate possible strategic, policy and site specific options, as well as the most sustainable in terms of economic, social and environmental performance.

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<sup>1</sup> NISRA Sub-National Population Projections 2016-based Population Projections for Areas within Northern Ireland (published 26 April 2018)

## What is the purpose of this document?

The purpose of this Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report is to:

- Identify other policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives of relevance to the LDP.
- Collect relevant baseline information about the environmental, social and economic conditions in Ards and North Down and consider how these might change in the future.
- Identify sustainability issues and challenges which could affect or be addressed by the LDP.
- Develop the Sustainability Appraisal Framework, consisting of sustainability objectives and appraisal prompts, which will form the basis for assessment of the LDP.
- Invite comment on the scope and method of the Sustainability Appraisal.

## Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for Ards and North Down Borough Council

A total of fourteen social, economic and environmental topics have been identified. For each topic sustainability objectives were identified by considering the wider strategic and policy context, and reviewing baseline information and any evidence of trends and issues.

The objectives for sustainable development within Ards and North Down Borough Council are to:

### 1...improve health and well-being.

Public policy seeks to increase healthy life expectancy, reduce preventable deaths, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities. Evidence shows that there is a need to address obesity, increase physical activity and reduce inequalities in health. It is also necessary to provide for the needs of an aging population and minimize the detrimental impacts of noise. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is clean and attractive; encourages healthy lifestyles; protects tranquil and quiet areas and enables access to health care facilities for all.

### 2...strengthen society.

Regional policy is directed towards improving community relations and creating a safe society which is more united. Success will be represented by places which are inclusive, respect culture and identity, promote social integration and create a sense of pride. They will also be designed to feel safe and to reduce opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.

### 3...provide good quality, sustainable housing.

The population is growing and therefore there is ongoing need for new housing in locations that meet regional policy, are accessible and balance the needs of society and the environment. The make-up of households is changing therefore design needs to meet long term requirements with good quality build to be sustainable. This objective should reduce homelessness and ensure decent, affordable homes with a mix of types.

### 4...enable access to high quality education.

Good education improves opportunities for employment and also contributes to avoidance of poverty and healthier lifestyles. The provision of suitable accommodation for educational establishments in appropriate, accessible locations should play a part in making schools more sustainable and reducing inequalities in education.

### 5...enable sustainable economic growth.

Regional policy seeks to develop a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy. It is necessary to provide suitable locations for employment, with flexibility where necessary, to reflect current and future distribution of jobs across sectors, encourage new business start-ups, facilitate innovation, regenerate areas, attract investment and make employment as accessible as possible for

all. This will reduce unemployment and poverty by helping more people to earn a living and increase their income.

#### 6...manage material assets sustainably.

Material assets such as infrastructure and sources of energy production are essential for society and the economy but need careful planning to ensure that they are designed for efficiency and to minimize adverse impacts. The concept of circular economy treats waste as resource which should be managed sustainably to reduce production and increase recovery, recycling and composting rates; new or adapted facilities may be required.

#### 7...protect physical resources and use sustainably.

Land, minerals, geothermal energy and soil are resources which require protection from degradation and safeguarding for future use. Sustainable agriculture, tourism and sustainable use of minerals and geothermal energy can help to support the economy.

#### 8...encourage active and sustainable travel.

There is a common goal to reduce traffic emissions and congestion which means reducing car use and increasing other forms of transport. Better access to public transport and opportunities for active travel make travel more affordable with added health benefits and also reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Measures that help reduce car use and improve accessibility to encourage a shift to travel by public transport, walking and cycling will contribute to this goal.

#### 9...improve air quality

Air pollution has serious impacts on human health as well as degrading the natural environment. This objective can be achieved through reducing sources of air pollution. Where air pollution cannot be totally excluded careful siting of development should avoid impacts on sensitive receptors.

#### 10...reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.

International commitments require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to lessen their effects on climate. Measures that help reduce energy consumption and enable renewable energy helps mitigate greenhouse gas emissions however adaption is also required to plan for the impacts of climate change.

#### 11...protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.

This objective encompasses reducing levels of water pollution, sustainable use of water resources, improving the physical state of the water environment and reducing the risk of flooding now and in the future. It meets the requirements of Northern Ireland legislation, strategies and plans in support of the Water Framework Directive and other Directives that relate to water and it takes account of the future impacts of climate change.

#### 12...protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.

International obligations which are adopted in Northern Ireland legislation and policies require the protection of biodiversity including flora, fauna and habitats. This is for their intrinsic value and for the wider services that they provide to people, the economy and the environment for example as carbon stores which lessen the effects of climate change. This objective includes protecting and enhancing biodiversity as well as protection of green and blue infrastructure to enhance the services that natural resources provide.

### 13...maintain and enhance landscape character.

International and national policies seek to conserve the natural character and landscape of the coast and countryside and protect them from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development. This objective seeks to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes and to protect and enhance open spaces and the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors.

### 14...protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.

The historic environment and cultural heritage are resources that inform our history and bring character and sense of place. They also attract visitors and contribute to the economy and bring vibrancy to the places where we live, work and relax. This can be achieved by protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas, townscapes and other sites of historic and cultural value including their setting.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Area of Archaeological Potential
ADAP	Ards and Down Area Plan
ANDBC	Ards and North Down Borough Council
AoHSV	Area of High Scenic Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
ASAI	Area(s) of Significant Archaeological Interest
ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest
AWB	Artificial Waterbody
BMAP	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan
CCC	Committee on Climate Change
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCCAE	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
DE	The Department of Education
DEA	District Electoral Area
DETI	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for the Economy
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DOE	Department of the Environment
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
EA	Education Authority
EAPP	Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes
EC	European Commission
EO	Executive Office
ES	Ecosystem Services
ESCR	Earth Science Conservation Site
FRMP	Flood Risk Management Plan
GEP	Good Ecological Potential
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GSNI	Geological Survey of Northern Ireland
HMWB	Heavily Modified Waterbody
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
HSNI	Health Survey for Northern Ireland
IDBR	Inter Departmental Business Register
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LDP	Local Development Plan
LGD	Local Government District
MCAA	Marine and Coastal Access Act
MI	Marine Institute

MPS	Marine Policy Statement
NI	Northern Ireland
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NINIS	Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service
NIRLCA	Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NIW	Northern Ireland Water
PFRA	Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for NI
PfG	Programme for Government
POMs	Programme of Measures
POP	Preferred Options Paper
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
RBD	River Basin District
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RDS	Regional Development Strategy
RLCA	Regional Landscape Character Area
ROMP	Review of Old Mineral Permissions
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCA	Seascape Character Area
SCaMP	Sustainable Catchment Area Management Planning
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEHCT	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
SFRA	Significant Flood Risk Area
SLNCI	Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance
SOA	Super Output Area
SONI	System Operator for Northern Ireland
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPPS	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
UK	United Kingdom
UK Gov.	UK Government
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WMG	Waste Management Group
WMU	Water Management Unit
WTW	Water Treatment Works
WwTW	Wastewater Treatment Works

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of this Scoping Report

This Scoping Report is the first formal output of the Sustainability Appraisal process for the Ards and North Down Borough Council (ANDBC) Local Development Plan (LDP). It presents information about the topics being assessed under the Sustainability Appraisal which incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). It outlines the assessment methodology and approach for future Sustainability Appraisal reports. The Scoping Report will be updated throughout Plan preparation and will be included with all Sustainability Appraisal Reports published as part of the consultation process for the LDP.

## 1.2 Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan

The LDP timetable was published in November 2017 and sets out indicative timeframes for the key stages in the production of the LDP. Chapter 3 describes the approach we are taking to plan preparation in more detail and provides an overview of the Council area. The Borough shares its boundary with three neighbouring Councils - Belfast City Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. In order for cross-boundary issues to be effectively addressed, Ards and North Down Borough Council will continue engagement with these neighbouring Councils throughout the LDP process. We are also aware of the need to consider the development of Plans arising from all the other Councils across Northern Ireland (NI) and want to ensure a holistic approach to strategic matters is pursued and for policies to be complementary.

## 1.3 Sustainable Development

The Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy - '*Everyone's Involved*<sup>1</sup>' stated that sustainability policy '*is driven by intergenerational equity; to secure a quality of life for present and future generations that is positive and rewarding.*'

Achieving sustainable development is a requirement set out in Provision 25 of The Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006. This requires all Departments and Councils in Northern Ireland, in exercising their functions, to act in the way they consider best calculated to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In doing this they must have regard to any strategy or guidance relating to sustainable development published by Northern Ireland departments.

Within planning legislation, Section 5 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (as amended) requires those who exercise any function in relation to Local Development Plans to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development.

Sustainability Appraisal is the approach used to promote sustainable development within LDPs by evaluating the social, environmental and economic effects of all aspects of the LDP throughout its preparation.

The Sustainable Development Strategy identifies 32 strategic objectives in the following Priority Areas.

- Building a dynamic, innovative economy that delivers the prosperity required to tackle disadvantage and lift communities out of poverty.
- Strengthening society so that it is more tolerant, inclusive and stable and permits positive progress in quality of life for everyone.
- Driving sustainable, long-term investment in key infrastructure to support economic and social development.

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<sup>1</sup> NI Executive (2010) Everyone's Involved - Sustainable Development Strategy

- Striking an appropriate balance between the responsible use and protection of natural resources in support of a better quality of life and a better quality environment.
- Ensuring reliable, affordable and sustainable energy provision and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Ensuring the existence of a policy environment which supports the overall advancement of sustainable development in and beyond Government.

## 1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEA is a systematic process for assessing potential effects of proposed plans or programmes to ensure that significant environmental impacts are considered from the earliest opportunity and addressed in decision making. It was introduced by the European Directive 2001/42/EC 'On the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment' ('the SEA Directive'). In Northern Ireland the SEA Directive's requirements are taken forward through The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (EAPP) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004. The EAPP (NI) Regulations set out more detailed requirements for the process and content of the environmental assessment of plans and development. Appendix 1 records how these regulations are being complied with.

## 1.5 Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

Section 25 of The Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 requires that all NI Departments and Councils, in exercising their functions, act in the way they consider best calculated to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Section 5 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 ('the 2011 Act') requires those who exercise any function in relation to LDPs to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development. In addition, Sections 8(6) and 9(7) of the 2011 Act requires an appraisal of sustainability to be carried out for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, respectively.

The approach in this report is informed by Development Plan Practice Note 04: 'Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment'<sup>1</sup>. Sustainability Appraisal therefore refers to an integrated approach which fully incorporates SEA and fulfils the requirements for both Sustainability Appraisal and SEA.

## 1.6 Stages in Sustainability Appraisal

The key stages of Sustainability Appraisal are summarised in Table 1.6.1 with their location. Those areas shaded in grey will be reported on at a later stage.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of the Environment (2015) Development Plan Practice Note 04: Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment

**Table 1.6.1: Stages of Sustainability Appraisal**

Stage	Description	Location
<b>Stage A (1) Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</b>	Identify other relevant policies, plans, programmes and Sustainability Objectives.	Appendix 4
	Collect baseline information	Chapters 4 & 5
	Consult the Consultation Body on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal Report.	Consulted NIEA 19/07/18, response received 14/08/18, (separate response from HED received 07/08/18). Recommendations incorporated where appropriate (refer to Appendix 6) and will be further addressed in the updated Scoping Report for Plan Strategy.
	Identify environmental issues and challenges	Chapter 5
	Develop the Sustainability Appraisal Framework	Chapter 6
	Produce draft Scoping Report and share with stakeholders	Section 2.3
<b>Stage A (2) Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report</b>	Publication of Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report, assessment of reasonable alternatives against agreed Sustainability Appraisal framework and undertaking public consultation along with the Preferred Options Paper (POP).	Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report published with POP
<b>Stage B</b>	Assessment of alternatives and any likely significant effects on the draft plan against Sustainability Appraisal framework, taking into account the evidence base and where necessary, proposing mitigation measures for alleviating any adverse effects.	Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report published with POP
<b>Stage C</b>	Sustainability Appraisal Report to document the appraisal process and findings.	Not at this stage (Plan Strategy and LPP)
<b>Stage D</b>	Consultation with the public, environmental authorities and any EU member state affected on the Sustainability Appraisal Report and draft plan.	Not at this stage
<b>Stage E</b>	Sustainability Appraisal Statement to show how the Sustainability Appraisal and opinions/consultations have been taken into account, the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted and the proposed measures to monitor the plan.	Not at this stage
<b>Stage F</b>	Monitoring: Establishing arrangements to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the plan, to identify unforeseen adverse effects and undertake appropriate remedial action.	Not at this stage

## 1.7 Other Assessments

### 1.7.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a provision of The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). The regulations require assessment of possible adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) as a result of plans and policies in the LDP; this is also carried out for Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance designated under the provisions of the Ramsar Convention). Baseline information for HRA is included in Appendix 7 of this Scoping Report. A draft HRA will be published for consultation with the Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan. A final HRA will be published when each of these are adopted.

### 1.7.2 Rural Proofing

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, which came in to force on 1 June 2017, applies to NI Government Departments and Councils. It states that *'A public authority must have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans.'* Public authorities must report annually on how they have implemented this requirement.

The approach to considering rural needs is called 'rural proofing' and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) provides advice on carrying it out in 'Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing'<sup>1</sup> and 'A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 for Public Authorities'<sup>2</sup>. 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. Where appropriate, adjustments are made to take account of particular rural circumstances.

This Scoping Report considers rural populations and how the LDP could affect them in the evidence base for the community topic. Data on rural populations, where available, is also included under other topics, for example health, education and infrastructure. Key Sustainability Issues for the Borough include some specific to rural communities and the appraisal prompts include questions about how a proposal will meet the needs of rural populations or potentially have a disproportionate impact.

As plan preparation progresses and more detail emerges about proposals, how they will be implemented and where they will be located, rural issues will be considered in more depth. A rural proofing checklist, reflecting the 'Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template'<sup>3</sup>, will be included in the Sustainability Appraisal for Plan Strategy.

## 1.8 Scoping Report Structure

Chapter 2 details the proposed approach to Sustainability Appraisal while Chapter 3 provides an overview of plan preparation. Chapter 4 gives an overview of the baseline information and each topic is reported on in Chapter 5 with the context, relevant baseline information, trends, key issues and the implications for the LDP. Chapter 6 presents the Sustainability Framework and outlines the next steps in the Sustainability Appraisal.

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<sup>1</sup> DAERA (2015) Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing

<sup>2</sup> DAERA (2017) A guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 - May 2017

<sup>3</sup> DAERA (2017) Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template

## 2. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL: THE APPROACH

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the overall approach taken to Sustainability Appraisal throughout the LDP preparation process. Chapters 4 to 6 are the application of this approach for the Scoping Report for the Ards and North Down Borough Council LDP.

### 2.2 Principles

The Sustainability Appraisal process is carried out under the following principles:

#### *Role*

Sustainability Appraisal is a tool to aid plan making which identifies potential effects of options, how they may be mitigated and informs the most appropriate option. It does not however give a 'right' answer and is not the decision-making mechanism.

#### *Integrated*

Sustainability Appraisal is an essential part of the plan making process which is integral to and carried out through the whole of plan preparation and subsequent monitoring. It helps to test the effects of options and inform the selection of proposals. It will provide evidence of the decision making process and any changes brought about to ensure sustainability of the LDP.

#### *Shared Information*

Where appropriate, data collected for other purposes such as LDP Preparatory Papers or Community Planning is utilised for evidence or for future monitoring.

#### *Relevant*

The Sustainability Appraisal focuses on context and data that is relevant to the plan. It will not detail issues that cannot be addressed within the remit of the LDP.

#### *Connected*

The LDP may be influenced by or have an impact on neighbouring areas. This Sustainability Appraisal considers strategies and plans beyond Ards and North Down, where there is potential for significant positive or negative effects. Neighbouring Councils will be invited to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report and Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report. It is also acknowledged that Ards and North Down has connectivity with the marine environment both directly and indirectly through its watercourses and river systems.

#### *Proportionate*

The Sustainability Appraisal avoids duplication therefore, for example, international strategies are not included where they have been given effect in a national or regional strategy. Where more detailed information is available in another document the essentials are included here and a link provided to that document.

#### *Up-to-date*

The Sustainability Appraisal, including the Scoping Report will be updated during plan preparation to ensure that it reflects current policies, plans and programmes and recent data.

#### *Future proof*

Potential future changes within and beyond the life of the plan are considered to anticipate needs and to try to maintain opportunities for long term sustainable development.

## 2.3 Involving Others

Informal and formal consultation with stakeholders and the public is an essential part of Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that the topics and issues have been fully considered. The first formal consultation required on this Scoping Report is with the Consultation Body. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) acts as the lead for the Consultation Body and was consulted on the outline of this Scoping Report in August 2018. Where appropriate, the NIEA's comments have been incorporated in this report and will further inform future updates to the Scoping Report and Appraisal Reports.

Where possible, experts with general and local knowledge of all topics have been consulted to inform the technical papers and Chapter 5. Statutory consultees will be invited to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Reports. A register of consultation responses is being maintained and will be provided in a future version of this report.

Ards and North Down Borough Council shares boundaries with Belfast City Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, and Newry Mourne and Down District Council. These councils will be invited to comment on the Preferred Options Paper and Sustainability Appraisal Reports.

The public will be formally consulted on the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report, together with this Scoping Report, during consultation on the Preferred Options Paper. There will also be public consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Reports which will accompany the Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan. Representations at public consultation that are relevant to the Sustainability Appraisal will be reviewed. Where necessary, the Sustainability Appraisal Reports will be revised in response to representations and to any changes to the Preferred Options, Plan Strategy or Local Policies Plan.

## 2.4 The Evidence Base

The evidence base is arranged according to a number of topics and for each topic a consistent approach to reporting is followed. The approach is described in more detail in Chapter 4 and the evidence base is presented in Chapter 5.

The evidence base was prepared using all available information sources. Every effort has been made to ensure that the document refers to the most recent information available, however it is an evolving document and will be reviewed and updated at each stage of appraisal.

## 2.5 The Sustainability Appraisal Framework

The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework is to provide a means of ensuring that the social, environmental and economic needs of the area are considered in plan preparation. It enables the effects of plan proposals to be described, analysed and compared. It also helps identify measures to minimise negative effects and enhance positive effects.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework consists of Sustainability Objectives with prompts which are used to assess plan proposals against the baseline. All stages of plan-making will be assessed using the Framework which may be updated as further information becomes available. The Sustainability Reports to accompany the Plan Strategy will include proposed indicators for monitoring any significant effects of delivery of the LDP in relation to the Sustainability Objectives.

## 2.6 Significant Effects

The Sustainability Appraisal will assess the significant effects of options both positive and negative. There is no single definition of a significant effect therefore assessment is a matter of judgement taking account of the extent of the effect spatially and in time.

## 2.7 Assessment Method

The key stages are Sustainability Appraisal of:

- options and reasonable alternatives for the Preferred Options Paper;
- the Plan Strategy; and
- the Local Policies Plan.

The proposed method for the appraisal of each part of the LDP follows.

## 2.8 Appraisal of reasonable alternatives for the Preferred Options Paper

In the Preferred Options Paper, strategic proposals are presented with options for delivery. The options are reasonable alternatives where these can be identified. The Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report accompanying the POP evaluates these options using the appraisal matrix shown in Table 2.8.1. The matrix includes:

2.8.1. The matrix includes:

- The plan topic and delivery options to be assessed.
- A score indicating the nature of the effect for each option in the short, medium and long term with an explanation of why the score was given.
- A summary comparing the options and recommending the preferred approach together with any mitigation recommended to address negative effects and measures, where appropriate, to enhance positive effects.

**Table 2.8.1: Outline Sustainability Appraisal Matrix**

ISSUE												
OPTIONS	Option 1:				Option 2:				Option 3:			
Sustainability Objective	ST	MT	LT	Explanation	ST	MT	LT	Explanation	ST	MT	LT	Explanation
1. Sustainability Objective												
2. Sustainability Objective												
3. Sustainability Objective, etc.												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Summary and comparison of alternative options against the sustainability objectives.</li> <li>▪ Identification of the most sustainable option.</li> <li>▪ Identification of the preferred option.</li> <li>▪ Summary of what, if any, significant effects are envisaged with the preferred option.</li> <li>▪ Summary of mitigation measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and/or offset as fully as possible any significant adverse effects of the preferred option.</li> <li>▪ Summary of possible measures to reduce negative effects and promote positive effects.</li> </ul>												

Table 2.8.2 Scores and definitions for Sustainability Appraisal Matrix

Rating		Description
<b>++</b>	<b>Significant Positive</b>	Policy/ proposal would greatly help to achieve the objective
<b>+</b>	<b>Minor Positive</b>	Policy/ proposal would slightly help to achieve the objective
<b>0</b>	<b>Neutral / no effect</b>	Policy/ proposal would have no overall effect
<b>-</b>	<b>Minor Negative</b>	Policy/ proposal would slightly conflict with the objective
<b>--</b>	<b>Significant Negative</b>	Policy/ proposal would greatly conflict with the objective
<b>?</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	The effect cannot be predicted because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the approach has an uncertain relationship to the objective; or</li> <li>▪ the relationship is dependent on the way in which the approach is implemented; or</li> <li>▪ insufficient information may be available to enable an appraisal to be made.</li> </ul>
<b>ST</b>	<b>Short Term</b>	Up to five years
<b>MT</b>	<b>Medium Term</b>	Five to 15 years
<b>LT</b>	<b>Long term</b>	Over 15 years

Key:	<b>++</b> Significant positive	<b>+</b> Minor positive	<b>0</b> No overall effect	<b>-</b> Minor negative	<b>--</b> Significant negative	<b>?</b> Uncertain
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## 2.9 Plan Strategy

The proposals in the draft Plan Strategy will be reviewed and the Scoping Report and Sustainability Appraisal updated to reflect any changes from the previous stage. This will be published as a Sustainability Report in support of the consultation on the draft Plan Strategy.

## 2.10 Local Policies Plan

In advance of preparation of the Local Policies Plan (LPP) criteria will be developed to help guide the appraisal of sites. The proposals in the Local Policies Plan will be appraised using the Sustainability Appraisal Framework and a Sustainability Appraisal Report will be published as part of the consultation on these papers.

## 2.11 Cumulative Effects

Consideration will be given to any cumulative effects of proposals at each stage of plan preparation. These will include potential cumulative effects within the plan and in combination with other relevant plans and strategies.

## 3. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### 3.1 Context – Requirement to Prepare a Local Development Plan

Part 2 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act) provides for the preparation of a LDP by a Council for its district, which will (when adopted) replace current development plans. The LDP will comprise two development plan documents;

- The Plan Strategy (PS); and
- The Local Policies Plan (LPP).

The LDP should fulfil the following functions:

- provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of a Council's district in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development;
- facilitate sustainable growth by co-ordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the well-being of the community;
- allocate sufficient land to meet society's needs;
- provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within their local area should take place;
- provide a plan-led framework for rational and consistent decision-making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals; and
- deliver the spatial aspects of a Council's current Community Plan.

### 3.2 Preparation

The purpose of the Ards and North Down Borough Council LDP is to inform the public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will implement the strategic objectives of the Regional Development Strategy<sup>1</sup> (RDS) 2035 and guide development decisions within Ards and North Down up to 2030.

The new LDP will be prepared within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and will take account of the Council's Community Plan to enable us to plan positively for the future of the Council area. It will ensure that land is zoned appropriately and that infrastructure is enhanced to develop the Council area for future generations.

The LDP must also take account of the regional policy context set by the Northern Ireland Executive and Central Government Departments. This includes, amongst others, the Sustainable Development Strategy, the RDS, the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)<sup>2</sup> and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)<sup>3</sup>, the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS) and, when published, the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland. The new LDP will replace the four current statutory development plans that apply to the Borough, as discussed in the POP.

Following publication of the POP, the Plan will be produced in two parts consisting firstly of a Plan Strategy followed by a Local Policies Plan. The Plan Strategy will set the aims, objectives, growth strategy and strategic policies applicable to the Plan Area. The Local Policies Plan will provide site specific policies and proposals, including settlement limits, land use zonings and environmental designations.

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<sup>1</sup> DRD (2012) Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035

<sup>2</sup> DOE (2015) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) Planning for Sustainable Development

<sup>3</sup> Planning NI Planning Policy Statements and Supplementary Planning Guidance (found at Planning NI [https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/planning\\_statements\\_and\\_supplementary\\_planning\\_guidance.htm](https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/planning_statements_and_supplementary_planning_guidance.htm))

### 3.3 Overview of Ards and North Down Borough Council Area

Ards and North Down Borough Council extends to 73,556 hectares (735 km<sup>2</sup>). The Borough has an extensive coastline approximately 185km long (115 miles) from Belfast Lough to the north, extending along the outer Ards coast with a land mass extending as a peninsula around Strangford Lough. The Borough consists of seven District Electoral Areas and on Census day 2011 the population was approximately 157,015, which was 8.7% of the Northern Ireland total.

Approximately 72.6% of the population is urban-based, being located in the five main towns of Bangor, Comber, Donaghadee, Holywood and Newtownards. The remaining 27.4% of the population is split between the existing villages, small settlements and the open countryside, with the latter accounting for some 14.4% of the total population.

The most recent population projections, published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)<sup>1</sup> in April 2018, estimate that the population of the Borough is expected to grow from 159,593 in 2016 to 164,004 in 2030 - a population increase of 4,411 or approximately 3%<sup>2</sup>.

Life expectancy continues to improve for both males and females within the Borough. Northern Ireland statistical trends suggest that the number of people aged 85 and over in Northern Ireland has grown by around 900 people per annum throughout the decade ending mid- 2016. At Local Government District (LGD) level, the proportion of people aged 85 and over in mid-2016 ranged from 1.4 per cent (2,100 people) in Derry and Strabane, to 2.4 per cent (3,900 people) in Ards and North Down<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, of all the LGDs Ards and North Down has currently the highest proportion of the population aged 85 and over. In 2016, Ards and North Down was the only LGD where the estimated population aged 65 and over exceeded the estimated number of children<sup>4</sup>. These demographic changes are likely to have implications for housing needs, education provision and access to healthcare and community services in the district.

Figure 3.3.1 illustrates the principal settlements and transport routes of Ards and North Down Borough Council in its wider context.

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<sup>1</sup> NISRA Sub-National Population Projections 2016-based Population Projections for Areas within Northern Ireland (published 26 April 2018)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Figure 3.3.1: Ards and North Down Borough Council Plan Area



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## 4. OVERVIEW OF THE BASELINE EVIDENCE

### 4.1 Presentation of Baseline Evidence

The baseline evidence is presented in Chapter 5 for fourteen topics, which span the social, economic and environmental themes. Several topics contribute to social, economic and environmental themes. Due to these overlaps, Table 4.1 presents an outline scope for each topic to help clarify where information is likely to be presented in this report.

**Table 4.1: Scope of Sustainability Topics**

Topic	Includes
1. Health and Wellbeing	Health profile, physical activity, access to health care, access to open space and recreation, quiet areas and noise.
2. Community	Community identity, shared space, social inclusion, crime prevention and safety, deprivation and good relations.
3. Housing	Housing, urban capacity and settlements.
4. Education and Skills	Primary through to third level and apprenticeships.
5. Economy and Employment	Employment, economic growth, investment, tourism, industry and commerce, town centres and retailing.
6. Material Assets	Infrastructure relating to energy / heat generation and distribution; telecommunications; waste management and pipelines; derelict and contaminated land; and renewable energy.
7. Physical Resources	Earth science, minerals, land and soil (including land use) and geothermal resources.
8. Transport and Accessibility	Public, private transport, traffic and efficient movement.
9. Air	Air quality and short term changes (aspects relating to climate are covered in Climate Change).
10. Climate Change	Northern Ireland in global context of climate change; greenhouse gas emissions; implications of climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
11. Water	Water quality and resources, water levels (flood risk).
12. Natural Resources	Biodiversity, fauna, flora, designated sites, green and blue infrastructure, ecosystem services. Includes intertidal and coastal zones, and marine environment.
13. Landscape	Landscape, seascape and countryside/rural area.
14. Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage/Resources	Historic environment, archaeology including maritime, built and industrial heritage, townscape and cultural heritage assets.

Each topic is presented using the same structure, using the general headings listed below:

- Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies
- Baseline Information
- Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan
- Key Sustainability Issues

## 4.2 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The Sustainability Appraisal must include a review of other policies, plans, programmes and strategies that have an influence on the content of the LDP. The aims of this review are:

- to identify all external social, economic and environmental objectives which have a bearing on the Sustainability Appraisal of the LDP;
- to reflect sustainability themes contained in regional policies and strategies;
- to identify any other sustainability issues that might influence the preparation of the plan;
- to highlight whether other policies, plans or programmes might give rise to cumulative effects when combined with the LDP.

Consideration of this context also helps ensure that the LDP will deliver obligations for Ards and North Down Borough Council which are within the scope of the LDP. Appendix 4 presents the strategies, policies, programmes and plans that have been considered with their key objectives and implications for the LDP. This will be updated throughout Plan preparation.

## 4.3 Strategic Context

The following regional strategies are overarching and form a backdrop to the LDP. Each is introduced here and key relevant aspects are described in more detail under each topic in Chapter 5.

### 4.3.1 Regional Development Strategy

The RDS provides a strategic and long term perspective on the future development of Northern Ireland up to 2035 to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government. It contains regional guidance to provide policy direction in relation to the economy, society and environment. It complements the Sustainable Development Strategy and sets the context for policy and development decisions in order to achieve sustainable development throughout the region.

The RDS recognises the important role of Belfast in generating regional prosperity and that Londonderry is the focus for economic growth in the North West. The RDS also reflects the Programme for Government approach of balanced sub-regional growth, to ensure all areas benefit from economic growth and recognises the importance of key settlements as centres for growth and prosperity. It also recognises there is a need to understand the role and function of settlements and their role in serving rural communities. The RDS promotes co-operation between places and encourages clustering of Hubs so that services do not need to be duplicated but rather shared. The towns recognised in the RDS as having such potential include Newtownards. Bangor is also recognised in the RDS as having a complementary role to play within the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area.

To ensure all areas benefit from economic growth, the RDS also reflects the Programme for Government approach of balanced sub-regional growth and recognises the importance of key settlements as centres for growth and prosperity. The RDS also recognises that [the former] *“Ards Borough has a mixture of the rural and the urban and given the area’s scenic beauty and historical interest, tourism is a significant and growing part of the local economy. While traditional industries have declined dramatically, Ards is establishing a diverse economy, particularly in the added value food and engineering sectors”*.

The RDS has a statutory basis, is material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals, and Councils must take account of the RDS when drawing up their Local Development Plans.

#### 4.3.2 Strategic Planning Policy Statement

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) provides an overarching statement of the general regional planning principles underlying the reformed plan led system. It provides a planning policy framework which must be taken into account in the preparation of LDPs and the provisions are also material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

The SPPS outlines a number of core principles underpinning the reformed planning system in Northern Ireland. These are:

- improving health and well-being;
- creating and enhancing shared space;
- supporting sustainable economic growth;
- supporting good design and positive place-making;
- preserving and improving the built and natural environment.

The latter part of the SPPS contains 72 regional strategic objectives across 16 subject areas, in addition to the introduction of new policy for retailing.

#### 4.3.3 Sustainable Development Strategy

The Sustainable Development Strategy identifies 32 strategic objectives in the following Priority Areas:

- Building a dynamic, innovative economy that delivers the prosperity required to tackle disadvantage and lift communities out of poverty.
- Strengthening society so that it is more tolerant, inclusive and stable and permits positive progress in quality of life for everyone.
- Driving sustainable, long-term investment in key infrastructure to support economic and social development.
- Striking an appropriate balance between the responsible use and protection of natural resources in support of a better quality of life and a better quality environment.
- Ensuring reliable, affordable and sustainable energy provision and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Ensuring the existence of a policy environment which supports the overall advancement of sustainable development in and beyond Government.

The strategic objectives that are key are highlighted under their relevant topic.

#### 4.3.4 Draft Programme for Government

The Programme for Government (PfG) is the highest level strategic document of the Executive. It sets out the priorities that it will pursue in the current Assembly mandate and the most significant actions it will take to address them. The draft PfG was consulted on in October 2016.

The draft PfG contains 14 Strategic Outcomes supported by 42 Indicators. The outcomes touch on every aspect of government, including the attainment of good health and education, economic success and confident and peaceful communities. The outcomes are intended to meet statutory obligations and to make real improvements to the quality of life of residents.

While efforts continue to restore the institutions of Government, Departments continue to act, operating within the adjusted indicative departmental financial allocations announced to Parliament by the Secretary of State, in line with the direction set by previous Ministers and the Executive in their draft Programme for Government.

#### 4.3.5 UK Marine Policy Statement and Marine Plan for Northern Ireland

The UK MPS, the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009 and the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 provide the policy and legislative framework for the management of the marine area in Northern Ireland. The UK vision for the marine environment, set out in the UK MPS, is the attainment of ‘clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas’.

The MCAA is a UK-wide Act which includes a number of provisions for the management of the UK’s marine area. For Northern Ireland, key provisions within this Act include a licensing system for management of development within the marine area from the mean high water spring tide out to 12 nautical miles (the inshore region).

The Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 includes duties to protect and enhance the marine area. This includes provisions to prepare and adopt a Marine Plan for the Northern Ireland inshore region; and provision to improve marine conservation and protection. The draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland was consulted on for an eight week period beginning 18 April 2018. Once adopted, it will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of the marine area through a strategic framework with spatial elements.

Section 58 of the MCAA and Section 8 of the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013, require a public authority to have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents. For all Public Authorities, this means that currently, for example, in the preparation of Local Development Plans and all associated documents, Public Authorities, are legislatively required to have regard to the UK MPS.

#### 4.3.6 Community Planning

Community Planning is a process whereby Councils, statutory bodies, and the community work together to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of their area and pave the way for the most efficient use of scarce resources. It involves everyone working together to make life better for local people and deliver real improvements. It means planning ahead to improve the big issues that matter to people like health, education, employment, safety and the environment.

The Ards and North Down Borough Council Community Plan 2017-2032 is known as ‘*The Big Plan*’ and has a long term vision supported by five outcomes. It provides an overarching framework setting out a shared vision and ambition that Ards and North Down’s Strategic Community Planning Partnership has agreed to work towards over the next 15 years.

The vision of *The Big Plan* is for the Council area to be a vibrant, connected, healthy, safe and prosperous place.

The overarching, cross-cutting ambition of *The Big Plan* is to have empowered, resilient individuals and communities; to reduce inequalities; to promote good relations and sustainability; and to improve the accessibility of all public services.

*The Big Plan*’s vision is supported by the following outcomes that will make life better for all the people who live in the Borough:

- All people in Ards and North Down fulfil their lifelong potential.
- All people in Ards and North Down enjoy good health and wellbeing.
- All people in Ards and North Down live in communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure.
- All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy.
- All people in Ards and North Down feel pride as they have access to a well managed sustainable environment.

#### 4.3.7 Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019 establishes the purpose and the priorities of the Council. The purpose of the Council is to make Ards and North Down the best place to live, work, visit and invest. It has a strategic role and its core a vision. The plan states:

*Our vision is that Ards and North Down will be a place to be proud of which is more prosperous, vibrant, healthy, sustainable and where people enjoy an excellent quality of life.*

The Council has identified three objectives that are based on external impact and their delivery underpinned by performance excellence. The three objectives are:

- **People** - Ensuring we engage with, and support, all local communities to deliver real social benefits.
- **Place** - Ensuring we make the very best of the natural, cultural and environmental assets in the Borough.
- **Prosperity** - Ensuring the Borough's towns and rural localities are prosperous, vibrant and attractive.

Underpinning the Corporate Plan are a set of core values that will help to drive how employees of the Council will work and act over the period of the Corporate Plan. The five core values are:

- **Progression** - We will be proactive, ambitious, innovative, forward thinking and outward looking.
- **Respect** - We will treat everyone in a fair and equitable manner, respecting diversity and each other's roles.
- **Integrity** - We will always be open, honest, transparent, trustworthy and accountable in our business relationships.
- **Delivery** - We will ensure a "can do" attitude, being passionate about achieving results, performance driven and outcome focussed.
- **Excellence** - We will strive to deliver continuously improving and excellent quality services whilst ensuring value for money

Taken together these summarise what we promise to do and be as a Council over the next four years for the city and its residents.

#### 4.3.8 Masterplans and Regeneration

Town Centre Masterplans are non-statutory documents which focus on regeneration and public realm improvements. Each of the five towns within the Borough has a Town Centre Masterplan. These aim to ensure that the viability and vitality of the town centres are enhanced and that they are visually attractive to residents, businesses and visitors, whilst also improving the overall accessibility.

There are also several Village Plans extant in the Borough which are currently under review. These plans help to identify and address the current issues facing each village to facilitate economic, environmental, physical and social improvement. These documents have informed the preparation of the POP and will continue to be taken into account throughout the LDP process.

### 4.4 Baseline Information

A desk-based review has been undertaken to identify baseline conditions in Ards and North Down. Each sustainability topic is presented in Chapter 5 with a review of relevant current information available. Where it has not been possible to provide Council specific information, information for Northern Ireland has been used and where there are critical data gaps these are identified.

Information sources include data collected for our LDP position papers and for the Community Plan found at <https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/resident/community-planning/collecting-the-evidence>.

The baseline topics for the Sustainability Appraisal have a wider scope than the LDP evidence gathering requirements. Data sources in Local Development Plans: Environmental Evidence and Information<sup>1</sup> have been referred to, as well as the Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report<sup>2,3</sup>.

In addition to the LDP and Community Plan evidence, we have used evidence presented on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) website. NISRA is the principal source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. Much data at Council or sub-Council level was sourced from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) website. NINIS is part of NISRA and aims to make small area information held within Central Government and Non-Departmental Public Bodies available to as wide an audience as possible. The NINIS website contains datasets on a range of socio-economic themes at small-area statistical geographies.

#### 4.5 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

This section highlights trends in the baseline information and describes how the baseline might evolve without the LDP. This also helps identify key issues for each topic and identifies potential sustainability problems or opportunities that could be addressed through the LDP.

Ards and North Down Borough Council was included within these previous Area Plans prior to April 2015.

- Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 – for the legacy Ards Borough Council area;
- North Down and Ards Area Plan 1984-1995 - for the legacy North Down Borough Council area;
- Belfast Urban Area Plan for a part of Knocknagoney which is now with Ards and North Down Borough area;
- draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP)<sup>4</sup> – for the legacy North Down Borough Council area; and
- Bangor Town Centre Plan 1995.

These do not reflect the new council area baseline or '*The Big Plan*'.

#### 4.6 Key Sustainability Issues

Drawing on the policies, plans, programmes and strategies review, the baseline information and the likely evolution of the baseline without the LDP, Key Sustainability Issues are set out for each topic. These reflect the local area and are mainly ones that are relevant to and may be influenced by the LDP. These key sustainability issues will also identify the potential for cumulative effects which should be considered in preparation of the LDP. Key Sustainability Issues will be reviewed and, where necessary, updated at key stages of Plan preparation.

#### 4.7 Proposed Sustainability Objectives

The key sustainability issues inform the sustainability objectives. These are presented in Chapter 6 with a short rationale and description of what each objective seeks to achieve. There are several overlaps between objectives which support each other.

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<sup>1</sup> DAERA (2017) Local Development Plans: DAERA Environmental Evidence and Information (Version 2.1/ May 2017)

<sup>2</sup> DAERA (2017) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2017 (Date published: 23 March 2017)

<sup>3</sup> DAERA (2018) Northern Ireland environmental statistics Report 2018 (Date published: 31 May 2018)

<sup>4</sup> BMAP was adopted in September 2014, but was subsequently quashed as a result of a judgment in the Court of Appeal delivered on 18 May 2017.

## 5. THE EVIDENCE BASE

### 5.1 Health and Well-being

#### 5.1.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

This topic considers the health profile for the district, needs for and access to health care, physical activity, and the effects of noise. It overlaps with many of the other topics, for example where they shape the environment in which we live, interactions with others and opportunities for employment and education.

The common thread of relevant policies is that actions should improve the outcomes for everyone's mental and physical health and well-being. Policy measures seek to prolong healthy life and reduce preventable deaths. Contributors to this include improving health in pregnancy and improving mental health, which can have long term effects on healthy life. They also acknowledge that the health conditions of those who are most deprived are significantly worse. Consequently, programmes have been developed such as 'Delivering Social Change', an Executive programme that seeks to reduce inequalities. Northern Ireland health-related strategies are supportive of international strategies and the Sustainable Development Strategy.

Part of supporting good health is encouraging physical activity. There are several strategies and initiatives for this purpose including 'Sport Matters', 'A Fitter Future for All', the 'Outdoor Recreation Action Plan', and 'Exercise, Explore, Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways'. These include creating the environment and specific facilities to encourage increased physical activity, including active transport.

The 'Transforming your Care: Strategic Implementation Plan' and the South Eastern Health Care Trust's (SEHCT) Delivery Plan, inform infrastructure requirements for health care. Making Life Better is a ten-year strategic framework for public health launched in 2014. It provides direction for policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland and reduce inequalities in health. Outcome 12 of this framework 'Making the Most of the Physical Environment' is highly relevant to the LDP. Actions can be grouped into the following general themes:

- To improve and maintain the environment in terms of air quality, water quality, waste management and environmental noise;
- To enhance the capacity of our physical infrastructure to protect, support and provide access to healthy and active living and well-being through, for example, creating environments that promote social interaction and mental well-being, are safe for all ages and incentivise physical activity.

The SPSS reflects this, in particular through six regional strategic objectives that require provision of, and accessibility for all, to open space with high standards of design.

The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 locally implement the European Noise Directive, the aim of which is to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, of exposure to environmental noise. The Regulations apply to noise from major road, railway, airport and industrial sources. These existing sources are not subject to planning control, but may be considered in the context of proposed development, which could be affected by environmental noise. A range of legislation is in place to establish permitted noise levels and manage noise emissions from domestic, industrial and commercial sources. The 2014 Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland provides clarity on current noise policies and practices.

In the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, the vision is for Ards and North Down Borough Council to be, 'a place to be proud of which is more prosperous, vibrant, healthy, sustainable and where people enjoy an excellent quality of life.' Ensuring residents have their health and well-being will be central to achieving this vision. Working with and supporting communities, whilst ensuring the very best is made

from ‘the natural, cultural and environmental assets in the Borough’, are commitments in the Corporate Plan.

In the Community Plan, ‘*The Big Plan*’, aspirations are committed up to 2032. Three of the five outcomes - all people will fulfil their lifelong potential; all people will enjoy good health and well-being; and all people will live in communities where they are respected, safe, and feel secure – will be underpinned by ensuring good physical health and mental well-being for all residents of the Borough.

### 5.1.2 Baseline Information

Detailed information on health and well-being has been provided in the Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Community Plan, and in the LDP Position Papers on Population Growth and Housing; and Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation. NISRA has also been referred to and the Health Survey (Northern Ireland) (HSNI) First Results 2017/18<sup>1</sup>. This topic overlaps with the Community, Housing, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Natural Resources, and Landscape sections of this report.

#### *Population profile*

The future population profile of the Borough helps to inform future health care needs, demand for childcare facilities and schools, provision of adequate housing and need for later life care<sup>2</sup>. The Borough has the fourth highest population relative to other Council areas<sup>3</sup>. In June 2017, the Borough accounted for 8.5%, or 160,098 people, of the population of Northern Ireland (1,870,834)<sup>4</sup>. This was a 7% increase in the population from the 2001 figure, of 149,559 people, and a 2% increase from the Census 2011 figure of 156,672. Population projections up to 2041, predict the population in NI will reach two million<sup>5</sup>. The projected population increase for the Borough Council up to 2026 is 2.5%. This is one of the lowest predicted growth rates relative to other Councils<sup>6</sup> but is still an increasing population<sup>7</sup>.

The median age in the Borough in 2001 was 38.4 years but in 2017, it was 43.7 years<sup>8</sup>. This rise in the median age increases the older age groups. In June 2017, 20.7% of the Borough’s population was aged 65 or over<sup>9</sup> - the highest of all Councils in NI<sup>10</sup>. By 2032 this proportion is predicted to increase to 28%<sup>11</sup>. This aligns at a regional level with the increasing proportion of people aged 65 and over<sup>12</sup>.

The number of children under 16 accounted for 18.8% (30,117) of the population<sup>13</sup>. This amount was slightly lower than the 2001 figure (30, 512) and the lowest of all Councils in NI<sup>14</sup> but children remain a significant proportion of the population.

The LDP can play a role in ensuring that adequate land is available for the provision of development that can meet the future health care needs of the increasing population and its vulnerable groups. The various needs of these groups such as adequate healthcare facilities, nursing homes, suitable housing, community centres and outdoor spaces, will ‘need to be accommodated’ and ‘remain high

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health - Health survey Northern Ireland: first results 2017/18 (Date published: 20 November 2018)

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan - Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

<sup>3</sup> NISRA: 2016-based Population projections for Areas within NI

<sup>4</sup> NISRA: All areas - Population totals (2001-2017)

<sup>5</sup> NISRA: 2016-based Population projections for Areas within NI Statistical Bulletin Charts

<sup>6</sup> NISRA: 2016-based Population projections for Areas within NI Statistical Bulletin Charts

<sup>7</sup> NISRA: All areas - Population totals (2001-2017)

<sup>8</sup> NISRA: All areas - Median age (2001-2017)

<sup>9</sup> NISRA: All areas - Population by sex and age bands

<sup>10</sup> NISRA: 2017 Mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland

<sup>11</sup> NISRA: 2016-based Population Projections for Areas within Northern Ireland Statistical Bulletin Charts

<sup>12</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan - Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

<sup>13</sup> NISRA: All areas - Population by sex and age bands (2001-2017)

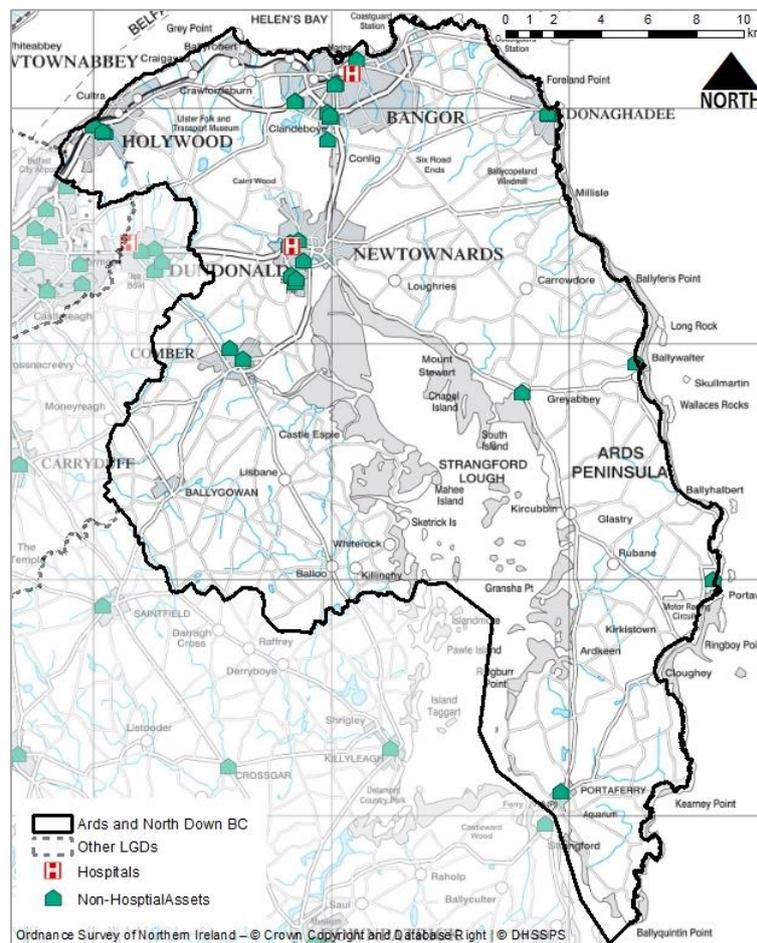
<sup>14</sup> NISRA: 2017 Mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland

on the agenda<sup>1</sup>. Ensuring ‘sustainable access’ to community and recreational facilities for children will also be part of the LDP’s role.

### South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

The SEHCT is responsible for the provision of community health and social care in the Borough

Figure 5.1.1: Community Hospitals and Health Centres in Ards and North Down Borough Council



Source: Spatial NI

The nearest main hospital is the Ulster Hospital, which is the major acute hospital for the SEHCT. It is located outside of the Borough in Dundonald, but is relatively close to several settlements located in the north of the Borough. There are two community hospitals - Bangor Community Hospital and Ards Community Hospital, the locations of which are in Figure 5.1.1. Both provide health, social and primary care. There are also a number of health centres, the majority of which are also located in settlements in the north of the borough<sup>2</sup>.

### Causes of Death

In 2017, of the 16,036 total registered deaths in NI, 25% (4,581) were cancer related<sup>3</sup>. While cancer is the most commonly recorded cause of death, other principal causes include circulatory diseases (24%) and respiratory diseases (13%). Alzheimer’s and other dementias accounted for 12%.

In 2017, nearly 10% of deaths registered in NI were from the Borough<sup>4</sup>. Of these, cancer was accountable for the majority of deaths (480) followed by circulatory disease (372) and respiratory

<sup>1</sup>Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan - Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.setrust.hscni.net/>

<sup>3</sup> NISRA: Registrar General Annual Report 2017 Cause of Death (Date published: 07 November 2018)

<sup>4</sup> NISRA: Cause of Death 2017 Tables – Deaths by sex and cause, by Local Government District, 2017

disease (197). The fourth highest amount of deaths (165), were from mental or behavioural disorders, followed then by deaths linked to diseases of the nervous system (112).

Relative to other Council areas, Ards and North Down has the third highest number of cancer, respiratory, mental/behavioural and nervous system related deaths; and the second highest number of circulatory related deaths.

### *Obesity*

In the HSNi 2017/2018, in the adult population, 37% were classed as overweight and 27% as obese<sup>1</sup>. In 2005, data from the NINIS reported that 35% of the NI population was overweight and 24% was obese<sup>2</sup>. This indicates an increase in the proportion of people suffering from weight issues. NINIS data for the SEHCT shows a slight increase in the number of obese people from 25% in 2010/11 to 27% in 2017/18. It is a similar trend for overweight people. Relative to other Trusts, it has one of the higher amounts of obesity and overweight people

Weight has been linked to some cancers including breast and bowel, so there is a direct link between weight and the largest cause of death in the Borough. Men tend to be more overweight or obese than women.

The HSNi 2017/18 also reported that 18% of children (2 years to 15 years) were classed as overweight and 9% as obese. This was a slight increase on most previous years dating back to 2010/11. NINIS data up to 2015 shows that the Council had the lowest average rate of primary one obese children and the second lowest in year 8 children, relative to other Council areas. However, amongst the most deprived SOAs in Ards and North Down, childhood obesity exceeds the NI average.

### *Mental Health*

In NI, mental health is a serious concern, with one in four people likely to experience a mental health issue at some point in their lives<sup>3</sup>. Significant numbers of young people have reported feeling stressed, anxious or hopeless<sup>4</sup>. At the same time, there has been an increasing trend for the prescription of anti-depressants<sup>5</sup>. In the HSNi 2017/2018, 18% of respondents indicated having a mental health issue whilst a fifth of people reported suffering from anxiety.

### *Physical Health*

In the Census 2011, 81% of people from the Borough were recorded as having very good or good health, 15% with fair health, and 5% with bad or very bad health. In the Census, North Down and Ards as 100 People survey found of people with long-term health problems that 80% were not limited in their daily activities but 9% were limited a little, and 11% were limited a lot.

In the HSNi 2017/2018, nearly three quarters (71%) of respondents, a slight decrease from 2016/2017 (73%), reported very good or good health. In the SEHCT, very good or good health was reported by 71% in 2017/2018. This was also a decrease from 2016/2017 (78%) and 73% in 2010/2011.

The HSNi 2017/18 also reported 43% of people with a long-term illness (physical or mental). This figure has been increasing since 2011/12, when 36% of respondents were classified in this group. In the SEHCT, 46% were classed with a long-standing illness. This figure has increased from 2012/13 when it was 35%.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health: Health survey Northern Ireland: first results 2017/18

<sup>2</sup> NINIS: Adult Obesity – Health and Social Well-being Survey

<sup>3</sup> SEHCT Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing (found at <http://www.setrust.hscni.net/healthyliving/2411.htm> )

<sup>4</sup> Belfast Telegraph: Almost half of Northern Ireland young people have mental health problems, study reveals (April 2018)

<sup>5</sup> Statistical Baseline for The Big Plan for Ards and North Down July 2017 - 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

In 2016, it was reported that the three most common conditions of people submitted to hospital were high blood pressure, obesity and asthma<sup>1</sup>. All of these conditions could be in some way alleviated through increased physical activity.

In general, figures for the Borough Council show that it performs better than the overall NI population on all 26 health indicators used for measuring population health<sup>2</sup>.

### *Well-being*

In the HSNi 2017/2018, 88% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with life but 4% felt to some extent dissatisfied. This was similar to figures reported in previous years. A fifth of people reported loneliness, with people living in urban areas more affected than those living in rural areas.

Personal well-being was measured in 2014/15 for an Annual Population Survey<sup>3</sup>. NI scored highest of all the UK countries for life satisfaction, worthwhileness and happiness. However, NI did not score well for anxiety. A fifth of people reported high levels in the HSNi 2017/2018.

People's physical health and well-being can be improved by spending time outdoors with access 'to good quality landscapes' and use of good quality green space<sup>4</sup>. In Ards and North Down, 74% of residents enjoy leisure time outdoors at least once a week<sup>5</sup> and residents have the highest life satisfaction in NI<sup>6</sup>. Providing outdoor recreational facilities, green and open space can help encourage people into the outdoors. The RDS recognises and promotes the health benefits of green/blue infrastructure including community greenways. This is partially why greenways are being encouraged at the strategic level, to help increase 'the number of people walking and cycling'<sup>7</sup>. More information on greenways is in the Transport and Accessibility section of this report; and on the natural environment in the Natural Resources section.

The LDP Position Paper on Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (para 5.23) notes that, broadly speaking, the legacy North Down Borough Council area, had a 65.93ha deficit of outdoor sports area and a 45.10ha deficit of children's play space.

### *Physical activity*

It is recommended by the Department of Health, that people aged 19 and over should try to be active on a daily basis and have 150 minutes of moderate activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity a week.

In the HSNi 2016/17, 55% of the respondents met the recommendations. Although a slight increase on previous years, 26% remained inactive. In the SEHCT, in 2016/17, 60% of people were meeting the physical activity guidelines. This showed an increase on previous years and remained the best performing of all the Trusts<sup>8</sup> but some people remain inactive. Men tend to be more active than women.

The Department for Health recommends that adults should undertake physical activity that involves all the major muscle groups at least twice a week. In 2016/17, 25% of respondents to the HSNi met the recommendations but 60% had no muscle building activity. In the SEHCT, in 2016/17, 27% of respondents were classed as meeting the recommendations, an improvement on previous years but no muscle strengthening remains an issue for the majority. Men tend to perform better than women.

ARK (Access Research Knowledge - a joint initiative between Queens University and the University of Ulster) carries out an annual survey of P7-aged children and 16 year olds in NI. Commencing in 2015,

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's baseline for The Big Plan

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Baseline for The Big Plan for Ards and North Down July 2017 - 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics: Personal well-being in the UK 2014/15

<sup>4</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan – Position Paper Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

<sup>5</sup> NINIS Leisure Time Outdoors (administrative geographies) 2015-2017

<sup>6</sup> NINIS Satisfaction with life - Health Survey (administrative geographies) 2017

<sup>7</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan - Position Paper Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

<sup>8</sup> NINIS: Physical Activity – Health Survey

ARK has been commissioned by Sport NI to include questions on sport and physical activity in the surveys, to provide a baseline and allow policy progress to be measured<sup>1,2</sup>.

The surveys found that around half (49%) of P7 children and four out of ten 42% 16 year olds reported that they walked or cycled to and from school. However only a third (32%) of P7 children and less than one in ten (8%) 16-year olds met the United Kingdom (UK) guideline target of a minimum 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Large proportions of children are therefore are not engaging regularly in physical activity. One in ten children felt they could not play freely with their friends in their community and children reported being able to play more freely with friends in school (84%), compared with being able to play with friends when in their communities or homes (77%). Children reported feeling safer when playing in school (89%), compared with feeling safe when playing in their communities or homes (73%). This reflects the findings of several UK studies<sup>3</sup> which found, among other things, that a fifth of children did not play outside at all on an average day and less than one in ten children regularly played in wild spaces compared to half of children a generation ago.

### *Disability*

People can have disabilities or health problems because of a variety of reasons. Some people may be born with a disability whilst others may develop one after an accident, as they naturally age or due to health related issues. In some cases, people's daily lives can be greatly affected and limited<sup>4</sup>. In the HSNi 2017/18, nearly a third of respondents reported that they had an illness that affected their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. In the Borough, nearly 13, 840 people or 8.6% of the population were claiming disability living allowance<sup>5</sup>. These people are likely to be less able to participate in physical activity and may find it more difficult to access the outdoors. According to Disability Sport NI, 'people with a disability are less than half as likely to participate in sport as non-disabled people'<sup>6</sup>. Enabling physical activity for less able people through provision of accessible and adequate sports facilities, as well as the outdoors, should be a consideration of the LDP.

### *Providing Care*

The LDP position paper on Population Growth and Housing, reported that in 2011, 13% of the population of the Borough were 'informal carers'. The paper also reported how, 'large areas', of the Borough, 'have higher proportions of people providing unpaid care.' A NINIS survey conducted in 2010-2016, reported that 12% of people in the SEHCT had caring responsibilities. In the SEHCT 14% of respondents were with full time caring responsibilities. This is a slight increase on most previous years since 2010/11. The HSNi 2017/18 reported a similar proportion of people (13%) with caring responsibilities. It was also reported that nearly three-quarters of carers receive no money and over half have their own health issues because of their role.

There is a role for the LDP to ensure that the needs of carers can be met. This may mean improving local access to appropriate facilities and services, enabling adaptations to housing and enabling live-in carers.

### *Health Inequalities*

Inequalities in health are differences that occur within a population as a direct result of social circumstance. There are many social causes to health inequalities that may include where someone is born, lives or works. *Health and Disability* is a measure toward the NI Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017<sup>7</sup>. Those Super Output Areas (SOAs) which are in the 20% most deprived areas (ranked 1-178) in

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<sup>1</sup> Schubotz, D., Lloyd, K. & McKnight, M. (2016) 'A Question of Sport - Perspectives of Children and Young People' ARK Research Update 107.

<sup>2</sup> McQuade, L., Kehoe, S. & Emerson, L. (2015) 'Are children getting the opportunities to realise their right to play?' ARK Research Update 98

<sup>3</sup> The Guardian, 25th March 2016 'Three-quarters of UK children spend less time outdoors than prison inmates – survey' (accessed 28.11.17)

<sup>4</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan - Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

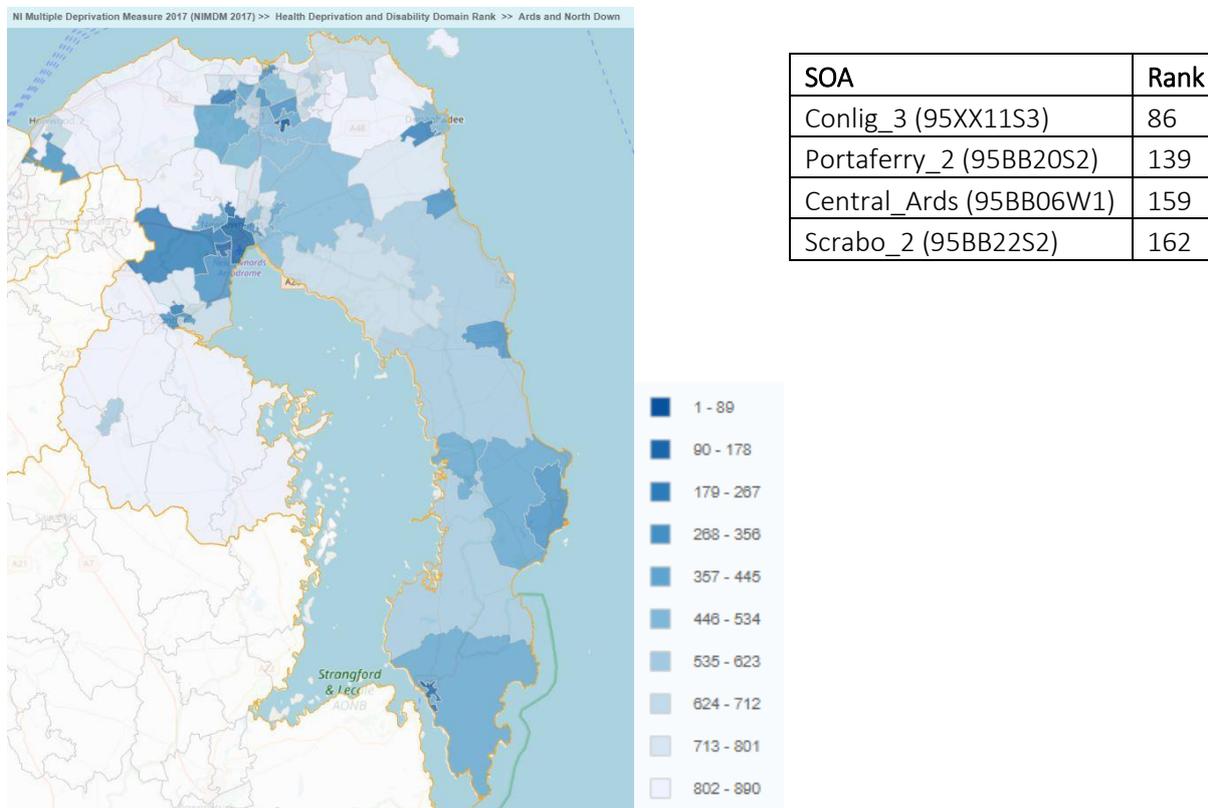
<sup>5</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Statistical Baseline for The Big Plan July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>6</sup> Disability Sport NI website – About Us – What We Do January 2019

<sup>7</sup> NISRA website – Deprivation

terms of health and disability are shown to the right side of Figure 5.1.2. In terms of this measure, the top ten most deprived areas in the Borough are ranked within 30% of the most deprived areas in NI. Conlig 3 is the most deprived area for this measure in the Borough which is in the top 100 of a total of 890 possible areas in NI. Of the 88 least deprived SOAs (ranks 802-890) across NI, 21 (24%) are in Ards and North Down.

**Figure 5.1.2: NIMDM 2017 Health Deprivation and Disability Domain Rank (Super Output Areas)**



Source: NISRA -NI Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017 SOA Results Interactive Maps

### Noise

The Environmental Noise Directive requires Member States to ‘preserve environmental noise quality where it is good’, through the identification and protection of designated Quiet Areas within urban areas with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

Under the Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006, Round 3 noise maps have been produced based on 2016 data for the following:<sup>1</sup>

- major roads – (more than 3 million vehicle passages per year)
- major railways – (railways with more than 30,000 train passages per year)
- major airports – (airports with more than 50,000 movements per year)
- agglomerations – (urban areas with more than 100,000 inhabitants)

Noise maps of relevance to Ards and North Down include those published for Belfast City Airport, industrial sites, major roads and major railways, all of which are evident in the north of the Borough. The settlements of Bangor, Crawfordsburn, Groomsport, Helen's Bay, Hollywood and Seahill are

<sup>1</sup> DAERA Round 3 Noise Maps and Noise Mapping Technical Reports (Date published: 26 January 2018)

included within the 'Belfast agglomeration'. The most affected areas from related noise appear to be along the north coast, in the Bangor area, and in and around Newtownards<sup>1</sup>.

DAERA has developed its own approach to the identification and designation of Quiet Areas in policy guidance and in connection with the city of Belfast. One Quiet Area has been designated in the Borough, at Conor Park / Stricklands, Glen Bangor West.

### Radon

Radon is a natural radioactive gas that occurs at low levels outside but which can become concentrated in enclosed places, such as houses, workplaces and other buildings. Long-term exposure to radon increases the risk of lung cancer, particularly in smokers or ex-smokers. After smoking, radon exposure is the second greatest cause of lung cancer. It is estimated to cause 30 deaths per year in NI<sup>2</sup>.

Public Health England (in conjunction with the GSNI) published a new indicative atlas of Radon levels in homes throughout Northern Ireland in 2015. It estimates that some 155,000 homes, about 1 in 5 in Northern Ireland, are now in 'Affected Areas'<sup>3</sup>.

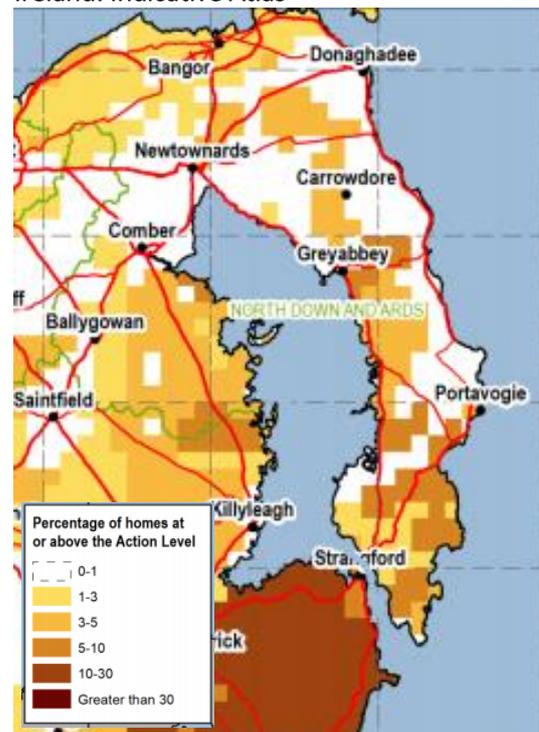
An extract from this atlas is shown in Figure 5.1.3. The darker colours on the radon map indicate a greater probability of high radon levels in a building. The government has recommended that householders take action to reduce their radon levels where they exceed the 'action level' of 200 Becquerels per cubic metre.

The atlas helps to inform where measurement of Radon levels may be required at dwellings, and if necessary, where action may be required to protect homes. It can be seen in Figure 5.1.3 that there are no areas in Ards and North Down with a 10% or greater probability of exceeding the recommended action level for Radon, however areas surrounding Portavogie and Greyabbey have a 5-10% probability.

#### 5.1.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, the most up to date spatial information would not be available and there could be a much higher risk of missing opportunities to provide adequate and accessible healthcare facilities and services in the most appropriate locations. It could become increasingly difficult to sustainably integrate measures like greenways, cycle routes, open space, sports facilities and play parks, even with their multiple benefits for health, wellbeing, nature and communities. Likewise, improving any existing inequalities in healthcare provision and any adverse trends relevant to health and wellbeing may be less feasible.

Figure 5.1.3: Extract from 'Radon in Northern Ireland: Indicative Atlas'



Source: Radon in NI: Indicative Atlas August 2015  
© Crown copyright and British Geological Survey © NERC 2015

<sup>1</sup> DAERA: Noise Mapping and Action Planning Contract Round 3 – 2016/17 Summary Report – Final January 2018

<sup>2</sup> NI Direct Radon Gas in your Home (found at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/radon-gas-your-home>)

<sup>3</sup> Gov.uk "New Radon Map for Northern Ireland Published" (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-radon-map-for-northern-ireland-published>)

#### 5.1.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Health and Well-being

- By 2039 the population of the district is projected to have increased from its 2016 level by 2.3% or 3,654 which is significantly lower than the population increase projected for NI with a gradual decline from 2030.
- Population trends indicate an ageing population with potentially a higher number of older people, e.g. the proportion of those aged 65 and over is expected to grow from 20% in 2016 to over 28% by 2032.
- An increase in the proportion of older people in the population will increase the requirement for care. There is a need to meet the future needs for care and support for older people at home or in communal homes and to improve access to health services, and other facilities and services.
- The Borough has the joint highest proportion of people (21%) reporting that they never spent time outdoors in 2016 although more people (69%) than the NI average spent time outdoors at least once a week.
- Participation rates in physical activity are higher than the NI average however they are significantly lower than recommended minimum levels.
- There is a need to promote and incentivise regular participation in physical activity through provision of and ensuring good accessibility to sports facilities, open space, play areas, green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes.
- Ards and North Down has an accessible natural environment, particularly to the coast and sea, with numerous open spaces, walking and cycling trails. Baseline information, recorded for BMAP, however points to a deficit of open space, sport and outdoor recreation provision.
- Less than half of children in NI walk or cycle to school.
- There is a particular need for children to have accessible play in places where they feel safe.
- There will be an increasing need to create accessible means for older people to engage in physical activity to prolong their healthy lives.
- Development should be sited and designed to connect with public open space, walking and cycling routes and other recreational facilities where possible.
- Levels of adult obesity in NI and the UK are high by global standards, reflecting poor diet and a relatively sedentary lifestyle.
- Obesity in children in the 20% most deprived SOAs in Ards and North Down is higher than the NI average, adult obesity is declining and at just under 10%.
- Mental health indicators on average are better than the NI average but there is evidence of poorer mental health in the most deprived part of the council.
- Noise and environmental quality are not identified as being significant adverse effects at present however they can impact on health and therefore environmental quality should be improved, or sustained where it is good, to minimise adverse health impacts.
- Conor Park/Stricklands, Glen Bangor West is a designated quiet area which should be taken into account in planning development.
- Road safety for all users should be a key consideration of planning and design.
- The location of and access to emergency services can impact on response times. Rural areas require accessibility to general practice and non-emergency healthcare services.
- Generally measures of health are better for the council compared to the Northern Ireland overall population across most of the indicators used for measuring population health. There are however inequalities in health and well-being with most measures of health and life expectancy being significantly worse in the most deprived areas.
- Good spatial planning can reduce health inequalities by providing a high standard of design and place making, open space, capacity for any additional services required and accessibility.
- Need to plan the relative location of industry and housing, open space and public facilities to minimise use conflicts.
- There are small parts of the Borough such as the southern Ards Peninsula where there is a moderate probability of the incidence of Radon at actionable levels.

## 5.2 Community

### 5.2.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Community considers demographics, community identity, shared space, prosperity and social inclusion, crime and community safety, good relations and the rural population.

An understanding of changes in the makeup of the population informs future needs for the plan area for housing, employment, infrastructure, facilities and amenities. Models of the future population take account of other policies, net migration and, for example, health initiatives, which are likely to have an influence on births and deaths. A consistent requirement of policies related to the various demographic groups is the need to incorporate equality of treatment and opportunity.

‘Delivering Social Change’, an NI Executive Programme, seeks to reduce inequalities, often through targeted approaches, and the draft Programme for Government includes an outcome that ‘*We have a more equal society*’ which includes measures to reduce poverty, health and educational inequality and also relates to employment.

The Regional Strategic Objective of the SPSS to ‘*sustain a vibrant rural community by supporting rural economic development of an appropriate nature and scale*’ is representative of regional rural policy. It seeks to enable people to live and work in rural communities with reasonable provision of facilities while retaining the intrinsic character and value of the countryside and small communities. This echoes the Rural White Paper Action Plan which also refers to improved infrastructure, transport and key services; strong community infrastructure which can avail of economic, social and cultural opportunities; and better linkages between rural and urban areas.

There is growing recognition of the need for provision to take account of the varying needs of different age groups. The World Health Organisation promotes Age-friendly practices. It states that ‘*An age-friendly world enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. It is a place that makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people that are important to them.*’<sup>1</sup> This ethos is reflected in the objectives of the Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2021 which includes aims such as the co-ordinated delivery of suitable warm housing and timely and reliable transport provision. Other aims include social participation and volunteering opportunities which help address isolation and loneliness and the active participation and citizenship of older people in decision making on policies and the provision of services. The draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People’s Strategy 2017-2027 promotes co-operation amongst Departments, Agencies and other service deliverers. Its aims include that children and young people are provided the opportunity to experience good relations with those of a different race, religion or culture.

Together: Building a United Community Strategy<sup>2</sup> is another Executive programme. It has a vision for ‘*a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance*’.<sup>3</sup>

As part of this Strategy, this Council has developed a Good Relations programme<sup>4</sup> which promotes respect, equality and tolerance between different people who live in the same place.

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization – Ageing and lifecourse/Towards an Age-friendly world (found at <https://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-world/en/>)

<sup>2</sup> Together: Building a United Community Strategy (Date published: 23 May 2013) <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/together-building-united-community-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> The Executive Office: Together: Building a United Community Strategy

<sup>4</sup> Ards and North Down: Good Relations (found at <https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/resident/community/good-relations>)

The 'Community Safety Action Plan'<sup>1</sup> includes the action for Councils 'to support a sense of pride and ownership within neighbourhoods, deter anti-social behaviour and to address growing amenity problems associated with dilapidated or unsightly buildings and neglected sites'.

The Corporate Plan, 2015-2019 has 'People' as one of its three themes. This includes the aim to 'develop more engaged, empowered and integrated communities' and to 'Foster a United Community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation'

'Creating positive outcomes for everyone by empowering individuals and communities...' is central to 'The Big Plan's' ambition up until 2032. Other key aspects of this ambition include reducing inequalities; promoting good relations and sustainability; and improving the quality of and access to all public services. One of 'The Big Plan's' five outcomes is for 'all people ...to live in communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure'<sup>2</sup>. Considering the needs and wellbeing of the people of the Borough will be fundamental to achieving these outcomes and the overall vision of the Community Plan.

### 5.2.2 Baseline information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in Ards and North Down Borough Council's Community Plan, 'The Big Plan 2017-2032'. Data has also been sourced from statistical baseline reports used for the Community Plan, as well as Local Development Plan Position Papers on Population Growth and Housing; Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation; and Settlement and Placemaking. NISRA and the NINIS have also been referred to. The Community topic overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Housing, Education and Skills, Economy and Employment, Transport and Accessibility, Natural Resources and Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage sections of this report.

#### Population Distribution

Approximately 72.6% of the population is urban-based, being located in the five main towns of Bangor, Comber, Donaghadee, Holywood and Newtownards. The remaining 27.4% of the population is split between the existing villages, small settlements and the open countryside, with the latter accounting for some 14.4% of the total population.

This urban proportion is higher than the NI average whilst the rural proportion is lower than the NI average<sup>3</sup>. About 80% of the population live in the northern 25% of the Borough. This leaves 20% of the population living throughout the remaining rural area, with some individuals and communities potentially quite isolated<sup>4</sup>.

On Census day 2011, 7,942 households in Ards and North Down were one person households where the resident was aged 65+ years<sup>5</sup>. This accounted for 43.5% of all one-person households.

#### Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Religion

The 2011 Census recorded 13% of the resident population of the Borough as 'belonging to or brought up in the Catholic religion' (NI: 45%) and 75% 'belonging to brought up in a 'Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)' religion' (NI: 48%). 1.1% were from 'other' religions (NI 0.9%) and 10.7% declared no religion (NI: 5.6%)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Justice Community Safety action plan 2015 to 2017 (date published 16 June 2015)

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down's Strategic Community Planning Partnership: The Big Plan April 2017-2032

<sup>3</sup> NINIS: Urban Rural Composition 2009 – Ards and North Down Borough Council

<sup>4</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>5</sup> NINIS Age Friendly Profile for Ards and North Down Local Government District (LGD2014)

<sup>6</sup> NINIS Census 2011: Religion or Religion Brought Up In: KS212NI (administrative geographies)

In respect of identity, 72.37% indicated that they had a British national identity, 8.32% had an Irish national identity and 32.41% had a Northern Irish national identity (respondents could indicate more than one national identity).

In the 2011 census 1.46% of the resident population of the Borough were from an ethnic minority population (NI: 1.72%) and the remaining 98.54% were white (including Irish Traveller) (NI: 98.28)<sup>1</sup>. 1.50% of the Borough's resident population reported that they did not have English as their first language<sup>2</sup>.

The Ards and North Down as 100 People survey<sup>3</sup> recorded nearly half the population as married or in a civil partnership (48%) but 37% were also recorded as single. In the Census 2011 survey for North Down and Ards, a 100 Households survey, recorded 28% of households as single. This indicates a likely increase in the number of single households.

### *Shared space*

There are 5 towns, 17 villages and 20 small settlements<sup>4</sup> in Ards and North Down Borough. These places, in which people live, need to provide services and facilities but they also have their own unique character, which evolves over time and reflects local culture, politics, wealth, and so on. Shared space is an important aspect of where people live. Provision of it enables people from different backgrounds and generations to meet and benefit from the shared space and the social interaction. Shared space can include community and leisure centres, libraries and museums, as well as areas of open space such as civic squares, playing fields and grassland areas<sup>5</sup>. Some people also consider shopping centres as a shared space<sup>6</sup>.

The second outcome of the Community Plan aspires for residents to 'enjoy good health and well-being'<sup>7</sup>. Provision of adequate and accessible shared space can help deliver this. It can also include or link to green infrastructure (GI) which may enable people to increase their physical activity, if walkways or cycle ways are included. More information on GI is in the Transport and Accessibility section.

Outcome 1 of *The Big Plan* is all about people fulfilling their potential, including the less able and people with disabilities, who can be prioritised as an 'at risk' group<sup>8</sup>. In the Borough, there is a significant proportion of the population – 20%, who have a limiting long-term health problem or disability<sup>9</sup>. In the Community Plan, 13, 840 people were reported as claiming disability living allowance. An aging population is likely to bring with it a higher number of age related disabilities. Older people can also be prioritised as 'at risk'. There is a need for the Council to ensure all groups of people can remain socially interactive and reduce social isolation. Providing accessible shared space for all people, in spite of their physical ability, is one way to help achieve this. More information on the population's health is in the Health and Well-being section of this report.

### *Outdoor Shared Space - Community Facilities*

Within the Borough, there is a variety of facilities available for people to use or visit that can be considered 'shared space' and that can help to maintain people's health and well-being through physical activity. Examples include playing pitches, outdoor gyms, allotments, community gardens and equipped play areas. Currently, a significant amount of residents (74%), enjoy leisure time outdoors at least once a week, which is above the NI average<sup>10</sup>. The LDP Position Paper on Open Space, Sport and

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<sup>1</sup> NINIS Census 2011: Ethnic Group: KS201NI (administrative geographies)

<sup>2</sup> Census 2011 Population Statistics for Ards And North Down Local Government District (2014)

<sup>3</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>4</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan Position Paper – Settlement and Placemaking

<sup>5</sup> Local Development Plan Position Paper Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

<sup>6</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>7</sup> Ards and North Down's Strategic Community Planning Partnership: The Big Plan April 2017 – 2032

<sup>8</sup> Ards and North Down's Strategic Community Planning Partnership: The Big Plan April 2017 – 2032

<sup>9</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>10</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan Position Paper: Open Space, Sport, and Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor Recreation refers to over 30 public playing fields as well as a variety of available recreational activities such as bowling, fishing, horse-riding and golf. There are also five leisure/sports centres within the Borough – Bangor, Newtownards, Holywood, Comber and Portaferry – and over 50 parks. However, the LDP paper also highlights that the Borough has less playing field provision relative to other Councils. It also highlights that a lack of ‘outdoor playing space, children’s casual play areas, equipped playgrounds and amenity open space’ has been indicated from the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP) so there may be a lack of this provision in the North Down area of the Borough.

The Young Life and Times Survey carried out by ARK on 16 year olds in 2017<sup>1</sup>, 66% of respondents reported that they ‘very often’ or ‘sometimes’ socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community compared to only 55% doing so with people from a different ethnic background. In the same survey carried out in 2017<sup>2</sup>, the figures had decreased to 63% and increased to 59% respectively. Respondents attending integrated schools were more likely to socialise or play sport with people from a different ethnic background.

The fifth outcome of the Community Plan is for people to ‘...feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment’. Ensuring people have access to enjoy their rich natural and historic environment for its health benefits is part of this outcome. Appropriate measures to maintain and increase areas of accessible outdoor space for recreation and leisure would be supportive of it. Community Greenways in appropriate locations are an excellent example of achieving this outcome with multiple benefits for the natural environment as well people’s health and well-being. More information on the three greenways in the Borough is in the Transport and Accessibility section of this report.

### *Placemaking*

The LDP process provides an opportunity to shape shared space to maximise its value for people and ‘to support positive placemaking’<sup>3</sup>. Also known as ‘placemaking’, urban design can be integrated with patterns of use that reflect community identities<sup>4</sup>. Public spaces can perform a function as well as benefit people’s physical health and mental well-being.

### *Crime, Safety and Deprivation*

The third outcome of ‘*The Big Plan*’ is for people to feel respected, safe and secure in their communities. Since 2012/13, recorded crime offences have been on the increase<sup>5</sup> of which the largest types have been theft (29%), violence without injury (22%) and criminal damage (21%)<sup>6</sup>. There is one juvenile justice centre in the Borough and of all youth justice referrals in NI, 12% have been from the Ards and North Down Borough<sup>7</sup> - a significant amount. In the Borough, incidents of anti-social behaviour – nuisance, personal, environmental - are high, with over 5000 cases recorded annually<sup>8</sup>. As much as 29% of residents feel that the fear of crime affects their quality of life. This is in spite of the presence of the emergency services throughout the Borough.

There are links with deprivation and crime and poor health. People living in more deprived areas are more at risk of health issues, including substance abuse. Records show that in areas of higher deprivation people are twice as likely to need help for substance abuse<sup>9</sup>. There is also a three-year gap in life expectancy across the Borough<sup>10</sup> which highlights health inequalities.

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<sup>1</sup> Access Research Knowledge Research (ARK) Update Number 79 May 2012

<sup>2</sup> Access Research Knowledge Research (ARK) NI Young Life and Times survey 2017 (<https://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/2017/index.html>)

<sup>3</sup>Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper – Settlement and Placemaking

<sup>4</sup>Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper – Settlement and Placemaking

<sup>5</sup> Ards and North Down’s Strategic Community Planning Partnership: The Big Plan April 2017 – 2032

<sup>6</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>7</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

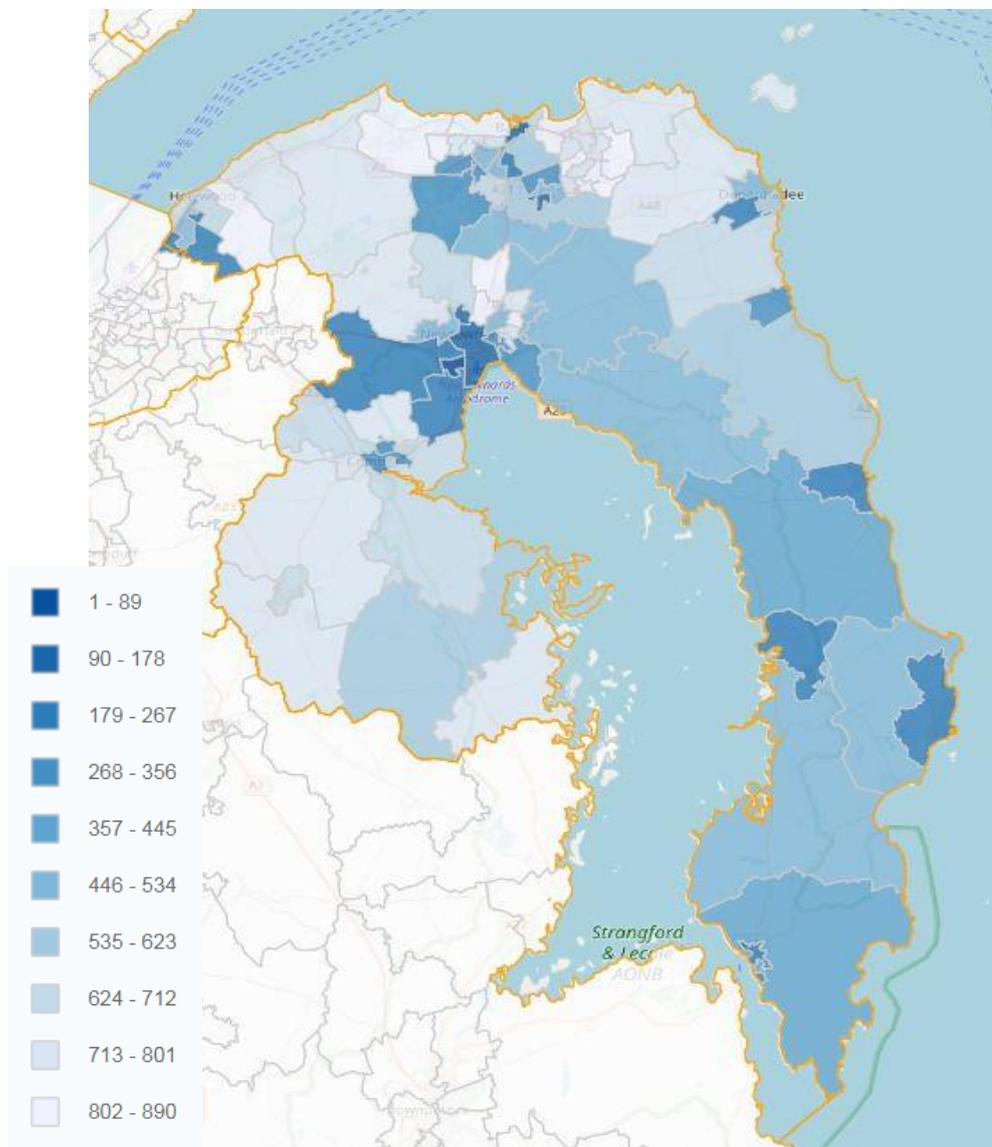
<sup>8</sup> The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>9</sup>The Big Plan Statistical Baseline July 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Issue

<sup>10</sup> Ards and North Down’s Strategic Community Planning Partnership: The Big Plan April 2017 – 2032

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2017 scores areas in NI across several deprivation domains including income, employment, access to services, and crime. Scores range from one (most deprived) to 890 (least deprived). Spatially there is a wide range of scores across the Borough. Scrabo 2 in Newtownards scores the lowest at 71, whilst Broadway 2 in Bangor scores highest with, 868. Scrabo 2 also scores least for income (41), and employment (83); third lowest in terms of provision of education, skills and training (79); and the fourth most deprived for health and disability (162). In terms of crime and disorder, Scrabo 2 ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the range (201), whilst Harbour 1 in Bangor is at the top for crime with a score of six. Overall, relative to other Council areas, Ards and North Down has only three areas ranked in the top 100 for multiple deprivation measures – Scrabo2 (71), Glen 1 (97) and Central Ards (99). The highest rankings for multiple deprivation are evident in and around the towns of Newtownards, Bangor and Donaghadee but also in the villages of Portaferry, Ballywalter and Portavogie as well as the rural areas associated with these places. Access to services is an issue across most of the Council area with the Ards Peninsula particularly affected as well as Killinchy 1, and Lisbane 1, located west of Strangford Lough <sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 5.2.1: Spatial profile of Ards and North Down Borough and its areas of multiple deprivation.**



Source: NISRA:NINIS: NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017

<sup>1</sup> NISRA: NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 (NIMDM2017)

### 5.2.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there may be the risk that policies and provision for development will not reflect the needs of the Borough area or support delivery of the Community Plan. A new plan would bring an opportunity to develop a plan led system and to reflect the most recent strategies including the Community Plan. It could also provide an opportunity to address any deficits in the provision of shared space, community facilities and support systems within the Borough.

### 5.2.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Community

- 80% of our residents live in the northern 25% of the Borough and the remaining population is quite dispersed with a quarter of the population in rural areas. This can result in some individuals and communities experiencing rural isolation.
- There will be an increased need to accommodate those with disability.
- Protestant and other Christian is the predominant community across the Borough.
- The community is less ethnically diverse than NI as a whole however the needs of minority groups should be taken into account.
- There is a commitment to promote social inclusion through quality shared and neutral space throughout the whole of the Borough where everyone feels welcome.
- Figures for recorded crime have been on the increase since 2012/13 and levels of anti-social behaviour are high. 29% of people in 2013 said fear of crime had an impact on the quality of their life. Harbour 1 and Central Ards were the most affected areas for crime and disorder.

## 5.3 Housing

### 5.3.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Good quality sustainable housing is a fundamental need of society and can make a significant positive contribution to community cohesion and the character of our built environment. It is the role of the LDP to proactively facilitate land for the delivery of homes to meet the variety of future housing needs, together with the opportunities for people living there to make healthy lifestyle choices and benefit from community services and facilities.

Our regional policy recognises the importance of housing in relation to sustainable development. It acknowledges the potential links between good quality, sustainable housing that enables access to jobs, facilities, services and infrastructure, and the benefits this can bring to wider society. Policy encourages housing near to public transport links and in residential areas with adequate facilities already in place. Consideration of local character and the environment, as well as attractive design, are also viewed as key elements for sustainable development.

Good quality housing is essential to safety and well-being. Availability of appropriate housing and access to community and social services influence the independence and quality of life of older people. Good quality housing developments promote well-being and health improvement through development design, which encourages walking and cycling, and use of open space for recreation. Fuel poverty can be tackled through housing design that aims for a low-carbon future, which also helps local air quality and our contributions to climate change mitigation.

Regional policy recognises that housing growth needs to be managed to achieve sustainable patterns of residential development. This can be achieved by promoting housing within existing hubs and clusters and by using vacant and underutilized land including brownfield sites. Regional policy encourages 60% of new housing to be in the hubs and clusters and to use brownfield sites. The needs of rural dwellers, those on low incomes, the vulnerable, the elderly, the disabled and the homeless should also be considered in housing policy.

The Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017 was produced by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and identifies a number of desired outcomes in terms of housing in Ards and North Down. The vision for Ards and North Down is one where, 'Housing plays its part in creating a peaceful, inclusive prosperous and fair society'. The plan aims to deliver sustainable communities, living in dwellings of a decent standard and in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of both local and rural areas. Outcomes identified within the plan include providing suitable accommodation and support services for vulnerable residents, developing low carbon homes and reducing fuel poverty, assisting in homeownership and increasing the supply of affordable renting to meet community needs.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019 sets the overall strategic direction with a number of objectives linked to people, prosperity and place. The vision for the Borough is to make it, 'more prosperous, vibrant, healthy, sustainable and where people enjoy an excellent quality of life'. The Corporate Plan recognises that the Borough has a higher than average house price due to its attractiveness as a place to live but it acknowledges that areas of deprivation are also evident.

The Council's Community Plan, '*The Big Plan*', aims to create 'positive outcomes for everyone' by working with individuals and communities. There are five outcomes of the Big Plan, and ensuring people have 'access to affordable housing' and 'are safe and feel secure in their homes' and communities, are just some aspects of these. The need to provide support for independent living of an ageing population is identified, as too the importance of accessible, good quality housing. The fifth outcome of the Community Plan also recommends mixed tenure and low-carbon homes, with 'access to the benefits of good mobile and broadband connectivity.'

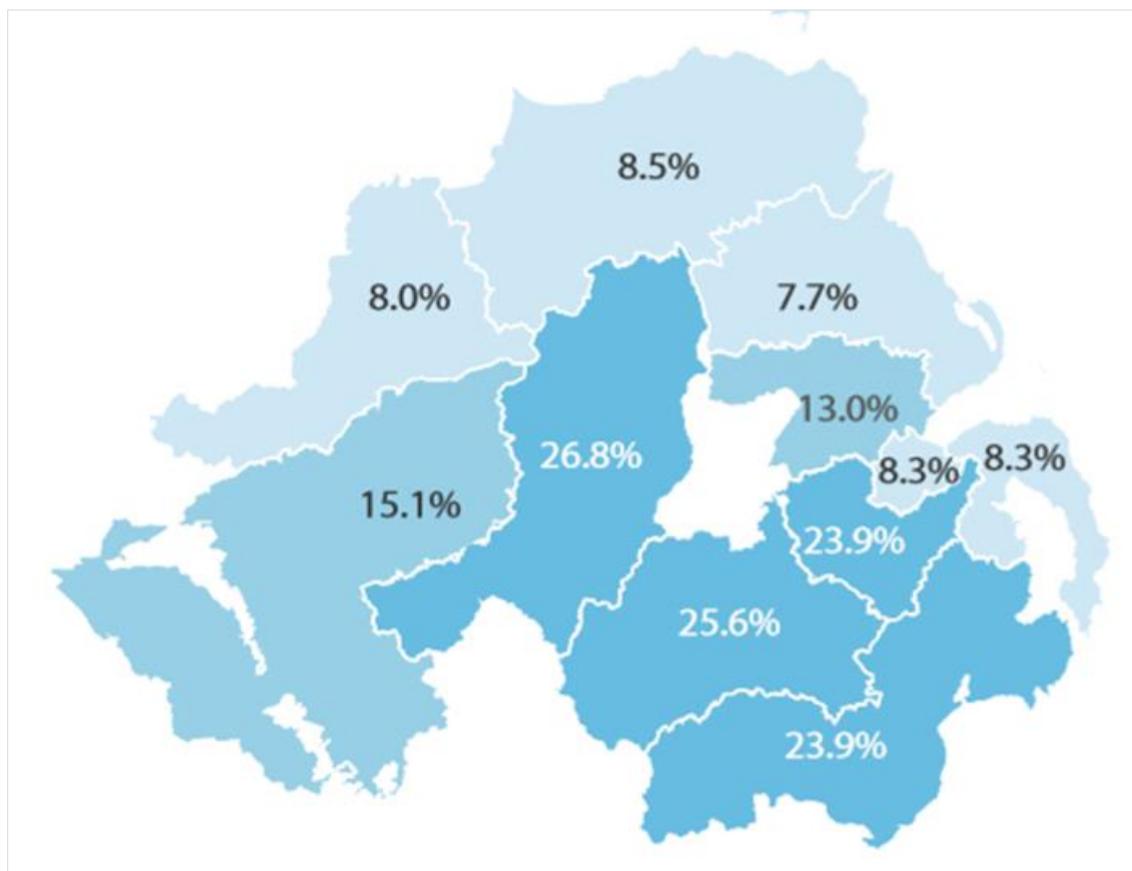
### 5.3.2 Baseline Information

Relevant information is presented in the Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper on Population Growth and Housing. This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being and Community sections of this report.

#### *Household Projections and Profile*

In 2012, the number for households in Ards and North Down was 68900, households are projected to increase by 8.3% by 2037, with the number of households projected to be 70,300. Household growth in the Borough is relatively low compared to other parts of the region where household growth exceeds 20%. Regionally household sizes are decreasing with the average household size expected to be 2.42 by 2037. Similar to regional household trends the projected household size within the Borough is expected to decrease to 2.29 persons by 2037<sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 5.3.1: Projected household growth in Northern Ireland by Local Government District between 2012 and 2037**



Source: NISRA 2018

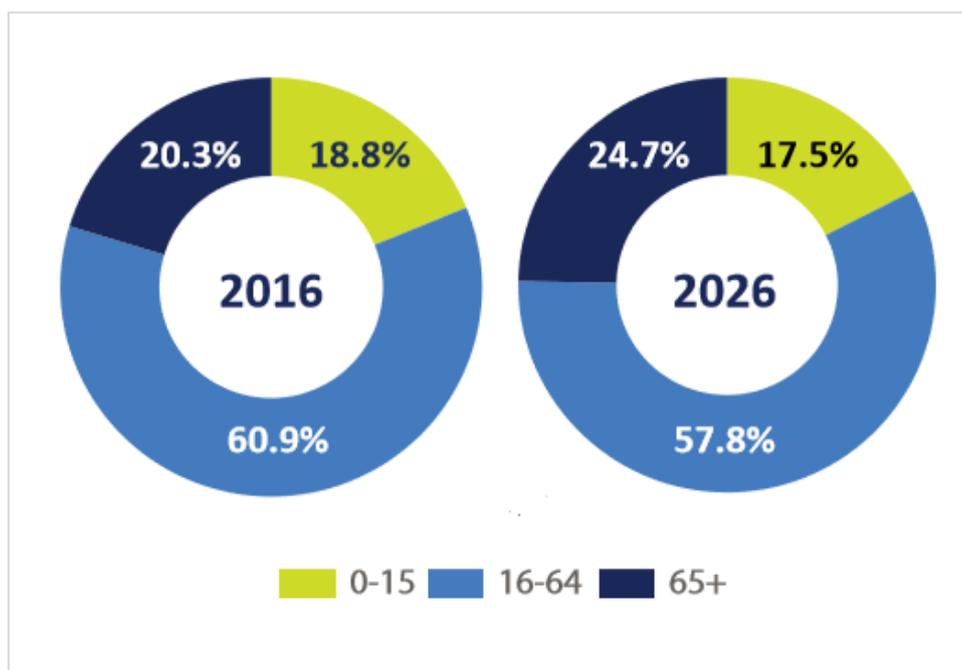
The proportion of the population over 65 living in Ards and North Down is higher than the NI average<sup>2</sup> and is predicted to increase. Figure 5.3.2 shows that by 2026, the proportion of people aged 65 or over is expected to account for just under a quarter of the Borough’s population. The growing proportion of the population age 65 and over is likely to increase the need for housing that can accommodate the needs of the elderly<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> NISRA, Local Government Districts – Household Type

<sup>2</sup> NISRA, Northern Ireland Household Projections 2012-2037.

<sup>3</sup> Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

Figure 5.3.2 Age Distribution of Population Ards and North Down 2016 - 2026



Source: NISRA 2018

Ards and North Down has a higher than regional average number of detached dwellings. In 2009, 39% of dwellings in Ards and North Down were detached although household trends within the Borough show that the number of people living in flats and apartments doubled between 2001 and 2011. This trend is likely to continue with the number of two person households increasing demand for smaller accommodation.

#### Housing Growth Indicators

Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) provide an estimate of future housing need in Northern Ireland. The figures are based on current population/household formation trends and assume that these trends will continue into the future<sup>1</sup>.

The latest Housing Growth Figures based on 2015 projections predict that new dwelling requirement for Ards and North Down will be 8,190 by 2030 and the projected annual yield required to meet new dwelling requirement is 546.

Figure 5.3.3 Projected New Dwelling Requirement Ards and North Down 2015-2030

Projected Annual Yield	Projected New Dwelling Requirement 2015-2030
546	8,190

Source: Local Development Plan Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

#### Dwelling Completion Rates

In 2012, the projected annual dwelling completion rate was approximately 496 dwellings per annum based on dwelling completion data over 2010-11 to 2014-15<sup>2</sup>. Completion rates are based on historical trend data and therefore reflect economic conditions at the time. The latest dwelling completion rates for the Borough show a general increase in the number of dwellings completed since Q2 2015 with the highest number of dwellings being completed in Q1 2018<sup>3</sup>. In 2016 and 2017

<sup>1</sup> NISRA/ Land and Property Services, 2012 based Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs)

<sup>2</sup> NISRA/ Land and Property Services, 2012 based Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs)

<sup>3</sup> Land and Property Services, Northern Ireland New Dwelling Statistics, 2018

respectively the annual dwelling completion rate exceeded the 2015 projected annual yield rate of 546.

**Figure 5.3.4 New Dwelling Completions Ards and North Down (Q2 2015 - Q1 2018)**



Source: Land and Property Services, Northern Ireland New Dwelling Statistics, 2018

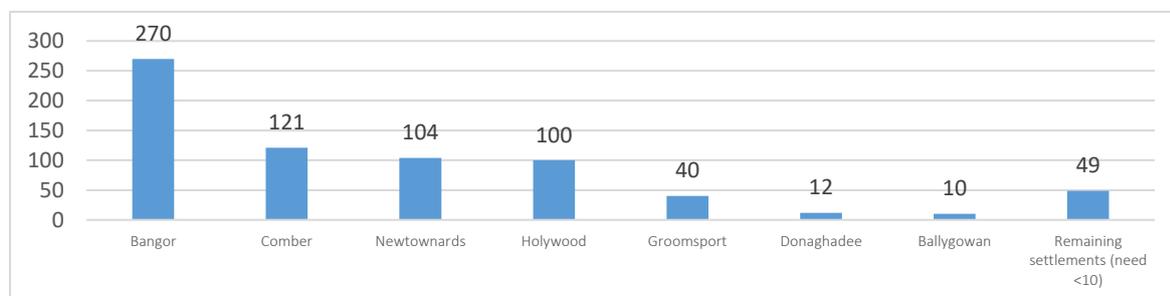
New dwelling development in Ards and North Down has been driven by the private sector with 72% of new dwellings between Q2 2015 - Q1 2018 being completed by this sector<sup>1</sup>.

#### Affordable Housing

Demand for affordable housing is prevalent in both Ards and North Down as indicated by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) waiting lists. In 2014, only 18.7% of those who applied for social housing in both legacy council areas were allocated housing. In March 2015, singles, the elderly and small families were reported to be in greatest housing need<sup>2</sup>.

The five-year assessment for 2017-2022 projects need for 702 new social dwellings in Ards and North Down. Housing need is highest in Bangor Urban, Comber and Newtownards, closely followed by Hollywood. The Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan notes that whilst affordable housing need is highest in Bangor Urban, due to popularity and growing population there is also need for additional housing across all tenures in this location<sup>3</sup>.

**Figure 5.3.5: Social Housing Need by Settlement in Ards and North Down 2017/22**



Source: Population Growth and Housing Position Paper

<sup>1</sup> Land and Property Services, Northern Ireland New Dwelling Statistics, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Local Development Plan Position Paper: Population Growth and Housing

<sup>3</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

There are a number of affordable housing schemes planned and started as part of the Social Housing Development Programme<sup>1</sup>. In March 2017, 636 units were onsite mainly across Bangor and Newtownards. Another 158 social housing units are planned within the 2017-2020 scheme<sup>2</sup>.

**Figure 5.3.6: Number of Affordable Housing Units Onsite and Planned 2017-2020**

Affordable Housing Schemes	Onsite March 2017	Planned 2017-2020	Total
<b>Units</b>	636	158	794

Source: NIHE

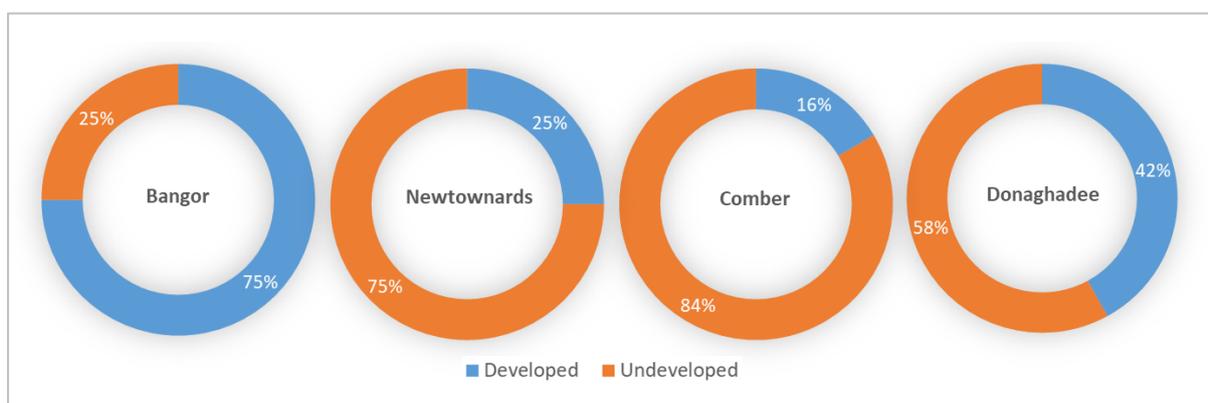
Ensuring there is land available to supply housing in areas of need has become more difficult, with NIHE reporting that in recent years areas of housing need have emerged in areas where NIHE does not own land. Groomspoint, Crawfordsburn and Helens Bay have been identified as areas where there is difficulty meeting demand due to lack of land availability<sup>3</sup>.

### Housing Supply and Distribution

Existing Development Plans within Ards and North Down define the Settlement Strategy for the Borough. The draft BMAP provides the Settlement Strategy for North Down. The Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP) is the adopted plan for Ards and its surroundings. Analysis of land for housing provision in 2017, showed that yields based on maximum gross density as set out in Key Design Considerations were often higher than yields identified in respective plans<sup>4</sup>.

Both development plans favoured focusing development in hubs and main settlements. Figure 5.3.7 shows the percentage of land allocated for housing that has been developed within the Boroughs four main towns. Bangor was most developed in terms of land allocated for housing with three quarters of land being developed. The least developed of the main towns was Comber.

**Figure 5.3.7: Percentage of Developed Land Allocated Within Main Towns 2017**



Source: Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

Analysis of land allocated for housing within existing development plans show that almost 80% of land allocated for housing within the draft BMAP was developed. Groomspoint had the highest levels of development with 100% of land allocated being developed within it. Land allocated within Crawfordsburn was 60% developed; which was the least developed of all the settlements, within the draft BMAP<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

<sup>3</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

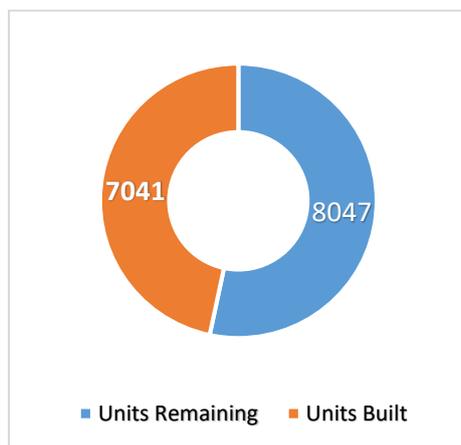
<sup>4</sup> Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population; Growth and Housing

<sup>5</sup> Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population; Growth and Housing

Land allocated for housing within the ADAP showed a mixed picture in terms of overall development. Ballywalter was the most developed with 100% of land allocated being developed. Kircubbin was the second highest location for development with 80% of land allocated being developed whilst Balloo and Greyabbey showed zero development of land allocated<sup>1</sup>.

Figure 5.3.8 shows the combined number of units built on allocated land within both area plans giving the total number of units built and units remaining within Ards and North Down Council Area.

**Figure 5.3.8: Number of Units Built within Zoned Land in Ards and North Down 2017**



Source: Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

Development trends show a decrease in the number of houses being built in rural areas and increase in the number of houses being built in urban settlements. Over the period 2013-2017, the number of houses built within urban areas had increased over the previous period 2008-2012 whilst the number of houses built in rural areas had decreased<sup>2</sup>.

**Figure 5.3.9 Houses Built within Ards and North Down 2008-2017**

Houses Built	2008-2012	2013-2017
Rural	437 (17%)	256 (9%)
Urban	2221 (83%)	2481 (91%)

Source: Land and Property Services

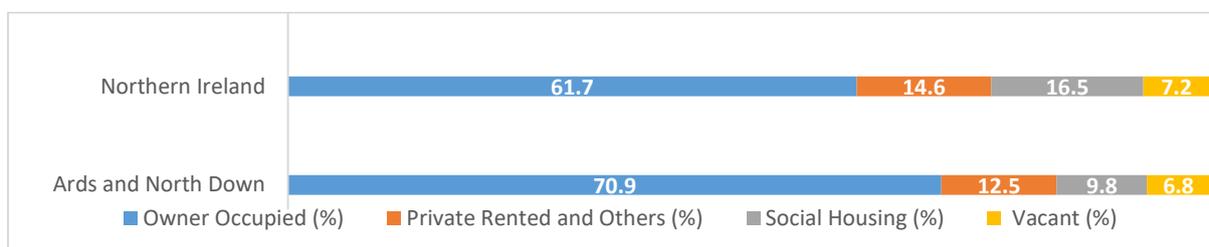
<sup>1</sup> Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population; Growth and Housing

<sup>2</sup> Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

### Tenure

In 2011, owner occupation accounted for just under 62% of housing tenure in Northern Ireland. The percentage of owner occupied properties in Ards and North Down accounted for approximately 71% of all housing stock indicating that a higher proportion of residents in Ards and North Down own their own homes compared to the NI average<sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 5.3.10 Ards and North Down Dwelling Tenure 2011**



Source: NISRA

Trends between 2006 and 2011 show a decline in owner occupation in Northern Ireland whilst in 2013/14 figures from the continuous Household Survey show continued growth in the private rented sector<sup>2</sup>

Whilst owner occupation accounts for the largest proportion of dwelling tenure in Ards and North Down the private rented sector plays a key role in meeting housing needs of younger households and those priced out of the housing market. Demand for affordable housing also contributes to demand in the private rented sector where demand for affordable housing outstrips supply<sup>3</sup>.

### Affordability

Housing affordability is determined by price, average incomes and access to borrowing<sup>4</sup>. Generally, reports suggest that housing in Northern Ireland is showing steady growth with Ulster University reporting a 6% increase in house prices in Q3 2017 over 12 months<sup>5</sup>. For the same period Ards and North Down experienced a 5.9% increase in house price with the standardised house price for the Borough reported to be £150,733, the second highest standardised house price in Northern Ireland<sup>6</sup>.

Data available for North Down shows that the average house price in Q1 2018 was £186,416 and the most popular property type was apartment with sales increasing more than any other property type in North Down<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 5.3.11: North Down Average House Price at Q1 2018**

Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
£163,621	£186,416

Source: Ulster University

In 2017, Market research showed that Ards and North Down had the largest rental market outside Belfast with 1199 rental transactions in the first half of 2017. The average monthly rent was £609 above the NI average of £595<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> NISRA, Dwelling Tenure (administrative geographies) 2011

<sup>2</sup> Northern Ireland Housing Market Review & Perspectives 2015-2018

<sup>3</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

<sup>4</sup> Local Development Plan – Position Paper Population Growth and Housing

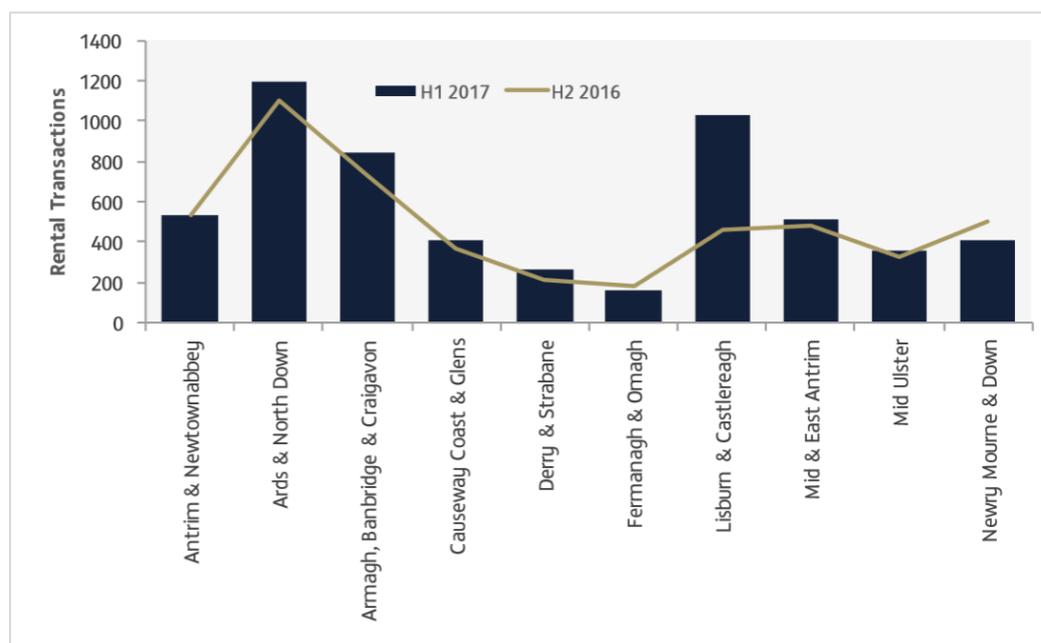
<sup>5</sup> Ulster University, Northern Ireland Quarterly House Price Index Q3 2017

<sup>6</sup> Ulster University, Northern Ireland Quarterly House Price Index Q3 2017

<sup>7</sup> Ulster University, Northern Ireland Quarterly House Price Index Q1 2018

<sup>8</sup> Ulster University Performance of the Private Rental Market January-June 2017

Figure 5.3.12: Rental Transactions by Council 2017



Source: Ulster University, Performance of the Private Rental Market January-June 2017

### Affordable Housing

Increasing the supply of affordable housing and assisting in home ownership is essential to the long term objectives of the Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan 2017. The affordable housing sector comprises of the social rented sector, private rental funded by housing benefit and co ownership/help to buy housing.

In 2017, there were 10,590 benefit claimants in Ards and North Down with 4,439 of claimants living in the private rented sector. Over the past five years, the number of benefit claimants in the private sector has remained around 4,500 with no significant decrease<sup>1</sup>.

Co Ownership approvals within Ards and North Down have decreased year on year since 2013 with 82 approvals being granted in 2016/17 compared to 145 in 2013/14<sup>2</sup>.

### Vacancy Rates and Unfitness

Vacancy rates are often an indicator of stock condition and the availability of existing housing stock. Dwellings unfit for habitation and second homes that are unoccupied contribute to vacancy rates reducing the supply of available housing.

Figure 5.3.13 Vacancy Rates by Dwelling Tenure in Ards and North Down 2016

Ards and North Down	Owner Occupied %	Private Rented %	Social Housing %
<b>Vacancy Rate</b>	72	15	12

Source: Northern Ireland Stock Condition Survey 2016

Between 2011 and 2016 there was a decrease in the rate of unfitness of Northern Ireland's housing stock from 4.6% to 2.1%<sup>3</sup>. Trends also showed that dwellings in rural locations were more likely to be unfit with two thirds of all unfit dwellings in Northern Ireland being located in the rural areas.

<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update, 2017

<sup>3</sup> NIHE, Northern Ireland Stock Condition Survey 2016

In 2016, 72% of owner occupied properties in Ards and North Down were vacant which could be linked to the number of second homes within the Borough. The social sector had the lowest proportion of vacancies in Ards and North Down in 2016 followed by the Private sector.

#### Fuel Poverty

A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory level of heating, (21°C in the main living area and 18°C in other occupied rooms), it is required to spend in excess of 10% of its household income on all fuel. This definition of Fuel poverty is based on the 10% methodology as defined in the Northern Ireland Stock Condition Survey 2016<sup>1</sup>.

Key findings of the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey 2016 show a reduction in fuel poverty and improvements in energy efficiency of households in Northern Ireland<sup>2</sup>.

In 2016, 20% of households in Ards and North Down were living in fuel poverty a decrease of 17% since 2006. In 2017, 4740 approvals were issued to private households in Ards and North Down to assist with insulation and heating measures under the Affordable Warmth Scheme<sup>3</sup>.

In 2012, 48.4% of dwellings within Ards and North Down had an A-C energy rating, 42.3% of dwellings had a band D rating, 8.6% of dwellings had a band E rating and less than 1% fell within F-G band<sup>4</sup>.

#### Deprivation - Living Environment Rankings

Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017 explore the relative deprivation measures of small geographical areas known as super output areas (SOAs). There are 890 super output areas in NI, of which 86 are located in Ards and North Down.

Deprivation measures are grouped into seven domains. The *Living Environment* domain identifies the prevalence of shortcomings in the quality of housing, access to suitable housing and physical environment.

There are six SOAs within Ards and North Down that are ranked in the top 100 most deprived in terms of living environment and Harbour 1 is the most deprived SOA within the Borough.

**Figure 5.3.14: Top 11 Living Environment domain rankings for Ards & North Down**

Super Output Area	Living Environment Ranking
Harbour 1	21
Cultra	43
Bryansburn	47
Killinchy	60
Harbour 2	64
Hollywood Demesne	91

Source: NISRA – NI Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017

#### 5.3.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

The draft BMAP and ADAP were not prepared in the context of the Ards and North Down Borough area. These plans are unlikely to reflect the current needs of residents, or support delivery of the Community Plan. In the absence of a new plan, there is a risk that policies and development would not reflect the needs of the future residents. A new plan would bring an opportunity to develop a plan led system able to reflect the most recent strategies. In the absence of a new plan, there may be less

<sup>1</sup> NIHE, Northern Ireland Stock Condition Survey 2016

<sup>2</sup> NIHE, Northern Ireland Stock Condition Survey 2016

<sup>3</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

<sup>4</sup> Northern Ireland Stock Condition Survey 2016

opportunity to consider zonings for housing in the context of current conditions and to design sustainable housing that accommodates existing and predicted demography.

#### 5.3.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Housing

- The growing aging population combined with the decreasing household size will increase demand for smaller households.
- Increasing demand for smaller accommodation could lead to lack of supply and make smaller accommodation less affordable.
- The declining rural population and increased pressure for housing in urban areas could increase the rural isolation felt by some communities.
- Affordable housing need is highest in Bangor Urban although there is also need for additional housing across all tenures in this location<sup>1</sup>.
- Lack of land availability in areas of high demand could lead to unaffordability in some areas.
- 20% of households within Ards and North Down experience fuel poverty.
- Areas of deprivation in terms of living environment were identified in MDMNI 2017.
- In recent years, affordable housing need in Ards and North Down has been delivered by housing associations on Housing Executive land. Increasingly, areas of housing need are emerging in locations where the Housing Executive does not own land.
- Demand for affordable housing that is not available could lead to increased demand in the private rented sector which could lead to affordability issues.
- Some sites zoned for housing within the Borough have had zero development, identifying why land has gone undeveloped may be necessary when considering future land zoning.

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Housing Investment Plan Annual Update 2017

## 5.4 Education and Skills

### 5.4.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Education and skills takes account of learning from primary to third level education, in addition to vocational training. Good educational and skills outcomes support people to succeed economically, have better life chances and can enable opportunities for better health.

Low educational attainment and low skills levels significantly constrain life chances and increase the risk of poverty and poor health. Significant inequality in educational attainment exists within NI. Access to high quality education and skills training can be increased through cooperation between statutory agencies and other institutions. Overarching policies recognise that the education and skills levels of the population must improve in order meet the needs of communities and businesses. This will allow businesses to make use of opportunities for regional and global trade, and will help create conditions for increased high quality employment.

Education is one of the most significant investments in developing the individual, society and the economy. The overall vision of the Department of Education (DE) is to see *'every young person achieving to his or her full potential at each stage of his or her development'*.

In recent years there have been a number of influential publications which challenged all those involved in the education sector to consider new approaches. This includes sharing of facilities, which would promote a more cohesive and tolerant society and may provide a better use of the resources available to education.

In 2009, the DE introduced the 'Sustainable Schools Policy'. This was followed in 2011 by an area planning process, designed to address the long-term primary school needs from 2012-2025. The overall output of these is the assessment of schools against a set of criteria for sustainable enrolment levels, delivery of quality education and financial sustainability.

The 'Providing Pathways - Strategic Area Plan for Schools 2017-2020' identifies the challenges for the education system throughout each Local Government District area. Area planning aims to establish a network of viable schools that are of the right type, the right size, located in the right place, and have a focus on raising standards. The aim of area planning is to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum in sustainable, fit-for-purpose schools. The Education Authority (EA), in partnership with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, Controlled Schools' Support Council, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, Governing Bodies Association, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education, Catholic Schools' Trustee Service and the Further Education sector publishes an annual Action Plan to identify area planning solutions within each Council.

The draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-2021 has 14 outcomes, of which some are directly linked to the provision of a good education system. Some of these outcomes aim for *'more people in better jobs'*, and ensuring *'children and young people have the best start in life'*. Indicators for achieving these outcomes include reducing educational inequalities and improving the quality of education across NI.

Within a land use planning context, LDPs should allocate sufficient land to meet the anticipated educational needs of the community. They should recognise town centres as important hubs for a range of uses, including education. Within a rural context, policy requires that people who live in the countryside should also have opportunities to access high quality education and learning.

The Ards and North Down Borough's Corporate Plan 2015-19 recognises that the area has a higher proportion of degree qualified residents than anywhere else in NI. One of the Corporate Plan's objectives, *'Prosperity'*, aims to make the Borough *'prosperous, vibrant and attractive'* while its overall purpose is to make Ards and North Down *'the best place to live, work, visit and invest'*. The Plan refers to measures of success in achieving this objective, which include level of inward investment, the

number of new business start-ups and jobs created, as well as the level of work experience opportunities for young people. These measures apply to both urban and rural areas and are largely dependent upon a well-educated and skilled workforce.

Access to high quality education is also identified as an important outcome within the Borough's Community Plan, *'The Big Plan'*. It emphasises the importance of educational attainment in creating prosperous communities and improving well-being. The Plan aims to address deprivation and to increase economic opportunities through improved access to employment and skills training. Part of the Plan's Vision is, *'to have empowered, resilient individuals and communities'* which would be supported by well-educated residents. The Plan has placed education and skills at its core by aspiring *'for people through all stages of life to gain the educational and life skills needed for learning, life and work.'*

#### 5.4.2 Baseline Information

A baseline of information is also presented in the LDP Position Paper 'Population Growth and Housing Uses'. This topic overlaps with the Health and Wellbeing, Community, Economy and Employment and Transport and Accessibility topics. The distribution of schools and colleges in the Borough is shown in Figure 5.4.1.

##### *Pre-school Education*

There are six nursery schools or units within the Borough and 35 pre-schools<sup>1</sup>. Nursery schools provide pre-school education for children in their immediate pre-school year. Pre-schools are private or voluntary education settings which may also provide funded pre-school education places. Figure 5.4.1 shows that nursery schools are located only in the three main settlements, plus one at Kircubbin. While pre-schools are more widely distributed, including in the smaller settlements, there is limited provision in the south of the Borough and children may have to travel considerable distances to reach their nearest pre-school.

##### *Primary School Education*

'Providing Pathways<sup>2</sup>' states that the Borough's population in the age range 0-15 years is projected to decrease by 2.3% by 2024.

Primary education in ANDBC is provided by 45 primary schools along with two preparatory schools. Around a quarter of these (12) are in Bangor, which Providing Pathways notes is the fifth largest urban area in NI. 'Providing Pathways' also identifies that in the 2015-16 year, which forms the baseline for the report, there were 12,393 enrolments at primary level across the Borough. Around 14% of the total approved enrolments (1,981 available places) were unfilled. This proportion is the lowest of all the LGDs in NI (NI average 22%) and the Annual Action Plan 2018/19 has indicated that there are no key issues in terms of primary school provision in the LGD. The Action Plan has, however, identified a need to consolidate current learning support and autism-specific provision.

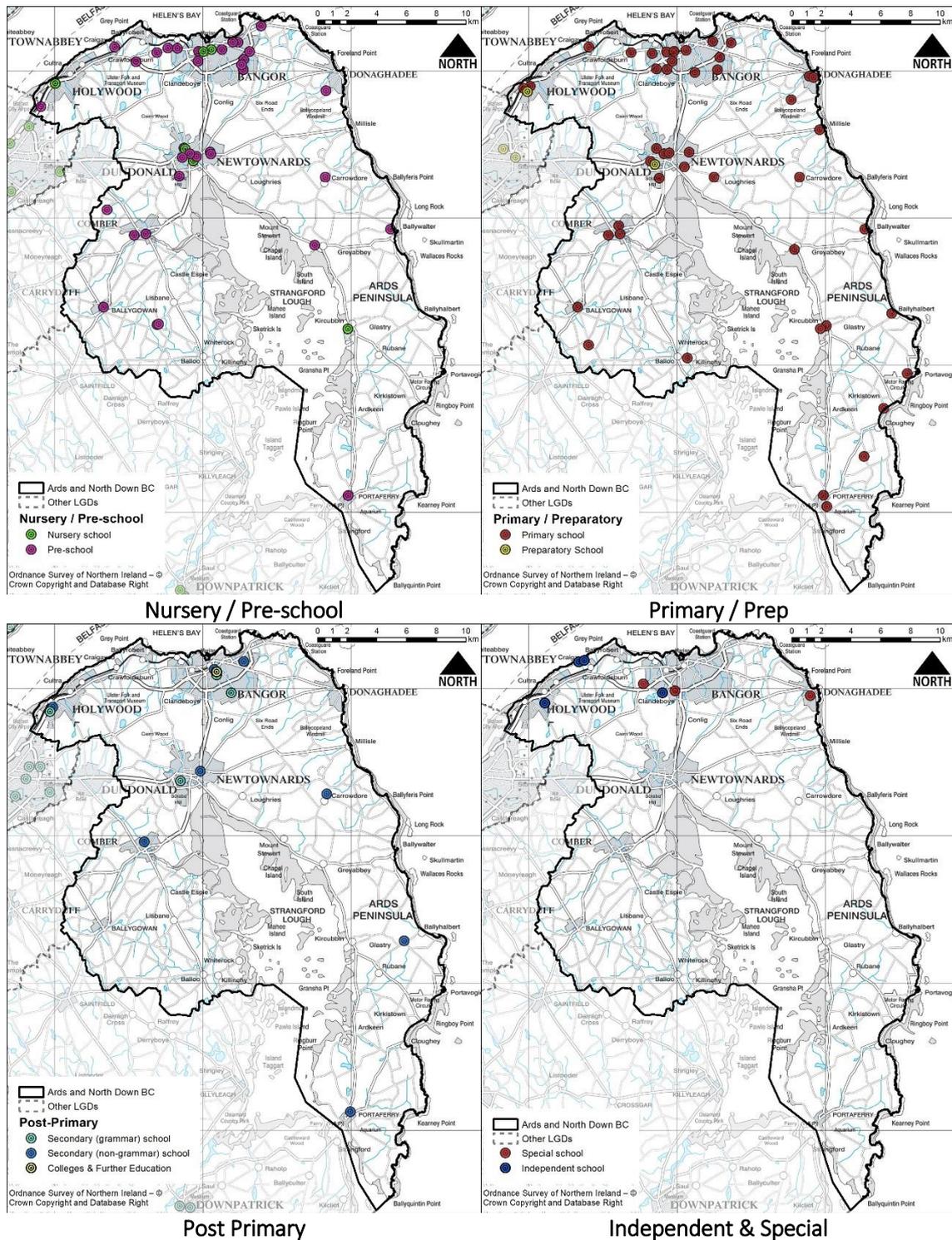
The Borough's four independent schools also provide education for 4-11 year olds, but as these schools receive no funding from the Education Authority, they are not included in the Action Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Education (NI) Schools+ database (via Opendata NI, Updated July 2017)

<sup>2</sup> Education Authority (NI) (2017) 'Providing Pathways' – Strategic Area Plan 2017-2020.

Figure 5.4.1: Spatial distribution of education establishments in Ards and North Down Council.



Source: Spatial NI (Department of Education) & Opendata NI Location of Schools

### Post Primary Education

Providing Pathways has indicated that the Borough’s population in the age range 16-19 years is projected to increase by 0.9% by 2024.

There are twelve post-primary schools in the Borough, six of which are within the settlements of Bangor and Hollywood. The four independent schools described in the previous section also enrol post-primary age pupils, but are not included in the Education Authority’s strategic area plans.

'Providing Pathways' reported 9,126 enrolments for the year 2015/6 out of a total of 9,525 approved places. However, this overall figure does not reflect the more localised issues that are occurring within the LGD. In May 2018 it was reported<sup>1</sup> that a large number of pupils resident in the Borough were not able to obtain Year 7 school places at their nearest school when transitioning into post-primary education. Actual enrolments at the voluntary and integrated schools in the Borough are in some cases more than 100 pupils over the approved enrolment, while enrolments at Movilla High School (Newtownards) and St Columba's College (Portaferry) are in the region of 400 pupils beneath the approved enrolment number. The EA Annual Action Plans have identified that sustainability of school provision is an issue at these two schools. The 2018/19 Action Plan has also identified that the provision of school places is a key issue at Strangford Integrated College.

### *Further & Higher Education*

South Eastern Regional College (SERC) has eight campuses located across the south-east region. There are two main campuses in the Borough, at Bangor and Newtownards, plus an out-centre at Hollywood. SERC works in collaboration with over 20 schools in the South East Region to deliver professional and technical courses as part of the Entitlement Framework. SERC also works with many community and statutory organisations to deliver courses in community centres, schools, halls and clubs.

### *Special Education*

There are three special schools in the Borough. Clifton School provides for pupils with severe learning difficulties from pre-school to Key Stage 5. Killard House provides for pupils with moderate learning difficulties from pre-school to Key Stage 4. Lakewood School provides for pupils with behavioural difficulties for Key Stages 3 and 4. The 2018/19 Action Plan has identified key issues with the nature and extent of current provision in two of the three special schools.

Pupils with special needs living in the south of the Borough, especially those in the south west, may have to travel considerable distances to attend the schools that can accommodate their requirements.

### *NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017*

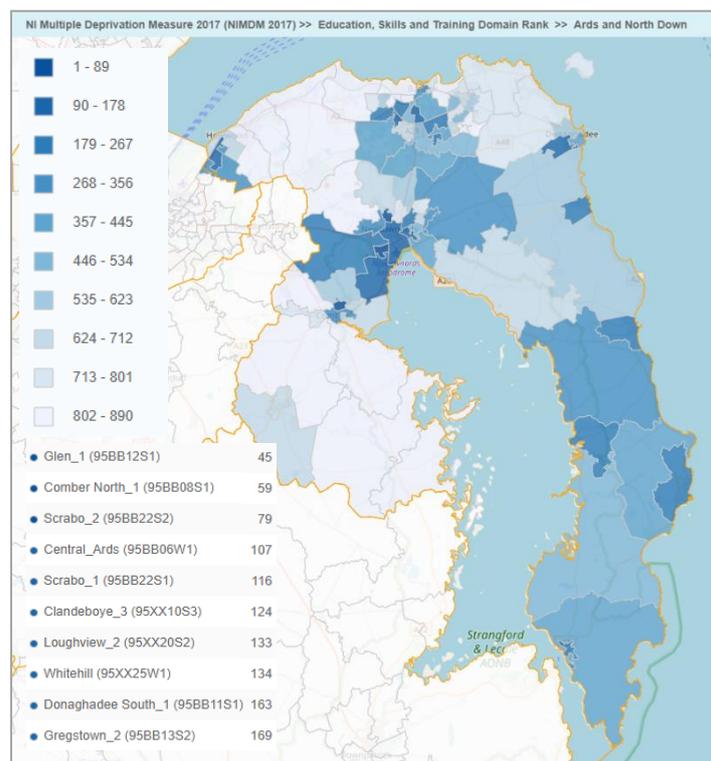
The Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain in the NIMDM 2017 identifies the prevalence of poor educational outcomes for children and low levels of qualifications for working age adults. The indicators used in the ranking of this domain include:

- Proportions of pupils attending special schools or attending primary school with Special Educational Needs stage 3-5;
- Absenteeism at primary schools;
- Proportions of school leavers not achieving 5 or more GCSEs at A\*- C (and equivalent) incl. English and Maths;
- Proportions of those leaving school ages 16, 17 and 18 and not entering Education, Employment or Training;
- Proportions of 18-21 year olds not enrolled in Higher Education courses;
- Proportions of pupils attending special schools or who are attending post-primary schools with special educational needs stages 3-5;
- Absenteeism at post-primary schools; and
- Proportions of working age adults (25-64) with no or low levels of qualification.

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<sup>1</sup> BBC News NI 21 May 2018 "Bangor Pupils face hour-long school journey" <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-44194655>

Figure 5.4.2: NIMDM 2017 Education, Skills and Training Domain Rank (Super Output Areas) for Ards and North Down



Source: NISRA NIMDM 2017 SOA Level Results Interactive Maps - Education, Skills and Training Domain (Super Output Areas)

Figure 5.4.2 shows the NIMDM 2017 rank for Super Output Areas in Ards and North Down for the Education, Skills and Training deprivation domain. The figure shows that, generally speaking, the east of the Borough and the Ards peninsula are ranked higher / more deprived (the darker blue colours) than the north and west. It also shows that the most deprived SOAs (top quintile, ranks 1 - 178) are within the main towns of Bangor, Comber, Holywood and Newtownards, however Donaghadee also features.

### Educational Attainment

Educational attainment in Ards and North Down is above average for the NI LGDs, with Table 5.4.1 showing that almost two thirds (64.2%) of school leavers in 2016/17 had 2+ 'A' Levels A\* to E versus the NI average of 58.5% in 2016/17. However, across the Borough there is significant variation in educational attainment. The indicators used in the NIMDM 2017 show that while six SOAs have 10% or less of their school leavers leaving with fewer than 5 GCSE passes, 28 SOAs, shown in Figure 5.4.3, have more than 40% of pupils leaving school with fewer than 5 GCSEs (including English and Maths). There were three SOAs with more than 60% of school leavers receiving fewer than five GCSEs.

Table 5.4.1: Qualifications of school leavers by 2014 district council of pupil residence 2016/2017<sup>(1) (3)</sup>

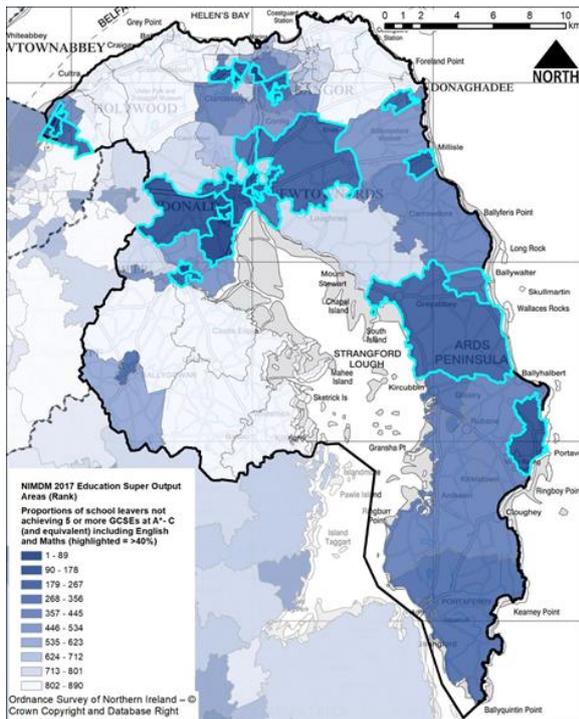
	2+ A-levels A*-E <sup>(2)</sup>	5+ GCSEs A*-C <sup>(2)</sup>	5+ GCSEs A*-C <sup>(2)</sup> inc. GCSE English and Maths
Ards and North Down	64.2	86.9	74.2
NI Total	58.5	83.8	69.6

1. Excludes special and independent schools

2. Includes equivalent qualifications

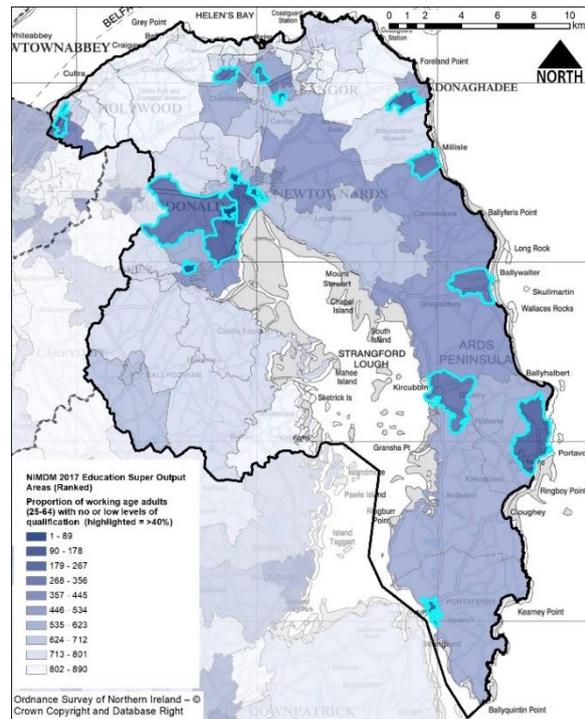
3. District Council of pupil residence is based on the residential postcode of each individual pupil

Source: NISRA 2016/17 statistical bulletin Qualifications & destinations of Northern Ireland school leavers table 2016/17 published: 31.05.18



**Figure 5.4.3 NIMDM 2017 SOA Proportions of school leavers not achieving 5 or more GCSEs at A\*-C (and equivalent) including English and Maths**  
(For 2014/15 to 2015/16 academic years). Highlights show areas in excess of 40%.

Source: NISRA - Deprivation Education, Skills and Training Indicators - NIMDM 2017 (statistical geographies) - Table view.



**Figure 5.4.4: NIMDM 2017 SOA Proportion of working age adults (25-64) with no or low levels of qualification**  
(Derived from Census 2011). Highlights show areas in excess of 40%

### Skills Level of Working age population

ANDBC has amongst the highest proportion (36% in 2016<sup>1</sup>) of resident 16-64 year olds with a qualification at or above NVQ level 4 of all the LGDs (NI 31%) and the lowest (11%) with no Qualifications (NI 16%). However, the NIMDM 2017 also demonstrates that there is a significant variation across the Borough in the proportion of the population with 'no or low levels of qualifications' (NVQ Level 1 / equivalent or none). In 17 of the Borough's SOAs, more than 40% of the working age population have no or low levels of qualification, shown in Figure 5.4.4.

### 5.4.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline within the Local Development Plan

Without a new LDP there may be fewer opportunities to look at settlement pattern and school sustainability or to help facilitate skills training and further education in areas of greatest need.

### 5.4.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Education and Skills

- A number of post-primary schools are facing sustainability challenges.
- The current Strategic Area Plan has identified potential for Irish Medium and Integrated school development.
- The current Strategic Area Plan has also identified potential for shared education solutions which provide sustainable schools.
- Although the council area has a high level of educational achievement in comparison to the NI average, this is not consistent across the Borough.
- Sharing facilities has been recognised as a way to promote a more cohesive and tolerant society and make better use of the resources available to education.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Labour Force Survey, Local Area Database 2016

## 5.5 Economy and Employment

### 5.5.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Creating the conditions to achieve and maintain stable economic growth are key aims of all relevant strategies locally, regionally and within a European context. Economic growth is driven by a healthy business sector, which itself relies on a base of high quality education, and delivery of relevant skills to the workforce.

The common thread of relevant economic policies is to achieve sustainable growth of the economy. In particular, policy recognises the priority in Northern Ireland (NI) to raise competitiveness through increased export, and to identify opportunities in new, emerging and developed markets. The need to support the development of a more innovation-based economy is also identified and this links to a high potential for research and development. The Draft Northern Ireland Tourism Strategy 2020 was identified in the PfG as one of the ‘building blocks’ to underpin the first strategic priority of growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future.

Within current planning policy, it is recognised that planning authorities should take a positive approach to sustainable economic development and enable job creation, giving priority to large scale proposals with job creation potential, through zoning land and promoting developments in settlement hubs. Policy also refers to the importance of creating the right conditions for investment through supporting urban and rural renaissance, ensuring that settlements remain vital. In terms of regional policy there is a recognition that accessible land should be made available to promote job creation and to promote sustainable economic growth at key locations. The Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development in Ards and North Down 2018 - 2030, identifies the key assets of the Borough, as well as economic and environmental challenges faced at local and regional level. It presents a confident and ambitious plan for the future.

The purpose of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2015-19 is to make Ards and North Down the best place to live, work, visit and invest. Its objectives include ‘ensuring the Borough’s towns and rural localities are prosperous, vibrant and attractive’. Overarching goals for ‘prosperity’ are to:

- Attract and promote economic investment;
- Support business start-up, development and growth;
- Enhance the visitor experience to increase visitor spend; and
- Develop a thriving rural economy.

A prosperous economy is an important outcome of ‘*The Big Plan*’ 2017 - 2032. The plan emphasises the importance of addressing deprivation through a prosperous economy. The fourth outcome of ‘*The Big Plan*’ is to ensure that all people in the Borough will benefit from a prosperous economy. The plan focuses on the potential to develop economic opportunities within the Borough. Attractive town and village centres and access to leisure and tourist facilities is an important aspect of this outcome. The plan recognises the importance of improved infrastructure and digital communication in supporting new business development opportunities.

### 5.5.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in a number of Local Development Plan Position Papers, including ‘Employment and Industry’, ‘Town Centres and Retailing’, ‘Tourism’ and ‘The Coast’. Data have also been sourced from NISRA, the NINIS and the Department for Economy. This topic overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Natural Resources, Physical Resources and Historic Environment topics.

## Overview

Ards and North Down is one of the smallest Council areas in NI, comprising approximately 3.4% of NI's total land area. However, it provides services to over 160,000<sup>1</sup> residents, (around 8.5% of the total NI population) and has more than 115 miles of coastline.

The RDS identifies Newtownards as the main gateway / hub in the Council, although a small portion of the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area extends into the Borough. AND Council identifies Bangor and Newtownards as the Borough's strategic locations for employment/industrial development in the 'Employment and Industry' Position Paper. As will be further discussed in Chapter 5.8, 'Transport', there are no RDS Key Transport Corridors in the Borough, although a Link Corridor exists between Belfast and Newtownards. There is also a railway link between Bangor and Belfast. The RDS also identifies Strangford Lough and Coast as a Strategic Natural Resource.

## Economic Activity and Employment

Economic well-being is discussed in detail in the Baseline report for 'The Big Plan'<sup>2</sup>. It reports that in 2015 the economic activity rate in the council (78%) was higher than the NI average (73%) and this has continued to be the case for the most recently published figures (2017)<sup>3</sup>.

The 'Employment and Industry' LDP position Paper notes that, Based upon 2014 projections, the number of residents at working age (16-64) will fall by 6% between 2014 and 2030; potentially resulting in a decline in the number of residents in employment at the end of the Plan period, should current employment rates remain constant.

The average number of people aged 16-64 in Ards and North Down claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in 2016 was 2,558, representing a claimant count annual average rate of 2.6%. This compares with a claimant count rate for Northern Ireland of 3.1% in 2016. However, the proportion of young people (aged 18-24) in the Borough claiming JSA was considerably higher at 23.4% (NI: 25.0%)<sup>4</sup>.

## Employment and Income Deprivation

NISRA publishes spatially linked statistics on deprivation as part of the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure, the most recent of which was published in 2017 (NIMDM2017). In total, seven deprivation indicators make up the overall NIMDM, including the 'Employment Deprivation Domain' and the 'Income Deprivation Domain'. Each Super Output Area (SOA) and Small Area (SA)<sup>5</sup> has been ranked against all the other SOAs and SAs in NI, to determine their relative position on the scale in terms of each indicator. It should be noted that the NIMDM 2017 is a relative measure of deprivation, meaning that it is possible to say that one area is more or less deprived than another, but it is not possible to say by how much.

'Employment Deprivation' rankings are calculated on the basis of the proportion of working age population in the SOA or SA who are in receipt of at least one employment related benefit, and individuals who are not in receipt of the selected benefits, nor have received income from employment<sup>6</sup>. Figure 5.5.1 shows the pattern of employment deprivation in the SAs across Ards and North Down from the NIMDM2017. The darkest blue colours (ranks 1-454) show the most deprived SAs in NI in terms of the employment deprivation indicator and the lightest colours (4,804-4,537) are the least deprived.

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<sup>1</sup> NISRA 2016-based Population Projections for Areas within Northern Ireland Date Published: 26 April 2018

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Community Planning. Collecting the evidence: The Big Conversation and our statistical baseline. Print Friendly statistical baseline.

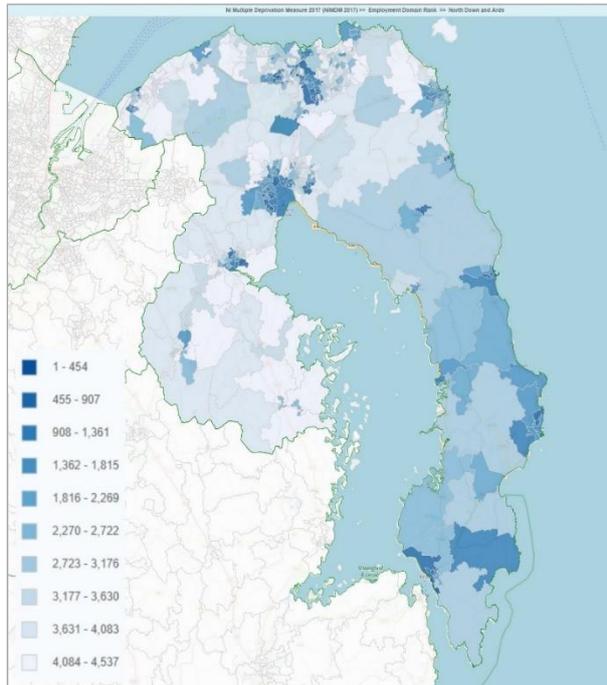
<sup>3</sup> NISRA Labour Force Survey Tables for Local Government Districts 2009-2017 published 29 May 2018

<sup>4</sup> Economic and Labour Market Profile for Ards And North Down Local Government District

<sup>5</sup> Super Output Areas (SOA) and Small Areas (SA) are statistical geography boundaries created by NISRA to allow the reporting of small area statistics. There are 890 SOAs in NI and 4537 SAs.

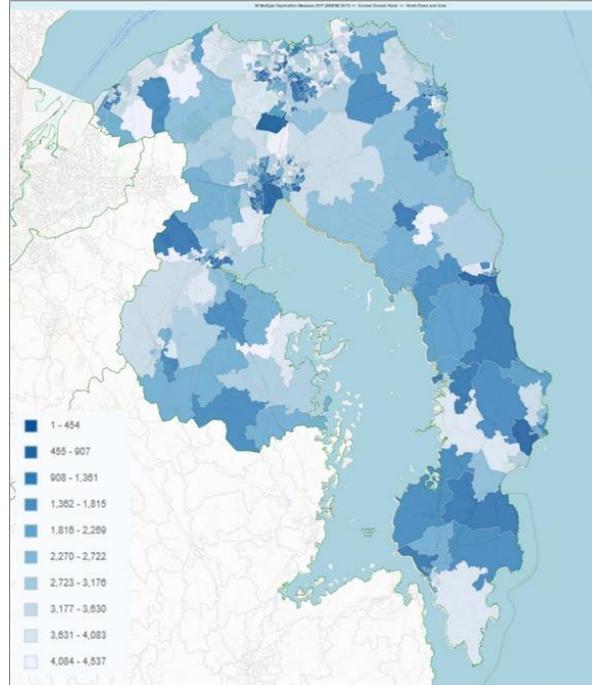
<sup>6</sup> NISRA (2017) Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017 Description of Indicators

Figure 5.5.1: NIMDM 2017 Employment Domain Rank for SAs in Ards and North Down



Source: NIMDM2017 Small Area interactive maps on NINIS

Figure 5.5.2: NIMDM 2017 Income Domain Rank for SAs in Ards and North Down.



It can be seen in this that the SAs in the Ards peninsula generally have greater employment deprivation than the north and east of the Borough. The ten most employment deprived areas in the Borough are in urban areas of Bangor, Newtownards, Donaghadee and Portaferry. However, none of the SAs in Ards and North Down are within the top 100 (out of 4,537) most deprived areas of NI in terms of employment. Eleven SAs in Ards and North Down are included in the 100 least deprived areas for employment (i.e. a rank higher than 4,437).

'Income Deprivation' rankings are calculated on the basis of the proportion of the population living in households whose equivalised income is below 60% of the NI median. Figure 5.5.2 shows the income deprivation pattern across Ards and North Down.

The figure shows that income deprivation in Ards and North Down is spread across both rural and urban areas, with many of the SAs shown in Figure 5.5.2 having the darkest blue colours. However, the top 10 most income deprived small areas are in urban areas of Bangor, Newtownards and Donaghadee. Four of these are in the top 100 (out of 4,537) most income deprived SAs of NI. Five SAs in Ards and North Down are among the 100 least deprived areas for income (i.e. a rank higher than 4,437).

### *Employment Sectors*

The Employment and Industry LDP position paper identifies that the tertiary (service) sector dominates the local employment market in terms of jobs and the number of VAT/PAYE registered businesses. On the Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) 2018, 88% of the businesses in the Borough are considered to be micro-businesses, with <9 employees, 10% are small businesses (10-49 employees), 1% are medium businesses and 0.2% are large businesses (>250 employees). Just under a quarter (23%) of employee jobs in the Borough are in the public sector<sup>1</sup>.

Para. 9.15 of the position paper notes that while NI is a global leader in many manufacturing sub-sectors, jobs within the manufacturing sector remain modest and reflective of historic downturn within this sector on the basis of wider economies of scale and job displacement. It forecasts predict substantial growth in aerospace, agri-food and sustainable energy by 2020. The Borough has a portfolio of top performing companies across these sectors.

In 2015 there were estimated to be 11,000 self-employed persons in the Borough<sup>2</sup>, representing 16% of those in employment (NI 14%). The IDBR recorded 4,555 registered businesses in Ards and North Down in 2017 (up from 4,285 in 2015). This represents 6% of all businesses in NI<sup>3</sup>. Of these, 13% were in the Agriculture sector (NI 25%).

Para. 9.19 states that rural - based enterprise is clearly important to the Borough, as is fishing. Fishing has been a major industry in the area for many years with local communities (such as at Portavogie) remaining at the centre of the trade today.

The paper recognises that, in the context of the labour market, there are relationships evident between Ards and North Down and other neighbouring council areas, particularly Belfast City. Belfast City Council is where many residents of Ards and North Down commute to and from where much of the Borough's workforce also commutes from. The paper recognises that connectivity to the transport network has a key role in improving sustainability and accessibility of employment in the Borough.

The Council's Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development has placed a focus on attracting businesses involved in the ICT, Professional, Scientific and Technical, Financial/Insurance and Administration/Support sectors as well as sectors that will support enhanced tourism performance (e.g. Arts, Entertainment and Recreation and Accommodation/Food).

### *Earnings from Employment*

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings<sup>4</sup> by Local Government Districts is published by NISRA. The 2018 (provisional) survey results gave the value for those persons living in Ards and North Down a median gross annual salary of £20,769 (down 1.3% from £21,042 in 2017), which is fifth lowest of all the LGDs. The median gross annual salary for all of NI in 2018 was £22,016. The median gross annual salary in 2018 for those working in the Borough was £17,496, considerably lower than for those living in the Borough and the lowest of all the NI LGDs. This discrepancy in earnings between those living and working in the Borough is due to a tendency for workers to commute out of the Borough for higher earning employment.

### *Business Start-ups and Success*

The Office for National Statistics publishes an annual bulletin of Business Demography<sup>5</sup> which presents the number of active enterprises and charts the births of new enterprises, and deaths of enterprises. The number of enterprises active in Ards and North Down in 2017 was 4,530 - an

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<sup>1</sup> NISRA Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2017 published 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018

<sup>2</sup> Invest NI Council Area Profile for Ards and North (published July 2017 (accessed 20/12/2018))

<sup>3</sup> The IDBR excludes smaller businesses and the self-employed who fall below the VAT registered/PAYE thresholds.

<sup>4</sup> Department for the Economy Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings by NI geographies (Provisional), by place of work and place of residence, 2018. Date published: 25 October 2018

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics 'Business demography, UK: 2017' (published 21 November 2018)

increase of 210 over the previous year. The five-year survival rate for businesses established in the Council area in 2012 was 43.9% (NI 44.7%) and there was minimal difference in the survival rates of businesses located the former districts of North Down and Ards. In 2017, 500 new business start-ups were recorded, slightly below the average of the other Council areas outside Belfast but a significant increase on the years 2012-14 which averaged around 335.

In general, business start-up rates for Northern Ireland are relatively low in comparison to other parts of the UK. The Corporate Plan has amongst its aims *'to create opportunities for local people and local communities to thrive by supporting sustainable economic growth over time'*.

### *Innovation*

It is widely recognised that improving the ability of the economy in NI to be innovative is a key factor in improving economic growth and employment. The most recent innovation figures are published in the UK Innovation Survey (UKIS) 2017<sup>1</sup>. These show that in 2014-16, fewer NI businesses were innovation active than in 2012-14. 40% of enterprises in NI were estimated to be innovation active in the three year period 2014-16 (down from 45% in 2012-14). This is lower than the equivalent UK figure of 50%, which has also decreased from 53% in 2012-14. NI remains among the least innovation active regions of the UK. Across the UK, large enterprises with 250 or more employees are currently reported as being more likely to engage in some sort of innovation activity, with 63% innovation active, as opposed to 49% of Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Internal R&D and investment in computer software were the main factors driving innovation in the UK as a whole for the most recent survey period 2014-2016.

### *Competitiveness*

No data is available at Council level on levels of competitiveness. Total external sales by companies in NI to markets outside of NI were estimated to be worth £24.1 billion in 2016<sup>2</sup>, representing an increase of 4.2% (£1 billion) from 2014. These figures are broken down as £18.8 billion (78.0%) for goods (an increase of 2.9% on 2015) and £5.3 billion (22.0%) for services (an increase of 9.1% over 2015). These figures exceed the previously recorded peak in 2014 (£22.7 billion), and external sales are therefore at their highest level since 2011. External sales account for just over a third (34.9%) of all sales by companies in NI in 2016 (£68.9 billion).

### *Retailing*

The Council has a hierarchy with Primary Retail Cores and Town Centres at Bangor, Holywood and Newtownards. In addition to these main centres, Town Centres are also identified at Comber and Donaghadee. Two District Centres and two Local Centres are also indicated in the 'Town Centres and Retailing' LDP Position Paper. In addition to the district centres there are two further 'out of centre' retail parks also located in the Borough.

The position paper has indicated that town centre vacancy rates are increasing in all but one of the town centres, yet demand is high for retail floorspace in out of town centres. It notes that national retailers are increasingly focusing on district centres and out of town centres, in conflict with 'the town centre first' approach. The paper indicates that a tailored, town specific approach to policy concerning Town Centres and Retailing may be warranted. The Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development in Ards and North Down has also identified that an important means of reinvigorating our town and village centres is to ensure they sustain a residential population.

### *Ports and Harbours*

Ports and harbours are important economic generators and are essential to the operation of a range of different marine and coastal industries. While there are no commercial ports in Ards and North

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy The UK Innovation Survey: Headline Findings 2014 to 2016 (published 18/04/2018)

<sup>2</sup> NISRA Northern Ireland Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics (BESES): Goods and Services Results 2016 – published 22 March 2018

Down, the Borough has ten harbours from which commercial fishing vessels are known to operate and many local quays, pontoons, slipways and harbours which are mainly used for recreation purposes.

The sea fishing sector, in terms of catching, employs 859 people across NI, 708 of whom are full time and 151 part time<sup>1</sup>. Portavogie is the second largest fishing port in NI; it landed 2,095 tonnes of fish and shellfish in 2016, with an estimated value of £6.97 million (up from £6.41 million in 2015). Portavogie mainly lands high quality / high value seafood, such as prawns and herring. Seven other smaller harbours in the Borough had commercially caught catches landed in 2016, with a combined total recorded value of £1.35 million. Of this, £1.1 million was at Bangor or Portaferry<sup>2</sup>. The other harbours are Ballydorn, Ballyhalbert, Ballywalter, Donaghadee and Kircubbin. There are four EU-designated shellfish cultivation areas in the waters surrounding Ards and North Down and over 30 licensed aquaculture sites, growing mussels and oysters. Section 5.11.2 will discuss these in more detail.

The Coast LDP Position Paper indicates that several food processing plants are located near Portavogie and that proposals have been made to upgrade the local facilities. Provision of improved local facilities and infrastructure could help to support more local jobs in this area.

There are a number of marinas in the Borough including Bangor, Copelands (Donaghadee) and Portaferry. Bangor marina is the largest marina in NI, with a total of 530 berths<sup>3</sup> while Portaferry has 50 berths including 14 visitor berths<sup>4</sup>. These harbours are within a day's sailing from Scotland and the Isle of Man which makes them attractive for small yachts. Bangor can accommodate drafts of up to 4m which also makes it attractive to larger sailing craft and motor boats. The 2016 report 'Sailing Tourism in Scotland'<sup>5</sup> estimates the average expenditure per visitor boat night for Scottish marinas is £122 (not including mooring fees). This report also indicates that average party size is 2.9 and the average distance travelled per day is 27.6 nautical miles. Other findings in this report include that a lack of facilities/moorings and pontoons is a key factor in discouraging boat owners from travelling. The report also found that boat owners that wished to visit a location but hadn't, was most commonly due to a lack of facilities in that area.

More generally, harbours and marinas can be focal points for settlements. They can also function as an attraction/destination for land-based day trips and this is particularly notable at Bangor.

One local passenger and vehicle ferry service also operates from Ards and North Down. The Portaferry –Strangford ferry service crosses Strangford Lough at its narrowest point on a half hourly basis all year round and is operated by the Department for Infrastructure. The service reduces the 47 mile journey (which typically takes up to an hour and a half) between these villages to around 8 minutes. The ferry is used by around 550,000 passengers (with 180,000 vehicles) annually<sup>6</sup> and is an important transport link in the local economy, carrying commuters and schoolchildren in addition to tourists.

### *Tourism*

Investment in tourism brings new facilities to the Borough's towns, villages and surrounding landscapes. It makes a vital contribution to the Borough in terms of the revenues it generates, the employment opportunities it provides, and the potential it creates for economic growth. It also provides the opportunity to get maximum benefit from our wealth of environmental and heritage

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<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service Briefing Paper: 'Northern Ireland's fisheries sectors – background and possible 'Brexit' considerations' published 8th September 2016.

<sup>2</sup> UK Government UK Sea fisheries annual statistics report: 2016 Supplementary Table 2012 to 2016 UK fleet landings and foreign fleet landings into the UK by port

<sup>3</sup> Quay Marinas website – Welcome to Bangor Marina (accessed 03/10/2018)

<sup>4</sup> Portaferry Marina <http://www.portaferrymarina.co.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> EKOS Ltd 'Sailing Tourism in Scotland' Report for The Crown Estate, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Canals December 2016

<sup>6</sup> The Irish News, 10th March 2016 "Strangford ferry costs an average of £1.5m a year to run" (accessed 02 May 2016)

assets; our waterways, landscapes and historic environment. There are also health benefits to be gained by a more active resident population who are motivated to be out and about exploring more of Ards and North Down's tourism assets.

The 'Tourism' LDP Position Paper has included a range of statistics on tourism within the Borough. Ards and North Down does not currently stand among the most visited of NI's LGDs as an overnight tourism destination, however, when the visitor figures are considered in the context of the Borough's size versus other larger LGDs, it performs favourably. In 2017 it was the fifth most popular destination (sixth in 2016), with an estimated 282,000 overnight trips (down 1,000 from than 2016).

Excluding day visits, tourism to the Borough in 2017 was worth around £46m from overnight expenditure, up 1% from 2015 but down from 51.3m in 2015. Tourism-related employment supported 4,954 jobs in the Borough in 2015, an increase of 8% from 2011<sup>1</sup>.

The principal reason that overnight visitors spend time in the Borough is 'visiting friends and relatives' (56% for the period 2015-7)<sup>2</sup>. Visits for 'holiday/leisure/pleasure' accounted for 30% of overnight trips over the same period. The Tourism Paper notes that very small proportion of visits are for business (one of the lowest proportions of all the Councils) and this may be a potential growth area due to the proximity of Ards and North Down to Belfast. This figure has, however, increased from 4% in the Tourism Paper to 5% in the most recently published figures<sup>3</sup>.

The Borough has the third lowest quantity of available tourist accommodation of all the NI LGDs, with 109,000 rooms available in 2017 and 68,000 sold<sup>4</sup>. The Tourism Paper notes that the types of accommodation currently available in the Borough may not be as attractive to prospective tourism visitors in terms of price point and flexibility, however proximity to Belfast and the City Airport may enable parts of the Borough to market themselves as being well placed for business travel. Activity tourism or eco-tourism prospects may be better supported through development of alternative emerging accommodation types such as glamping pods and self-catering units. One of the actions of the Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development in Ards and North Down is to seek to proactively support and advise those wishing to develop new and appealing concepts in sustainable accommodation provision which will showcase to best effect the attributes and assets of the destination, whilst meeting the needs of Ards and North Down's target segments.

### 5.5.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

Without a new LDP in place, the opportunity to make plans for growth in line with recent evidence and to develop a plan-led system may be missed. The absence of a LDP to address local needs could disadvantage those on lower incomes or in rural areas in terms of enabling access to places of work. The Council would be unable to facilitate sustainable tourism growth to adequately reflect the needs and assets unique to Ards and North Down.

### 5.5.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Economy and Employment

- Identifying and zoning appropriate land for development is a vital part of creating the right conditions to create and sustain economic activity that meets local employment needs whilst considering opportunities for regeneration.
- In selecting land for development, it is important to provide sites with quality environments that are readily accessible to the key transport corridors.
- Proposed new employment locations should be readily accessible by active travel and/or public transport.

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<sup>1</sup> NISRA, Local Government District tourism statistics publications (additional tables) (published 26 July 2018)

<sup>2</sup> Source NISRA Local government district tourism statistics infographics 2017 (Date published: 26 July 2018)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Tourism Statistics Bulletin Northern Ireland Local Government District Tourism Statistics 2017 Published 26 July 2018

- NI has seen a decrease in primary sector and manufacturing jobs in recent decades. However there are a number of successful strong manufacturing and agri-food businesses in the Council area which should be supported and growth in these areas encouraged.
- National and regional trends indicate an ongoing shift towards tertiary sector jobs. The Council and relevant statutory bodies should work with local providers of education and training to identify and address any local skills shortfalls and develop tailored learning to ensure its population has the skills and training to meet future demand.
- There is a need to ensure that the Borough is attractive to investors, and higher skilled people, by supporting the vitality and vibrancy of town centres and the wider area.
- Commercial fishing landings at Portavogie harbour are an important contributor to the local economy, however significant commercial fish landings also occur at Bangor and Portaferry.
- Bangor Marina is the largest marina in NI and is renowned for its excellent facilities. Maritime tourism can provide strong economic benefits and other marinas in the Borough may have scope for attracting more visitors.
- The diversity, vibrancy and vitality of town centres can be supported and enhanced through the new LDP.
- Major opportunity exists for the expansion of the tourism industry across the Council area to attract investment, jobs and visitors. Tourism priorities may be interlinked with regeneration and development.
- The benefits of tourist attractions to the night-time economy should be recognised both in social and economic terms.
- The Borough is a source of high quality agricultural produce and seafood. Food Destination tourism has been identified in the Tourism Strategy as a key opportunity.
- The Borough has a unique coastline. A joined up approach with neighbouring Council areas in establishing and promoting linked trails and experiences could bring added benefits.
- Ards and North Down has a number of natural assets which are particularly suited to activity tourism (golf, angling, sailing and watersports, beaches and other water-based activity). It also has a strong built and cultural heritage foundation for cultural tourism.

## 5.6 Material Assets

### 5.6.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Material assets are referred to in the SEA Directive but it is not defined. For the purposes of this report, the material assets sustainability topic covers a range of policy areas, including telecommunications, electrical infrastructure and energy distribution, energy including renewable energy, derelict and contaminated land, and waste management.

Overarching regional and strategic planning policy strives for the sustainable development of land to help ensure the integration of material assets. Growth of infrastructure should be enabled in an efficient and effective manner whilst environmental impacts are minimised. The National Renewable Energy Action Plan for the UK 2010, the Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2012-15 and beyond, and the NI Waste Management Strategy are all relevant to material assets. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI)'s Strategic Energy Framework 2010-2020 has at its core decarbonisation of the energy mix. The multifunctional use of land is encouraged; significant increases in renewables to the energy mix recommended; and reductions in waste and increases in recycling rates targeted.

Investing in telecommunications, particularly in rural areas and considering the infrastructure required for renewable energy projects and strengthening of the grid for future energy demands is encouraged at the regional level. New gas infrastructure is also supported as the move to gas helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet UK climate change commitments. Climate change concerns encourage the use of renewables and a move toward a more sustainable energy mix that reduces emissions and improves air quality. Sustainable waste management is also acknowledged as an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by focusing on the waste management hierarchy, the proximity principle and the circular economy. Impacts should be considered of all types of installation on the environment and a strategic approach to the sustainable development of land could include multiple uses. For example, derelict land could be used to treat waste, which could in turn produce energy for local distribution.

The Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development in Ards and North Down recognises the importance of quality infrastructure in delivering economic potential across the Borough. An objective of the strategy is to improve the quality of infrastructure, helping to increase the geographic spread of economic activity and investment. It also seeks to reduce the environmental and social impact of commuting which is a key issue for the Borough.

Ards and North Down's Community Plan 2017-2032 entitled '*The Big Plan*', aims to create positive outcomes for everyone in the Borough. Being resilient to the effects of climate change and improving transport and digital connectivity are important to achieving the Community Plans outcome of having access to a well-managed sustainable environment.

Attracting and promoting economic investment within the Borough and supporting business development and growth is a main objective of the Corporate Plan. The Plan recognises the importance of digital connectivity in attracting visitors and business to the Borough and is a contributing factor in making the Borough the best place to live, work and invest.

### 5.6.2 Baseline Information

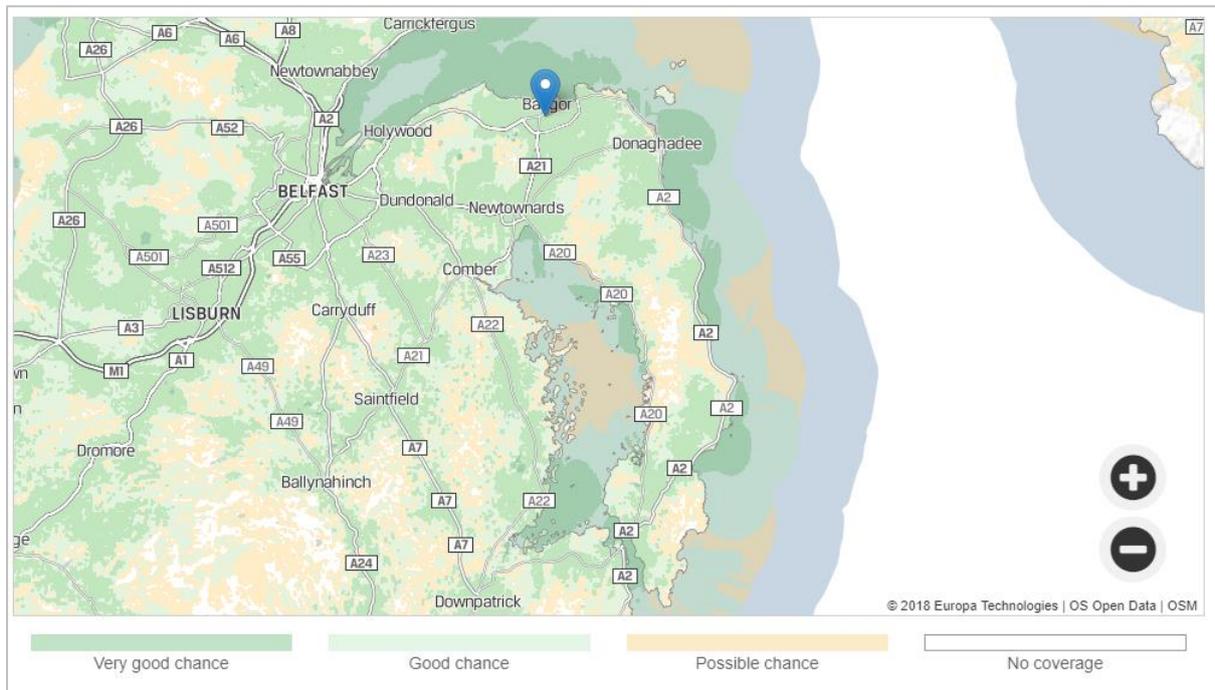
A detailed baseline of information is presented in the LDP Position Paper on Public Utilities. This topic also overlaps with the Community, Physical Resources and Climate Change topics of this report.

#### *Telecommunications*

There are four main network operators in Northern Ireland Vodafone, O2, Three and EE, all offering 3g and 4g services. In 2017, mobile data services covered 76% of Northern Ireland. There is ongoing

focus on developing 4g coverage by network operators and 4G coverage is now present in 60% of NI. However only 44% of premises have indoor 4G coverage<sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 5.6.1: Vodafone levels of Indoor 4G coverage within Ards and North Down**



Source: Ofcom Mobile and Broadband Checker, 2018

Vodafone and O2 have the highest levels of mobile coverage in Northern Ireland. The above map shows the level of Vodafone 4G coverage in Ards and North Down. Within the Borough indoor data and voice coverage is either 'very good' or 'good' especially in main towns and centres. Evidently, coverage is stronger within urban areas of the Borough than coverage within rural areas, which is consistent regionally.<sup>2</sup>

More information on network coverage can be found on the Ofcom website [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

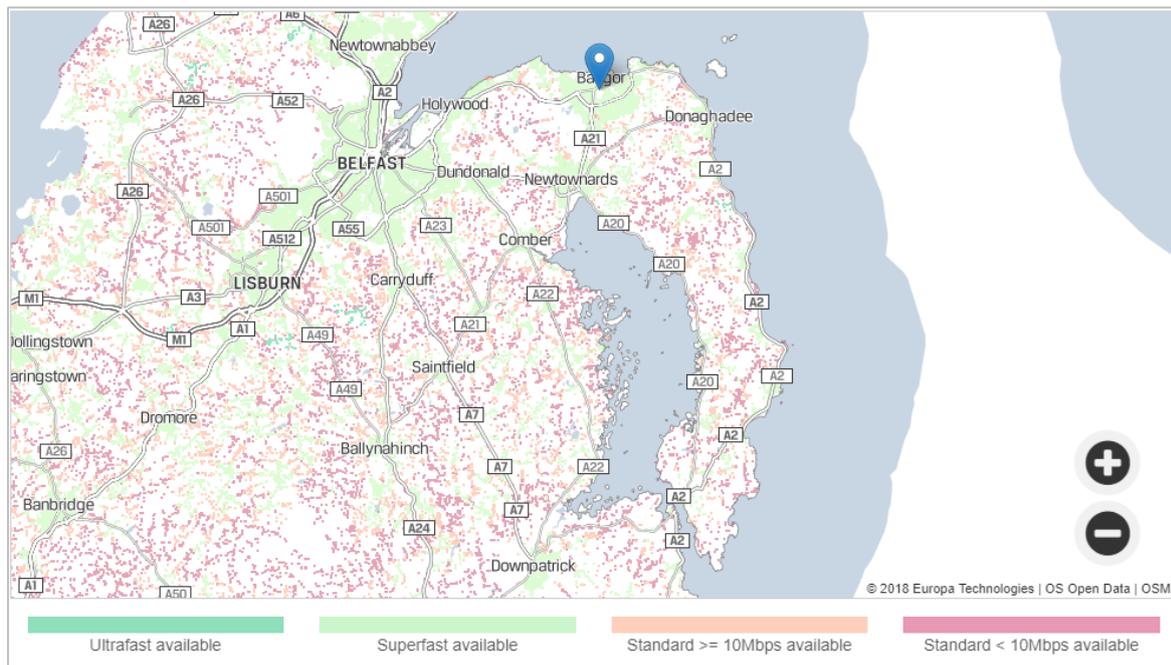
Northern Ireland has recently seen the completion of a superfast broadband roll out scheme which will increase the number of premises which receive higher broadband speeds. In 2017, 85% of all premises in Northern Ireland had access to superfast broadband and 57% of all rural premises had access to superfast broadband<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ofcom: Connected Nations 2017, Northern Ireland

<sup>2</sup> Ofcom: Connected Nations 2017, Northern Ireland

<sup>3</sup> Ofcom Mobile and Broadband Checker, 2018

Figure 5.6.2: Broadband Availability within Ards and North Down



Source: Ofcom Mobile and Broadband Checker, 2018

Broadband Speeds of 10Mbit/s or above are considered to be ‘decent’ by Ofcom the telecoms regulator. Broadband speeds of 10Mbit/s are widely available within the Borough. In 2017, only 3.6% of premises in Ards and North Down were unable to receive broadband speeds less than 10Mbit/s and less than 1 % of premises were unable to receive broadband speeds of 2Mbit/s.

Superfast broadband speeds are available in the Borough, mainly within main town centres<sup>1</sup>. There is currently free town centre Wi-Fi provision in Bangor, Newtownards, Comber, Donaghadee and Holywood<sup>2</sup>.

#### *Energy Supply and Distribution/Electrical Infrastructure*

The System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) manages the large-scale electrical transmission infrastructure across the country. It is the independent Transmission System Operator for Northern Ireland and operates 1,500km of transmission power lines and 45,000km of distribution power lines. The SONI website ([www.soni.ltd.uk](http://www.soni.ltd.uk)) displays the current energy sources for NI in real time, including connected sources of renewables. Currently all users are connected to the distribution network for their electricity<sup>3</sup>. The energy infrastructure in NI is shown in Map 1 of the LDP Position Paper Public Utilities.

NI is primarily dependant on fossil fuels for energy supply. There are three major gas and coal/oil power generating sites located at Ballylumford, Coolkeeragh and Kilroot. The region is also connected to the Scottish grid via the Moyle interconnector and to the Republic of Ireland via North South tie-lines.<sup>4</sup>

The future security of supply in NI is dependent on its capacity to generate, transmit and distribute energy efficiently. It is anticipated that NI will fall into a generation supply deficit in 2021<sup>5</sup>. The planned closure of Kilroot power station and reduction in capacity at Ballylumford power station

<sup>1</sup> Ofcom Mobile and Broadband Checker, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Local Development Plan- Position Paper Public Utilities

<sup>3</sup> Northern Ireland Electricity: Briefing on Grid Capacity in Northern Ireland in the context of enabling Economic Growth April 2015

<sup>4</sup> DETI: Energy in Northern Ireland 2016

<sup>5</sup> Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Electricity Sector in Northern Ireland, 2017

(both of which are located outside ANDBC, in Mid and East Antrim borough) combined with limited capacity of existing transmission lines have contributed to an increasing lack of security and stability of supply in NI.

Although there is no issue with access to supply in the Borough, regional and local improvements to the network could help to futureproof the energy supply in the Council area. This would increase its potential for greater capacity and reduce reliance on fossil fuels as well as improving security of supply and competitiveness.

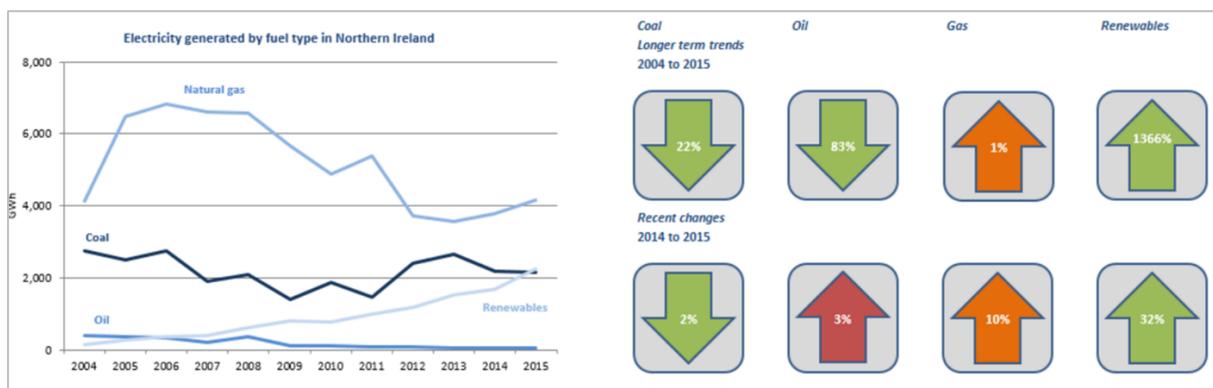
Northern Ireland is part of the Single Electricity Market for the island of Ireland which is currently served by the North South tie-lines located between Tandragee and Louth, Strabane and Letterkenny and Enniskillen and Corraclassy. Following a public inquiry, planning approval was secured by SONI in 2018 for a new North South Interconnector between Tyrone and Cavan. Approval was granted in 2016 for the section located in the ROI.

The North/South Interconnector is a major infrastructure project which will link the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland electricity networks. The project is vital to ensure the effective operation of an efficient 'all island' electricity market, to support the realisation of strategic renewable energy targets, increase energy security and establish a competitive energy market.<sup>1</sup> However, the UK's future energy relationship with EU member states could have implications for this project<sup>2</sup>.

### Energy – Natural Gas

The Department for Economy's, Strategic Energy Framework 2010 is committed to extending the natural gas network in the region where it is economic to do so. Natural gas has become the main fuel type for electricity generation in Northern Ireland.

Figure 5.6.3: Electricity Generation by Fuel Type 2001-2015



Source: DAERA, Carbon Intensity Indicators 2017

Phoenix Natural Gas is the operator of the licence area which covers Ards and North Down, however the areas in and around Killinchy and the Ards Peninsula have no licensed operator. In 2016, Phoenix Natural Gas obtained approval for the extension of its Natural Gas Licence to provide new gas infrastructure to 13 towns and villages in East Down<sup>3</sup>. However, Ballygowan is the only town in the Borough that will benefit from this expansion of the natural gas network, with works anticipated to be complete in 2019.

### Renewable Energy

The Strategic Energy Framework 2010 for Northern Ireland set a target to achieve 40% of electrical consumption from renewable sources by 2020. In December 2017, 38.1% of total electricity

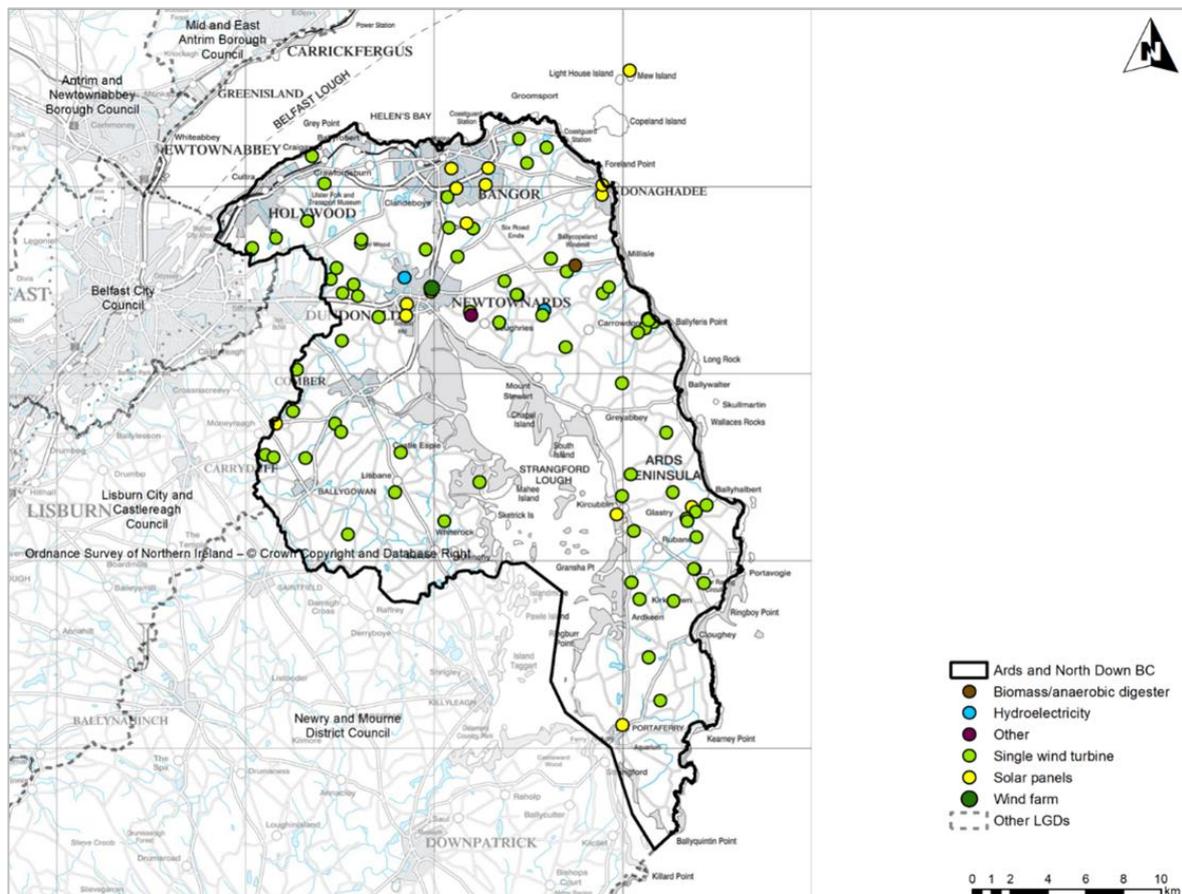
<sup>1</sup> DETI: Energy in Northern Ireland 2016

<sup>2</sup> Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Electricity Sector in Northern Ireland, 2017

<sup>3</sup> Phoenix Natural Gas: Gas to East Down Information Booklet (found at <https://www.phoenixnaturalgas.com/assets/documents/Gas-to-East-Down-booklet.pdf>)

consumption in Northern Ireland was generated from renewable sources located in NI with wind power accounting for 84.3% of that renewable energy production<sup>1</sup>.

Figure 6.6.4: Location of Approved Renewable Applications in Ards and North Down (2002-March 2015)



Source: Department for Infrastructure<sup>2</sup>

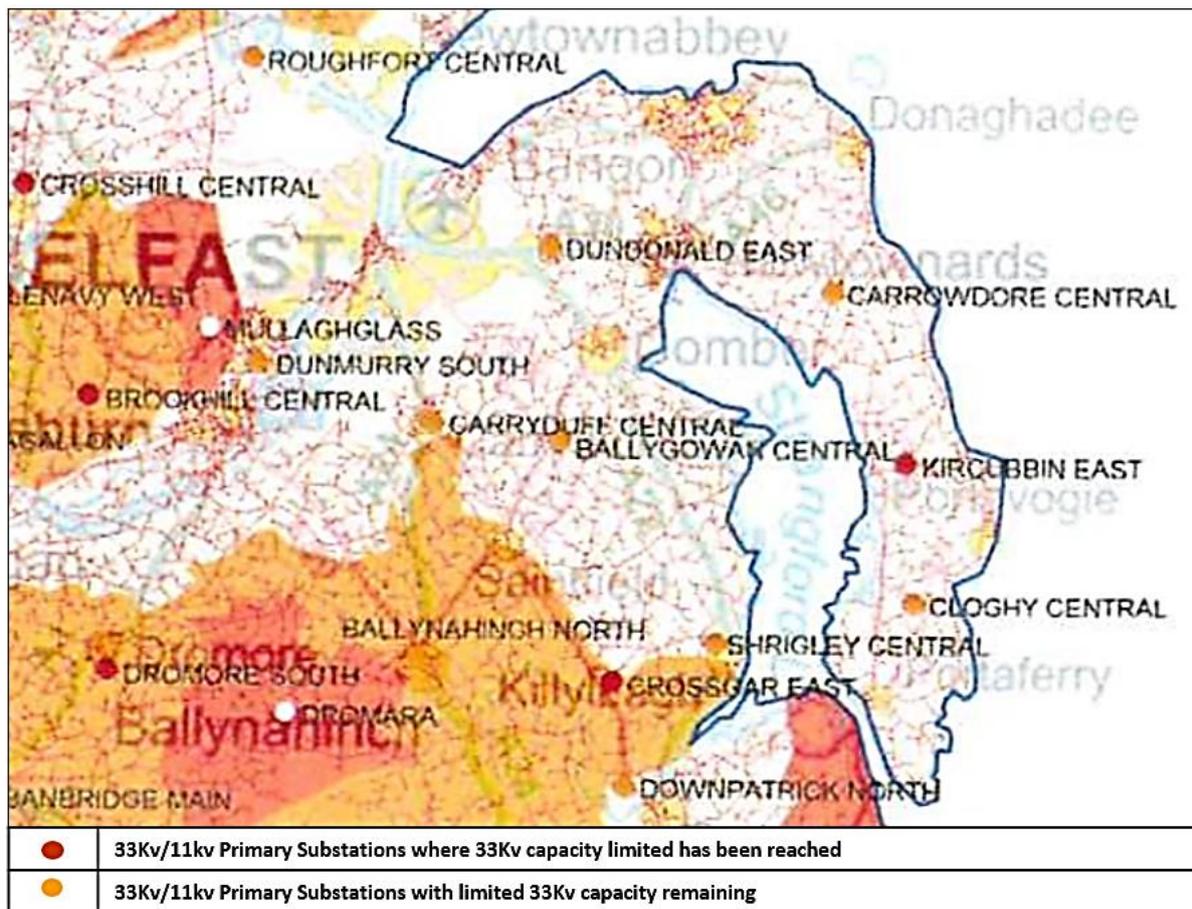
There has been a general decline in the number of renewables applications in Northern Ireland since 2010. The downward trend is reflected in the Borough where the number of renewable energy applications went from 13 in the first quarter of 2015 to 1 renewable wind application being approved in Q2 2017/18. The decrease in renewable energy applications can be contributed to the reduction of government incentives for renewables energy development.

Single turbines are the most prevalent type of renewable energy in the Borough. It is noted that wind speeds are particularly favourable around the Ards Peninsula, although preservation of landscape character, especially within the Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is a constraint on wind energy development.

<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Electricity Consumption and renewable generation in Northern Ireland; Year Ending March 2017

<sup>2</sup> DFI - Northern Ireland planning renewable energy monthly statistics - April 2015

Figure 5.6.5: 11kv Network Heat Map Small Scale Generation 2014



Source: Northern Ireland Electricity

The capacity of the electric network within the Borough is essential to support the growth of small-scale renewable generation in the future. In 2014, 11Kv Network Heat Maps produced by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE), indicated that there is potential for connection of additional generation within the Borough although capacity is limited<sup>1</sup>.

The NI Business Plan, 'Investing for the Future 2017-2024', states that planned investment will be taking place to improve network assets across the region which could see improvements in the Borough<sup>2</sup>.

The Renewable Integration Development Plan, Network 25 and Generation Cluster Infrastructure projects will see improvements within the region to enable the connection of renewables. However, there are no planned projects within the Borough that could enable commercial scale connection of renewables<sup>3</sup>.

Potential exists across ANDBC for hydroelectricity, tidal, biomass and solar, as indicated by the following planning approvals:

- 2015 - 5.9 megawatt solar photovoltaic (PV) farm at Carrowdore
- 2010 - 2018 three anaerobic digesters
- 2005 - hydroelectric scheme in Newtownards

<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland Electric 11kv Network Heat Map Small Scale Generation

<sup>2</sup> Investing in the Future, NIE Networks summary business plans 2017-2024

<sup>3</sup> Renewable Integration Status Report, 2016

The Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2012-2020 (ORESAP) identified two sites located at the mouth of Strangford Lough and east of the Copeland Islands as suitable locations within the Borough for potential tidal energy projects. The SeaGen generator, the first large scale commercial tidal stream generator of its kind in the world, was installed in Strangford Lough in 2008. Although it was successful, generating sufficient power to supply up to 1,500 homes annually, it was decommissioned in 2017 in accordance with the terms of its licence. Strangford Lough continues to be a focal point for tidal turbine research, with small-scale test projects being carried out by Queen’s University and Minesto.<sup>12</sup>

### Waste Management

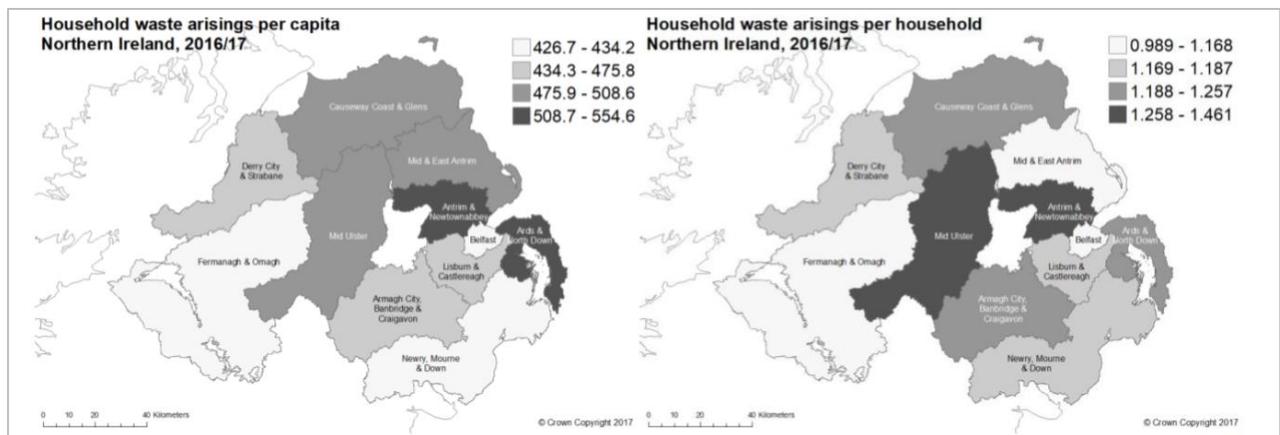
Ards and North Down is part of the ARC21 Waste Management Group (WMG), which comprises of six Councils and is responsible for the preparing, monitoring and reviewing of the group’s Waste Management Plan. Arc21 account for 59% of the region’s population making it the largest WMG.

In October to December 2017, 46.5% of Local Authority Collected (LAC) municipal waste collected in Northern Ireland was sent for preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting of this 18.4% accounted for energy recovery and 33.1% was landfilled<sup>3</sup>.

The Council reports on a number of Statutory Indicators including waste within its Performance Improvement Plan. In 2017/18, the Council set a target to increase recycling within the Borough by 55% by 2020<sup>4</sup>.

There are no active landfill sites for household waste within the Borough. At present waste produced in Ards and North Down is sent to landfill in Scotland. The Council has Waste Recycling Centres located at Balloo, Ballygowan, Comber, Donaghadee, Holywood, Kircubbin, Millisle, Newtownards and Portaferry<sup>5</sup>.

Figure 5.6.6: Household waste arising per capita and per household by council, 2016/17



Source: DEARA

In 2016/17, household waste per person within Ards and North Down fell 3.7%, the largest decrease recorded for a Council area. Since 2015, Levels of municipal waste within the Borough being prepared for reuse, recycling and composting has increased by 7%<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MarineEnergy.biz TTT turbines spin back to Strangford Lough flows (found at <https://marineenergy.biz/2018/07/04/ttt-turbines-spin-back-to-strangford-lough-flows/>)

<sup>2</sup> Minesto: Strangford Lough Test and Demonstration Site (found at <https://minesto.com/projects/strangford-lough>)

<sup>3</sup> DEARA, Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management, quarterly provision October to December 2017

<sup>4</sup> Ards and North Down Performance Improvement Plan 2017/2018

<sup>5</sup> Local Development Plan- Position Paper Public Utilities

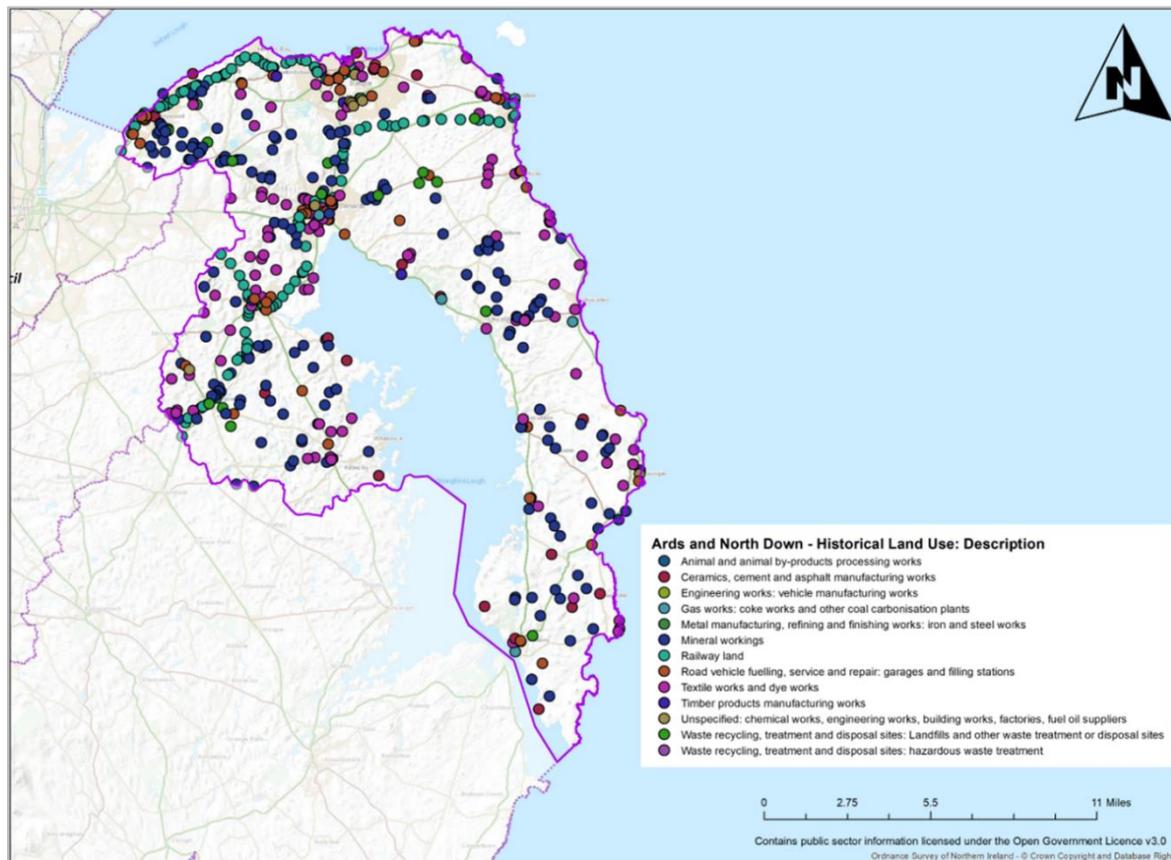
<sup>6</sup> Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies, Paper 9: Public Utilities

### *Derelict/Contaminated Land*

The Land Use Database held by the NIEA provides a record of approximately 14,000 sites that have had previous industrial land use(s). This database was originally based on historic maps and records dating from 1834-1960 but it has been updated with NIEA datasets including Industrial Heritage, Waste Management License, and Pollution Incidents.

There are 1,738 records for the ANDBC on the Land Use Database. The map below shows historical land use within Ards and North Down.

**Figure 5.6.7: Land Use Database –Historical Land Use Records in Ards and North Down Borough**



Source: DAERA, Historical Landuse Database

### 5.6.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a LDP, opportunities to ensure the most appropriate locations for material assets are likely to be missed. In terms of providing efficient and adequate material assets, achieving sustainable development could become increasingly difficult without an up to date spatial approach to planning. Development may not be feasible, or it could be constrained if existing infrastructure is deficient or absent. Without a spatial approach, there could be a higher risk of negative impacts on rural areas and inappropriate energy projects.

### 5.6.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Material Assets

- Improving infrastructure across rural areas for the needs of rural communities, rural services and rural businesses is vital to support rural enterprise and economic activity.
- Grid reinforcement is required to facilitate the growth of renewable energy generation.
- It is important to support wind energy whilst also safeguarding areas of particular scenic/environmental value.
- The coast could also support wave/tidal energy projects.

- The capacity and availability of infrastructure in respect of water, waste and sewage is key in identifying the location of future housing and employment land.
- The impact of existing or proposed waste management facilities should be considered when zoning land for development.
- Derelict/contaminated land sites may be available for appropriate reuse.

## 5.7 Physical Resources

### 5.7.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The physical resources sustainability theme covers minerals, earth science sites, geothermal energy, land and soil. Physical resources provide us with the building blocks we need for everyday life, but are mostly finite in their supply.

The sustainable management of physical resources is a common theme of regional, strategic and subject planning policy. The need to safeguard sufficient land to provide physical resources into the future is evident. Land is recognised as multifunctional, in that it can act as a connective wildlife corridor; provide amenity value, building resources, adaptation for climate change; remove water and soil pollution; support biodiversity and create landscape character. Adequate amounts of land are required to deliver all of these functions. Some physical resources such as soil can become so contaminated from pollution that they no longer adequately function.

The overarching aims of current government policy and programmes are sustainable development and sustainable land management, as these will underpin sustainable economic growth and a sustainable energy supply. Current policy strives to ensure that physical resources are safeguarded for the future and that sufficient local supplies are available. The Department for Economy (DfE) recognises that the concept of sustainability is different within the industry because reserves are finite, but the industry can still play a part in the circular economy and the principles of the waste management hierarchy. Northern Ireland also has a Geodiversity Charter that aims to inform decision makers of the importance of geodiversity to the economy and the environment, as part of the UK Geodiversity Action Plan.

The SPSS aims to minimise the impacts from the minerals industry on local communities and the environment. This is expected through sustainable minerals development that carefully considers impacts on the local area and includes the safe restoration of sites with an appropriate reuse. In Northern Ireland, older mineral workings from the 1970s and 1980s had little emphasis placed on managing their environmental impacts or restoration. Recent changes to planning legislation through the Planning Act (NI) 2011, enables Councils to review old mineral permissions sites (ROMP sites). However, a further Order is needed before Councils can begin this review.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-19, proposes for the Borough to be 'the best place to live, work, visit and invest'. It refers to 'prosperity' as one of three objectives to help achieve the Plan's purpose and although it does not directly refer to individual industries or businesses, the overall support and commitment for investment and business growth, particularly in rural areas, is evident.

The Council's Community Plan, '*The Big Plan*' recognises that there are competing interactions for physical space and that there is a need to manage the physical environment (natural and built) to ensure that natural spaces are protected and potentially competing elements work in harmony.

### 5.7.2 Baseline Information

A baseline of information has also been presented in the LDP Position Paper on Minerals. This topic also overlaps with the Housing, Material Assets, Climate Change, Natural Resources and Landscape sections of this scoping report.

#### *Minerals*

The DfE's LDP consultation response on Minerals<sup>1</sup> indicates that while four operators submitted minerals returns for the annual minerals statement in 2017, up to six quarries have been operational in Ards and North Down in recent years.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Economy - Ards and North Down Preferred Options Paper: Pre-Consultation Comments

The 2016 Annual Minerals Statement<sup>1</sup> published by the DfE shows that Ards and North Down is the most important contributor to the overall supply of sandstone in NI. In 2016, over 37% of the total NI output (by quantity), with a value of almost £6.7million was from the Borough. No data in respect of other minerals was returned by quarries in Ards and North Down in 2016 or 2015 and it is assumed that mineral extraction within the Borough of products other than sandstone is negligible.

**Table 5.7.1 Summary of Mineral production in Ards and North Down (2016)**

	2016 AND quantity produced (tonnes)	2016 Total NI quantity produced (tonnes)	2016 AND % of NI total (tonnes)
<b>Basalt and Igneous Rock (excluding Granite)</b>	N/A	4,215,787	0
<b>Sandstone</b>	1,933,748.00	5,182,759	37%
<b>Limestone</b>	N/A	2,146,172	0
<b>Sand and Gravel</b>	N/A	2,353,892	0
<b>Other</b>	N/A	1,264,407	0

Source: DfE Annual Minerals Statement 2016

The DfE's LDP consultation response on Minerals and the LDP Position Paper on minerals indicate that the type of sandstone currently quarried in the Borough is greywacke. This stone is used for construction aggregate and, because of its high Polished Stone Values (PSV – a measurement of the durability of skid resistance), is in high demand as roadstone both in Northern Ireland and further afield.

Census 2011 data showed that the mining and quarrying industry employed 78 people from the Borough. More recent figures from The DfE's consultation response on minerals suggest that 48 people in the Borough were employed in this industry in 2016, however it is indicated that aggregate extraction is likely to remain a major industry in the council area and that materials for infrastructure development will be required both locally and in neighbouring council areas. These sources also indicate that there are limited supplies of sand and gravel within the Borough and imports from other district Council areas in Northern Ireland will be required to meet local demand for housing and other planned development.

No mineral or petroleum prospecting licenses have been issued in the Borough to date. The DfE's consultation response on minerals notes that this does not mean that there is no further mineral potential. The Ards & Down Area Plan 2015 has identified 'Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development' (ACMD). The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 originally proposed a number of ACMDs, however these were excluded prior to the BMAP's adoption in 2014 (since then, BMAP has been quashed). Of the 565km<sup>2</sup> encompassed by Ards and North Down (including marine areas) 313km<sup>2</sup> (55%) of the Borough is currently covered by an ACMD designation. The designation of ACMDs may restrict the future opportunities to pursue minerals development.

There are currently no mineral prospecting licences coincident with the council area, though this does not mean that there is no further mineral potential. Modern mineral reconnaissance and exploration techniques have not been applied to the council area and it may be possible that undiscovered resources are present.

There were 14 sites identified in Ards and North Down by the Department of the Environment in their 2014 Review of Old Mineral Permissions (ROMP), equating to 2.9% of the total number of ROMP sites in NI (470) (see Figure 5.7.1). The majority of these (10) were for the extraction of grit, alongside one

<sup>1</sup> Department for the Economy Annual Minerals Statements (Date published: 21 February 2018) <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/annual-minerals-statements>

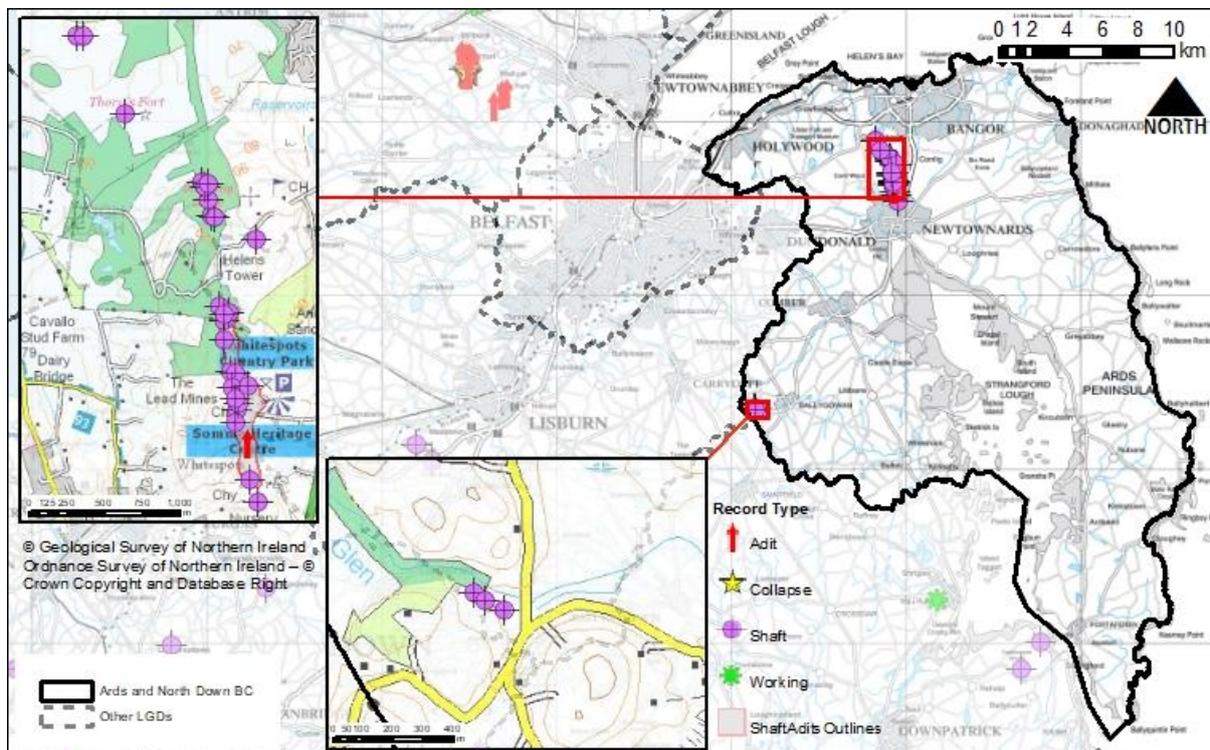
site for sand/grit and two for sandstone. The ‘Minerals’ Position Paper states that the ROMP enables a mechanism to review all existing planning conditions on extant mineral planning permissions, providing an important opportunity to secure improved operating and environmental standards within the quarrying industry. However, action on the ROMP has been delayed due to the need for the Department of Infrastructure to produce further legislation.

The ‘Minerals’ Position Paper notes that a former quarry at Scrabo is now a National Nature Reserve and a former limestone quarry at Castle Espie is now a bird reserve and forms part of the Strangford Lough Ramsar site. In the future, it may be feasible to restore more of these sites for recreational/educational use and/or as green/blue infrastructure.

The Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI) maintains a database of former mine workings, shafts and adits and has an associated webviewer<sup>1</sup>. This database shows that in the 1800s lead and coal were prospected and mined for at two locations within the Borough; west of Conlig and Ballygowan. A recently completed geodiversity audit of the Borough<sup>2</sup> has noted that the abandoned mine site at Whitespots-Conlig has ‘superb geology’ that should be developed as a tourist attraction. However, it also recognises that the current state of the site means that it would take substantial work to ensure that the site is safe for visitors to enjoy.

Land within the vicinity of former mine workings may be at risk of instability and subsidence, which should be taken in to consideration when planning new development. The DfE’s LDP consultation response on Minerals has indicated that contaminated land issues exist within some areas of Whitespots Country Park as a result of spoil heaps containing high levels of lead and other contaminants.

Figure 5.7.1: Abandoned Mines Hazards in Ards & North Down



Source: GSNI GeoIndex, Spatial NI

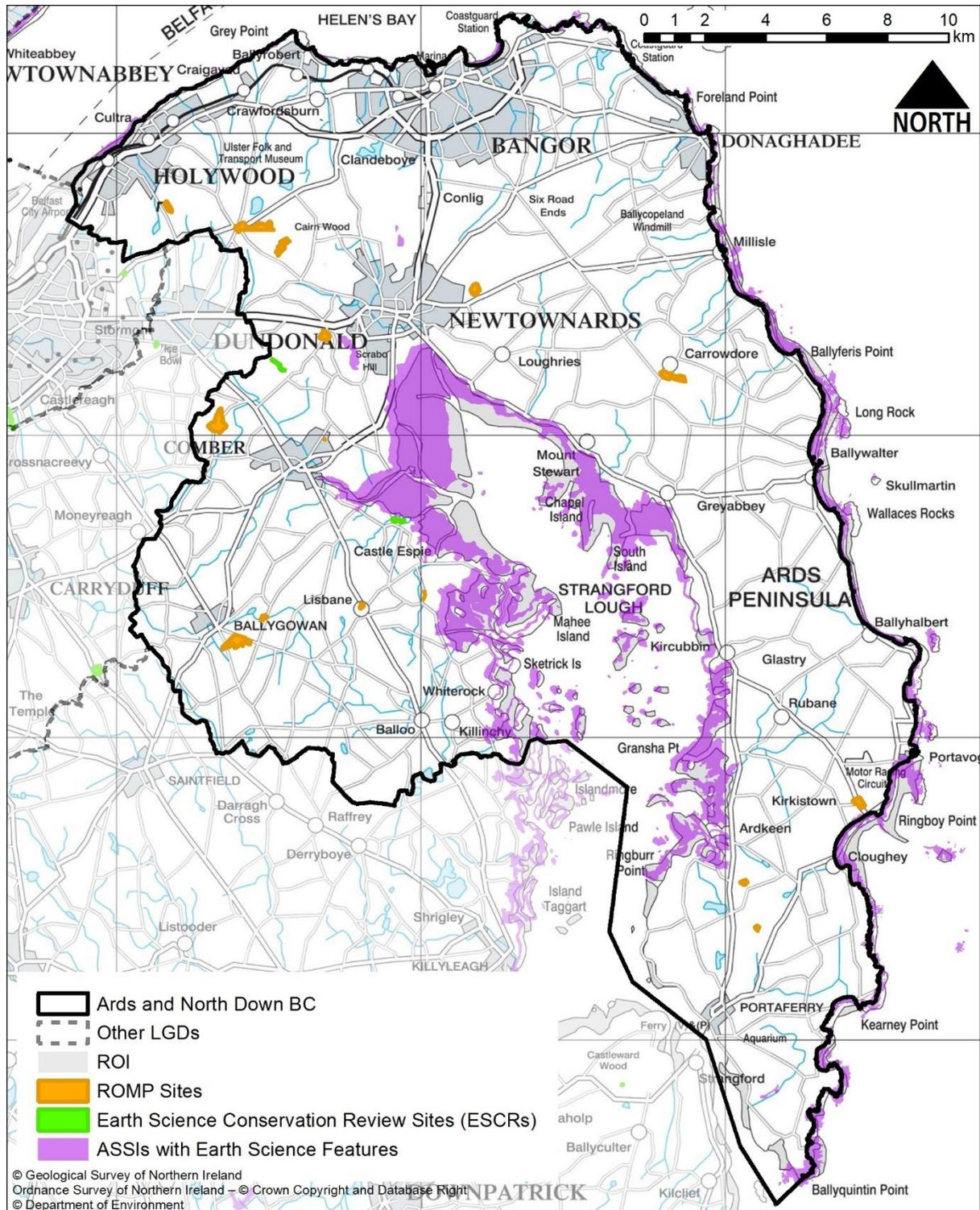
<sup>1</sup> GSNI Geoindex [http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/GSNI\\_Geoindex/home.html](http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/GSNI_Geoindex/home.html)

<sup>2</sup> Strangford and Lecale AONB Geodiversity Audit - Preliminary Results [https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/images/assets/COUNCIL\\_PAPERS\\_RDC\\_11.01.18.pdf](https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/images/assets/COUNCIL_PAPERS_RDC_11.01.18.pdf)

Earth Science

There are two Earth Science Conservation Review sites (ESCRs) in Ards and North Down, at Castle Espie and Ballyrainey (see Figure 5.7.2). These sites are recognised for their geological features.

Figure 5.7.2: ROMP sites, Earth Science Conservation Sites and geological ASSIs



Source: NIEA Digital Datasets

As discussed further in section 5.11, there are 15 Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) in Ards and North Down, of which eight have earth science selection features. These sites, shown in Figure 5.7.2, are protected for their geological value, but they can also provide habitat for local wildlife and

help to maintain local biodiversity. For example, Outer Ards is an important site for breeding and wintering birds but is also recognised for its structural geology, Ordovician stratigraphy and Caledonian igneous features. Ballyquintin Point hosts an important breeding bird assemblage and also provides a record of sea-level history through its raised beach and rock platforms. There are 47 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) in the Borough, some of which are likely to have a geological importance. There is a direct link between the geology and the geomorphology of an area and its physical character and natural heritage.

The GSNI published a Geodiversity Charter in 2017<sup>1</sup>, which aims to inform decision makers of the importance of geodiversity to the economy and the environment in NI and contributes towards the delivery of the UK Geodiversity Action Plan. The Charter states that *'an understanding of geomorphological processes is vital in managing geological hazards such as landslides, coastal change and flooding, all of which will undoubtedly increase due to climate change.'* It also recognises that *'[the]... soils, nutrients and natural processes that support Northern Ireland's nationally and internationally important habitats and species will also benefit from a better understanding of geodiversity, assisting with environmental management and protection and ultimately providing a safer and healthier place to live.'*

The Council's Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development 2018-2030 has identified the concept of a vision of a *'Blue Green, Creatively Connected Borough'* and the incorporation of geodiversity into this concept could help to deliver its objectives.

The neighbouring Newry, Mourne and Down District council has been developing a plan to acquire UNESCO Global Geopark status for the Mourne Mountains and the Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) since 2015. More recently the plan has been expanded to potentially include the Strangford and Lecale AONB, part of which lies within Ards and North Down Borough<sup>2</sup>. A UNESCO Global Geopark is a single unified geographical area where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed holistically for sustainable tourism, protection and education. Importantly, a UNESCO Global Geopark is not a statutory designation and does not have a negative impact on planning and development, but instead is a complementary designation.

The geodiversity audit of ANDBC carried out by GSNI has identified ten sites within Strangford and Lecale AONB which have the level of geological significance to be a primary site for a UNESCO Global Geopark. Of these, three are 'green sites', i.e. sites that would meet the standards required for application with minimal development. A further five sites in the AONB are 'amber sites', which would require substantial development plus a partnership agreement to be reached with the owner of the site. Two sites are not suitable for inclusion in any application. The audit identified a further thirteen sites of geological significance in the Borough that are outside the AONB, some of which could be accommodated in a future expansion of the Geopark designation, should it be acquired.

### *Geothermal Energy*

Naturally occurring heat is stored in ground layers ranging from core depths to shallow layers. It can be used as a source of heating for buildings and possible electricity. This naturally occurring ground heat is called 'geothermal energy'. Geothermal energy is low carbon, renewable (without fluctuation) and is viable with existing technology. It could become a sustainable part of the future energy mix, if investment and the necessary infrastructure were provided. The DfE has advised that the underlying geology of Ards and North Down is such that most of the Council area would be suitable for the deployment of open loop or closed loop systems ground source heat pump systems using shallow aquifer or non-aquifer rocks respectively. These may be used to provide heating for domestic and non-domestic buildings.

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<sup>1</sup> DfE / Geological Survey of NI: Northern Ireland's Geodiversity Charter - Safeguarding Northern Ireland's Rocks and Landscape

<sup>2</sup> Papers submitted to Ards and North Down Regeneration and Development Committee meeting, 11 January 2018.  
[https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/images/assets/COUNCIL\\_PAPERS\\_RDC\\_11.01.18.pdf](https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/images/assets/COUNCIL_PAPERS_RDC_11.01.18.pdf)

Consideration of the installation and integration of geothermal heating systems is recommended at an early design stage alongside other infrastructure. With further development of the technology, geothermal energy could help to meet the 2020 target of 40% of electricity consumption to be from renewables. The UK National Renewable Energy Action Plan refers to ground heat and the Strategic Energy Framework discusses shallow geothermal energy.

The DfE's LDP consultation response on Minerals has noted that groundwater can be viewed as a resource that requires careful protection. It is as a water source that can be utilised for growth and economic development. Businesses and industry can use groundwater as a private water supply source at their own premises, making significant savings on mains water costs and increasing the resilience of the business. Current groundwater level monitoring suggests that the aquifer is capable of sustaining a significantly higher volume of abstraction. Groundwater is further discussed in section 5.11, but it should be noted that groundwater is used extensively in local agriculture and is vital to sustaining the productivity of the high quality agricultural land in the Borough.

### *Land*

The Co-ordination of Information on the Environment (Corine) project, initiated by the European Commission in 1985, provides a comprehensive picture on land use in the UK and Ireland. Corine uses high-definition satellite images and detailed local maps to match land use against 44 different land use codes. These can be used to monitor changes in land use over time (reference years are 1990, 2000, 2006 and 2012).

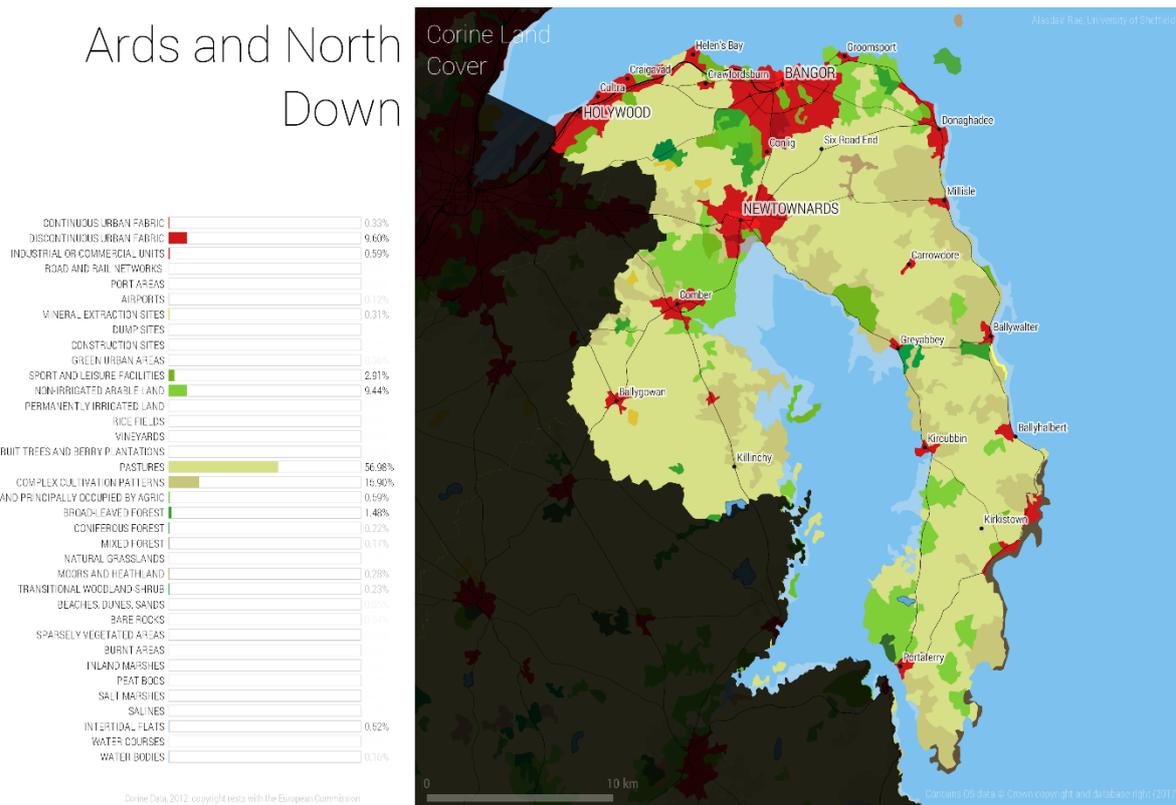
Figure 5.7.3 shows a simplified version of the Corine land use classifications for Ards and North Down. The detailed land use categories can be arranged into the four general categories of 'Built on', 'Green urban', 'Farmland' and 'Natural'. Ards and North Down currently has around 83% of its land cover classified as farmland, slightly higher than the NI average of 72%, and 3% classed as natural land cover, much lower than the NI average of 23%. The proportion of 'built on' land in the Borough, 9%, is quite high in comparison with the NI average of 3.5% and is second highest overall behind Belfast city (54%) but it also has the second highest proportion of 'green urban' land, 5% (average 1.3%).

The NI Countryside Survey 2007 found that the main changes in land cover over time were the loss of semi natural habitats to agricultural grassland and rural buildings. The trend for natural land conversion to improved grassland and curtilage was observed in the 1998 survey. Building was mostly on neutral or improved grassland, indicating pressure on agricultural land but semi natural habitat losses were also recorded. The loss of semi natural habitat in lowland areas, where this habitat is already scarce, is a biodiversity issue. The NI Countryside Survey highlighted development pressure for rural land from single rural dwellings.

### *Rural Housing*

The LDP Supplementary Position Paper 6a Housing notes that between January 2010 and January 2016, 677 single houses received planning permission in the countryside. Were this rate to continue, it would result in planning approval for c. 1,680 new rural dwellings over a 15 year Plan period. The paper acknowledges that not all approvals may be built, but that if current building rates were extrapolated it may result in up to 1,305 new houses in the countryside.

Figure 5.7.3 Land Cover Map of Ards and North Down, derived from Corine (2012)



Source University of Leicester, The Centre for Landscape and Climate Research and Specto Natura and supported by Defra and the European Environment Agency under Grant Agreement 3541/B2012/R0-GIO/EEA.55055 with funding by the European Union.

### Renewable Energy

In comparison with some other LGDs, Ards and North Down does not experience as much pressure on land use from wind and other renewables. As discussed in chapter 5.6 and in the Public Utilities LDP Position Paper, there are no commercial wind farms currently operating in the Borough. There is, however, one solar farm, at Carrowdore, which covers 27 acres<sup>1</sup>. Published planning statistics have indicated that around 83 single wind turbines received planning approval over the period 2002-18. It has not been possible to obtain data on how many of the approved single turbines have actually been constructed and are operational. However, as has been discussed in the Public Utilities Position Paper, obtaining a connection to the grid has been a constraint to development of renewables.

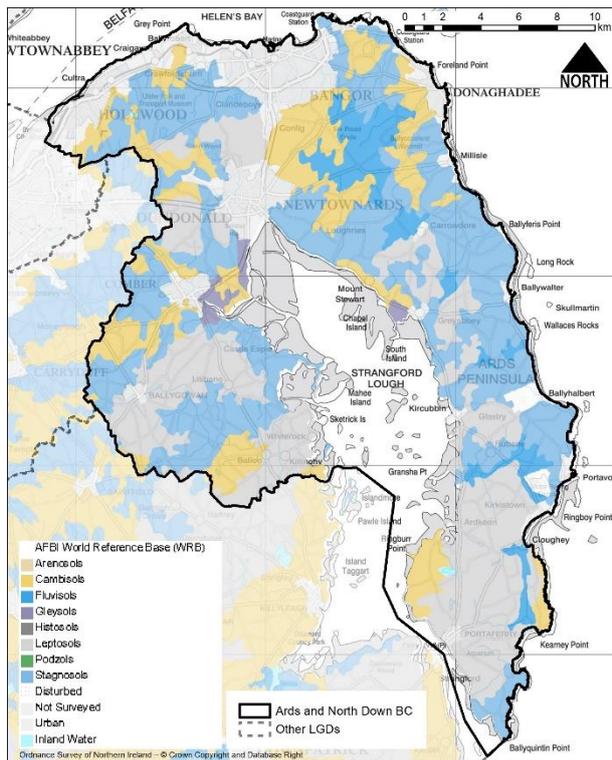
### Soil

Soil quality is not currently protected under any specific legislation in NI, but it is a fundamental physical resource. It acts as a store for - and source of - gases like oxygen, nitrogen and carbon dioxide. It also filters water and provides a base for biodiversity and raw materials. A properly functioning soil should be less vulnerable to erosion and can reduce flooding, filter pollution and store essential nutrients that can support plants and animals. Development can affect soil quality through pollution and erosion. Future changes to the climate will have significant impacts on our soils. Increased seasonal aridity and wetness poses risk to soils, which are vital to a healthy environment<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> BBC - Large solar farm gets green light in County Down – Published 5 February 2014

<sup>2</sup> CIWEM's priorities for the second cycle of the National Adaptation Programme (NAP) under the Climate Change Act 2008.

Figure 5.7.4: Soils Map of Ards and North Down



The dominant soil types in the Borough are:  
 Fluvisols – soils that are influenced by water.  
 Stagnosols – Soils with stagnating water  
 Gleysols – soils that are influenced by groundwater  
 Leptosols - Shallow soil over bedrock, calcareous material or a deeper soil that is gravelly or stony.  
 Cambisols - relatively young soils, with little or no profile development.

Source: AFBI NI / UKSO Soils Map Viewer<sup>1</sup>

The soils within the Comber, Greyabbey and Newtownards areas are derived from red sandstones and gravel, meaning they are light and free-draining. This, combined with the local climate, which is warmer than other parts of NI<sup>2</sup>, has given the area a unique advantage in terms of cultivation. The growing season can start before other regions in NI and can also be harvested earlier than anywhere else. These has led to New Season Comber Potatoes / Comber Earlies being one of only a handful of products from NI to be granted Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) status under European law.

### 5.7.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there could be less opportunity to spatially plan and sustainably manage existing and future physical resources so that reserves are safeguarded, and environmental damage avoided. It may become more difficult to respond to and manage development pressures on the Borough’s physical resources and to avoid inappropriate development, pollution and erosion.

### 5.7.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Physical Resources

- In comparison with other Councils, Ards and North Down has low quantities of mineral extraction. However, materials that are extracted are in high demand for road construction.
- There are limited supplies of sand and gravel within the Borough area and imports from other Council areas in NI will be required to meet local demand for housing and other planned development.
- While ACMD protect valuable and vulnerable landscapes and environments, they can also restrict economic development.
- Available, workable mineral resources which are of economic or conservation value should be safeguarded and not be allowed to become constrained by other forms of development.

<sup>1</sup> UK Soil Observatory World Reference Base, Reference Soil Groups for NI <http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/ukso/home.html?layer=AFBIWRB>

<sup>2</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on protected geographical indications and protected designations of origin “New Season Comber Potatoes/Comber Earlies”

- The Borough has two areas of former mining activity and one has potential for development as a destination.
- Land within the vicinity of former mine workings may be at risk of instability and subsidence.
- Land surrounding former mine workings may have contaminated land issues.
- The ROMPS may provide an opportunity to improve operating and environmental standards within the quarrying industry.
- Ten sites have been identified within Strangford and Lecale AONB which have the level of geological significance to be a primary site for a UNESCO Global Geopark. There are a further thirteen of geological significance outside the AONB.
- High quality agricultural land is a valuable and finite resource. Within the Plan area, there are areas of agricultural land comprising some of the best and most versatile in NI.

## 5.8 Transport and Accessibility

### 5.8.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Overarching regional planning policy for transport aims to deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure. Integral to this is an underlying drive to improve transport connectivity, accessibility, efficiency and social inclusivity. Regional policy also aims to reduce our carbon footprint and mitigate and adapt to climate change whilst improving air quality. Some measures to achieve this are directly linked to transport and include reducing emissions from transport, improving energy efficiency and protecting Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

Encouraging people to use public transport and to consider active travel options like walking and cycling is key to achieving regional policy outcomes. This is reflected in the policy objectives for transport in the SPPS along with objectives for adequate parking facilities and road safety. The LDP will also be fundamental to promoting and enabling sustainable transport, but a behavioural shift within society is also required, both at home and at the workplace.

One of the strategic outcomes of the draft PfG centres on connecting people and opportunities through infrastructure, which links to providing a sustainable transport system. Improving transport connections, increasing the use of public transport and active travel, increasing environmental sustainability and improving air quality are four indicators to measure progress on this strategic outcome.

The Council's Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development includes increasing the use of public transport and promoting active travel as key objectives. It advocates a sustainable transport strategy that promotes the use of public transport and active travel options. It aims to seek increased investment with public transport providers and government for infrastructure work, including services that are more frequent, new routes, and park and ride/share facilities. The strategy also highlights the potential of the future expansion of existing greenways.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, refers to a growing and aging population that is mostly urban-based in the north of the Borough but acknowledges the significant number of people also living in rural communities. It is evident from these defining aspects of the area that there will be several challenges faced in providing an adequate and accessible transport system for all residents and visitors without negatively affecting communities, the economy, or the unique natural environment of the Borough area.

In the Council's Community Plan, *'The Big Plan'*, the vision refers to, 'a vibrant, connected, healthy, safe and prosperous place to be' while several of the Plan's outcomes are based on aspirations directly linked to ensuring people can access adequate transport links and appropriate services, including green infrastructure with walking and cycling options. Outcomes of the Plan such as people enjoying 'good health and wellbeing', and people benefitting from 'access to a well-managed sustainable environment', would support provision of a more varied transport system that enables higher levels of accessibility to active and sustainable travel that can help to connect people and places.

### 5.8.2 Baseline Information

Relevant baseline information for Transport and Accessibility is presented in the Local Development Plan Position Papers on Transportation and Environmental Resilience. The NINIS also provides statistical data on transport related topics for the Ards and North Down Borough. This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Air Quality, Climate Change, Natural Resources and Landscape sections of this report.

### *Transport Emissions*

In Northern Ireland (NI), the transport sector is the second biggest emitter of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) and contributes 22% of total GHG emissions<sup>1</sup>. The emissions are a by-product from the combustion of fossil fuels and in spite of increasingly efficient vehicles, emissions have increased since 2014. In NI, the transport sector has shown an increase on baseline levels (1990) of just over 29%<sup>2</sup>. Between 2015 and 2016, emissions increased by 1.9%. GHGs are linked to a warming climate and the transport sector has a responsibility to reduce emissions. This could be achieved through the planning of transport routes that enable shorter journeys and the integration of public transport and active travel options.

Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) is also generated from road traffic. It can cause respiratory issues with prolonged exposure periods particularly increasing associated risks. In NI, it is measured across 15 automatically managed sites and based on an annual mean limit (40µg/m<sup>3</sup>), set by the UK Air Quality Strategy, exceedances were recorded at a quarter of sites<sup>3</sup>, although none of these are located in the Council area. Road transport also contributes to levels of airborne particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) which can particularly affect people with heart and lung issues.

### *Transport Routes*

There are a number of protected routes across the Council area including the A2 – Belfast to Bangor, the A20 – Belfast to Newtownards, the A21 – Bangor to Ballygowan (via Newtownards), and the A48 – Newtownards to Donaghadee. The A20 and A21 are also part of the Regional Strategic Transport Network<sup>4</sup>. The Council area has the fourth highest amount of dual carriageway present (26.4km), which is located in the north of the Borough but it also has the fifth lowest amount of single carriageway relative to other Council areas. Likewise, there are a low number of unclassified, C and B roads; and no motorway is present<sup>5</sup>. The Ards Peninsula has an absence of protected routes and main links. Its ‘rural nature’<sup>6</sup> may increase local reliance on cars for travel, and as the peninsula is ‘not well served by public transport’<sup>7</sup>.

### *Car Ownership*

In 2017, the total number of licensed vehicles in the Council area reached nearly 99,000<sup>8</sup>. This is the fifth highest amount relative to other Council areas. Census 2011 figures also show that car ownership per household is above the NI average for households with one, two and three vehicles; and only slightly below the NI average for households with 4 or more vehicles. Over 42% of households have access to at least one vehicle but 17% of households have no car and may be reliant on public transport or other options such as lift shares, taxis and active travel<sup>9</sup>. The level of car ownership may be exacerbated by the rural nature of the Ards Peninsula and the lack of access in some areas to public transport options. Although all towns in the Borough have had pedestrian accessibility improved, they remain ‘dominated by the existing road network’<sup>10</sup>.

### *Travel to Work/Study*

Within the Borough, there are approximately 97,541 people in employment, at school, or in study. In total, just over 68% of this group drive or travel as a passenger in a car or van to their place of work, school, or study<sup>11</sup>. Figures from the Census 2011 show that nearly 12% of residents use public transport to travel to work or their place of study (8.93% by bus and 2.73% by train). Nearly 10% of

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<sup>1</sup> DAERA 2018: Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

<sup>2</sup> DAERA 2018: Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

<sup>3</sup> DAERA (2018): Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 10

<sup>4</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Transportation

<sup>5</sup> NINIS: Travel and Transport – Road Lengths (administrative geographies)

<sup>6</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>7</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Transportation

<sup>8</sup> NINIS: Cars – Vehicles (administrative geographies)

<sup>9</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Transportation

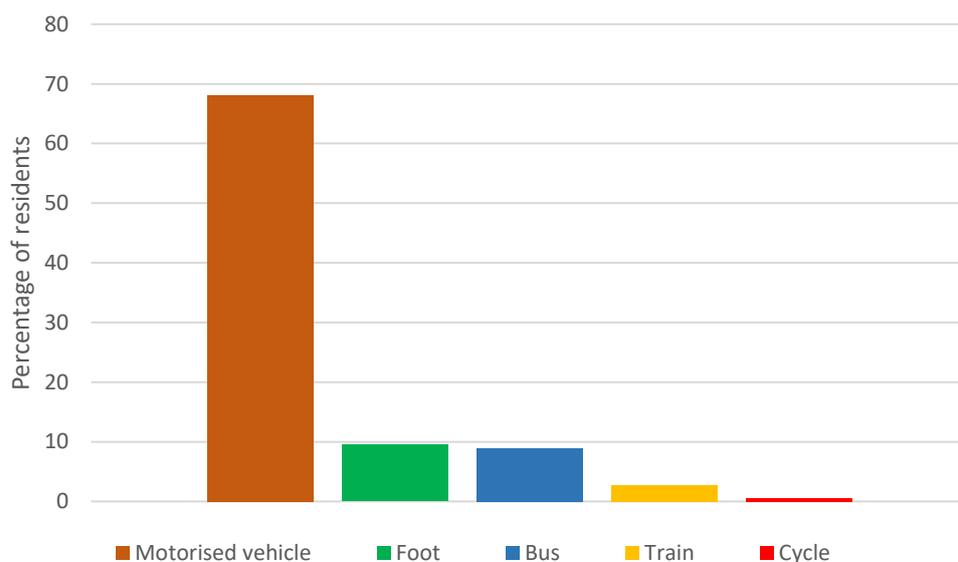
<sup>10</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Transportation

<sup>11</sup> NINIS Census 2011: Method of travel to work or place of study (resident population) KS702NI (administrative geographies)

commuters walk and less than 1% cycle. These figures reflect regional figures where 13% of those sampled sample walk and 2% cycle<sup>1</sup>. Although 9.45% of residents work or study from home, the majority remain reliant on motorised transport. Using public transport and active travel helps to reduce the number of vehicles on the road, which helps reduce transport emissions and helps to maintain air quality.

Figure 5.8.1 shows a breakdown of the chosen modes of travel. The 68% of the population that are reliant on motorised vehicles includes those who are passengers (14.98%), car pool (17.31%), use taxis (0.79%) or motorbikes (0.49%).

**Figure 5.8.1: Modes of Travel to Work or Place of Study in Ards and North Down Borough**



Source: NINIS Census 2011: Method of travel to work or place of study (resident population) KS702NI (administrative geographies)

Census 2011 data shows that the majority of people use motorised vehicles for longer journeys with car use particularly relied upon for journeys between 5km, 10km and 20km long. However, of the total number of residents using motorised vehicles to travel to work, 10.5% are travelling less than 2km and nearly 12% are travelling less than 5km.

### *Electric Vehicles*

In an attempt to help combat climate change, the transport industry has been developing measures to improve fuel efficiency as well as use of alternative fuels. Electric vehicles are now becoming more common because they emit less GHG emissions than petrol or diesel. Currently seven charging points are located in the Borough but the majority of these are in the Belfast to Bangor area. The transport sector is one of the main contributors to GHG emissions in NI and needs to reduce its impact and shift away from fossil fuels<sup>2</sup>. There is likely to be an increased demand for accessible electric vehicle charging points as low emission vehicles become more mainstream. Further information is in the Climate Change section of this report.

### *Ferry Transport*

Strangford Lough is a prominent natural feature within the Council area. To travel between Portaferry, which is located at the tip of the Ards Peninsula within the Council area and Strangford, it takes approximately 90 minutes by car, or eight minutes by the ferry. A regular ferry service runs throughout the year with capacity for up to 27 cars and 260 passengers.

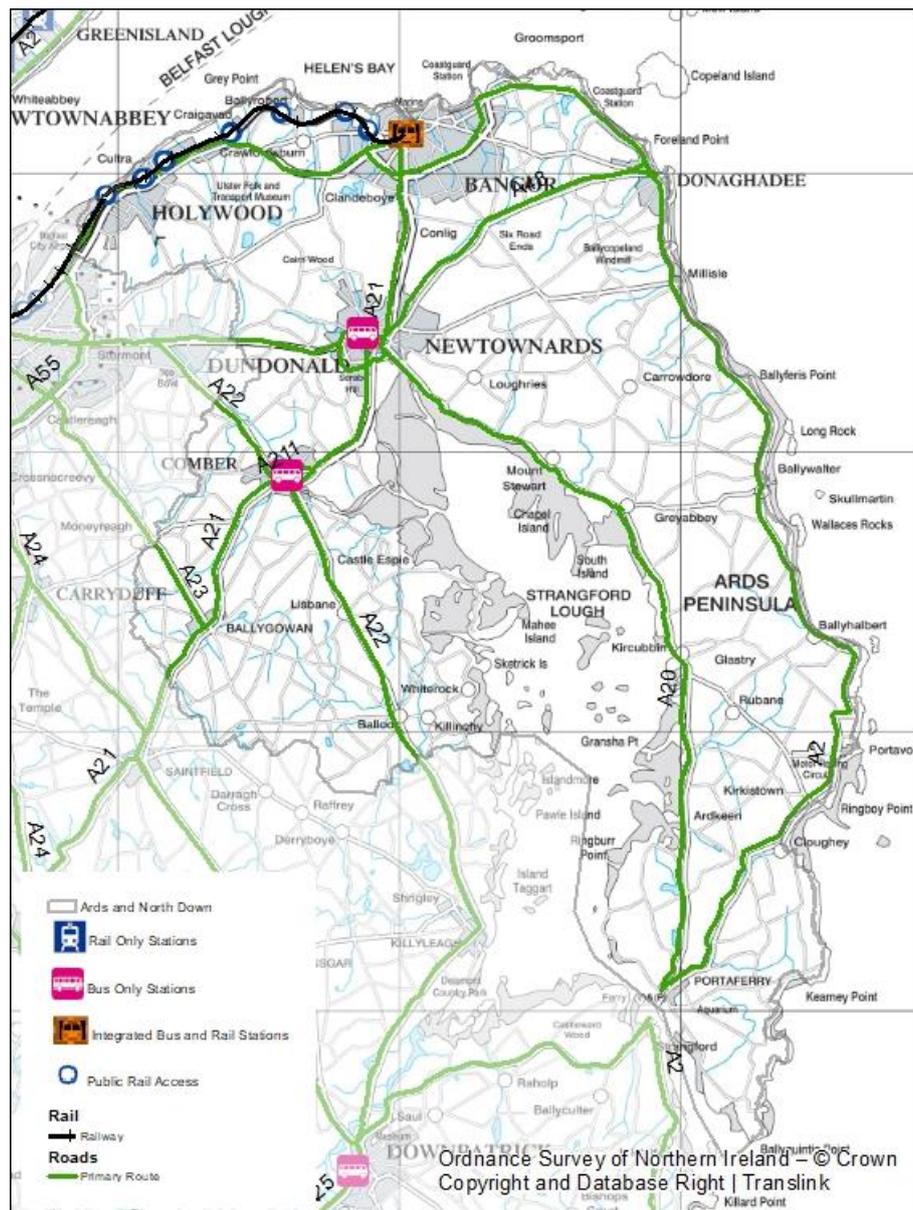
<sup>1</sup> Department for Infrastructure March 2018: Publication of Walking and Cycling to/from Work in Northern Ireland 2016/17

<sup>2</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan Position Paper: Environmental Resilience

### Public Transport

The Borough benefits from both bus and rail services. There is an integrated station in Bangor with a rail connection to Belfast. Two other bus stations are located in Newtownards and Comber. Ulsterbus and Belfast Metro Services serve the Borough from the main stations out to most towns, villages and small settlements. Rural areas across the Borough are less accessible by public transport and particularly the southern half of the Ards Peninsula<sup>1</sup>. Ards and North Down Borough are working on a Community Trails project in the Ards Peninsula area to help connect communities to facilities, services and open/green spaces using walking and cycling routes<sup>2</sup>. More information is below. Figure 5.8.2: Distribution of Public Transport Hubs in Ards and North Down Borough

Figure 5.8.2 Primary Transport Links in Ards and North Down



Source: Spatial NI

### Active Travel

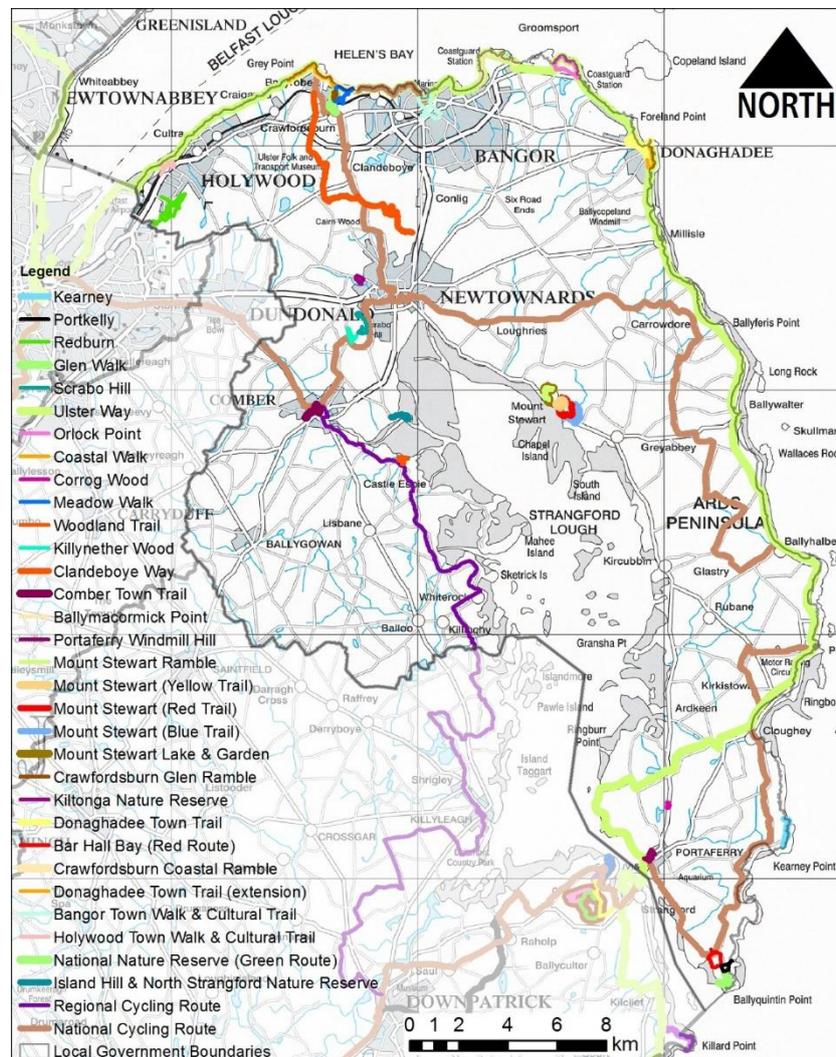
Walking and cycling routes can connect communities to facilities and services, as well as to open and green space and the wider countryside. The concept of active travel can enable people to access

<sup>1</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan Position Paper: Transportation

<sup>2</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan Position Paper: Transportation

places without using a vehicle as well as provide benefits for local air quality and people’s health and well-being. The LDP can be used to encourage and support active travel as a consideration in new developments and projects as well as existing towns.

Figure 5.8.3: Cycling and Walking Routes in the Ards and North Down Borough



Source: Sustrans, WalkNI (Ulster Way link and quality sections shown as one route)

In total, there are 31 established walking routes within the Borough including a section of the Ulster Way. There are five walks in the Mount Stewart area and a similar amount in the Crawfordsburn area including a substantial walk from Helen’s Bay to Whitespots Country Park. There are also several coastal walks located from Hollywood to Donaghadee. These include the Crawfordsburn Coastal Ramble and walks at Ballymacormick Point and Orlock Point. These all follow the Ulster Way which stretches along the coast from Hollywood to Bangor to Donaghadee to Cloughey and then across the Ards Peninsula to Portaferry. It starts again in Strangford where there are also several other walks located in and around Castle Ward, including the Lecale Way. These walks are located in another jurisdiction and present an opportunity for cross Council working on active travel routes that could support local level tourism and other economic initiatives. Likewise within the Borough there may be opportunities to connect existing routes together such as at Ballyquintan Point and Kearney Point.

A national cycling route (99) already connects these walks in the Ards Peninsula as the route connects Portaferry to Newtownards via the coast. At Newtownards, cyclists can go north to Bangor (93) or southwest to Comber and on to Belfast via the Comber Greenway (more information below). A

regional route (20) can also take cyclists from Comber and along the west coast of Strangford Lough<sup>1</sup>. Again, there may be opportunities to improve route connectivity to other active travel routes and improve accessibility such as at Island Hill. All active travel routes are shown in Figure 5.8.3. More information is on the WalkNI and Sustrans sites.

### Greenways

Figure 5.8.4: Map of Primary and Secondary Greenway Routes



Source: Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) 2016: Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways

In 2016, the Department for Infrastructure published A Strategic Plan for Greenways<sup>2</sup>. It identifies 1000 km of greenway routes made up from potential primary and secondary networks, with much of the disused railway network used to connect people and places. A third tier of community greenways could also be feasible that would help further connect local communities to facilities and services; to local green and open space; and with neighbouring communities.

The Comber Greenway is a seven-mile traffic free walk and cycleway on the route of a disused railway line. There are preliminary plans to extend the route by another 7 miles on to Newtownards – this is not shown in Figure 5.8.4. The Comber Greenway is an excellent example of a local level greenway project. There are two other community greenways in the Borough. Ballycrochan Walkway and Bangor Parks Walkway; both located in the North Down area of the Borough.

### 5.8.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, emissions from the transport sector are less likely to decrease. Without current spatial information, there is likely to be an increased risk of missing key opportunities to integrate efficient public transport and active travel routes that can help people reduce their reliance on the car. Development of land based on older information is unlikely to be able to consider the

<sup>1</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan Position Paper: Transportation

<sup>2</sup> Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) (2016): Exercise-Explore-Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways

most sustainable development of current land in terms of journey times, route linkages and accessibility, as well as provision of alternative modes of sustainable and active travel options.

#### 5.8.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Transport and Accessibility

- There is a need to reduce pollutant emissions from the transport sector and this could be partly achieved through the planning of transport routes that enable shorter journeys and the integration of public transport and active travel options.
- Reliance on the car is high with households able to access one, two or three vehicles above the NI average.
- Reliance on the car is high but a significant amount of households do not have access to a private vehicle and are reliant upon public transport, taxis or walking and cycling.
- Although there are bus and rail services in the Borough, the number of people using public transport or active travel to get to work or school is below the NI average.
- There is an opportunity to apply spatial planning to help enable people to live more sustainable lifestyles through a choice of transport options.
- Measures are needed to help encourage use of more sustainable forms of transport than petrol/diesel vehicles – electric vehicles, public transport, active travel – and to reduce reliance on the car.
- Measures are needed to help futureproof the Borough’s transport routes toward a more sustainable future – integration of active travel routes and park and ride/share facilities.
- Measures may be needed that focus on the issues faced by people living in the rural areas and more remote parts of the Borough.
- The Portaferry to Strangford ferry service cuts down an alternative road journey by 46-miles.
- There is potential for new greenway routes to be developed and existing routes to be extended with multiple benefits for health and well-being, the local environment and the local economy.
- Additional financial support for community and public transport is likely to be a future consideration.
- There is potential to connect existing walking and cycling routes together, as well as across Council boundaries, whilst enhancing accessibility with new local level routes.
- Planning to connect active travel routes across Council boundaries presents an opportunity to help support local level economic initiatives.
- Pedestrian access in town centres has improved but the road networks still take priority which may have potential negative impacts in the long term may decrease air quality.
- There is potential to improve local level active travel routes in the Ards Peninsula to improve people’s access to facilities, services and the outdoors in partnership with the Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership.

## 5.9 Air Quality

### 5.9.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Air quality is an important indicator of local, regional and international environmental conditions as it helps to indicate levels and sources of air pollutants and air pollution trends. Air pollution is both an urban and a rural issue that can affect human health, but when levels of certain substances such as nitrogen, sulphur or ammonia are exceeded, the effects on ecosystems can also be adverse.

DAERA and Councils manage air quality in Northern Ireland in compliance with domestic legislation (the Environment Order 2002, the Air Quality Regulations (NI) 2003 and the Air Quality Standards Regulations (NI) 2010). These stem from European Air Quality Directives but an Air Quality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2007 provides the strategic framework for air quality in Northern Ireland (NI).

Air quality objectives are set at a regional level and include limits for air pollutants. These are primarily based on ensuring protection of human health and sensitive habitats. Other measures include smoke control areas and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Regional policy thus recommends developing policy links between air quality and climate change.

Overarching regional planning guidance highlights agriculture, transport and energy supply as the three sectors contributing most to a warming climate in Northern Ireland. All these sources emit other air pollutants in addition to greenhouse gases. Agricultural land makes up a significant amount of land cover in Northern Ireland; we remain heavily reliant on private car use for journeys and we are mostly dependent on fossil fuels for our energy supply. Air quality does not have a specific planning policy, but under the SPPS it can be a material consideration.

In the draft PfG, there are several outcomes that can be linked to good air quality<sup>1</sup>. These include outcomes to live and work sustainably – protecting the environment; to enjoy long healthy, active lives; and to create a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest. Indicators to help us determine progress in achieving all of the draft PfG outcomes include improving air quality, as well as increasing healthy life expectancy, reducing preventable deaths and increasing environmental sustainability. Improving air quality is a fundamental aspect of sustainable development as it is important for the quality of our environment, the health of our society and the sustainability of our economy.

In the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, the purpose of it is presented as to make the Ards and North Down area 'the best place to live, work, visit and invest' with its vision referring to a healthy place 'where people enjoy an excellent quality of life'. The Plan has set three objectives around people, place and prosperity to help achieve its vision and purpose. Measures of success in achieving these objectives include people's perception of their quality of life and their area, success in environmental award schemes, and level of investment across the area, and business activity. These would all be supported by measures that could help ensure clean air.

The Council's Community Plan, '*The Big Plan*', has a vision for the Borough to be a healthy place with 'empowered, resilient individuals and communities'. There are five outcomes of which one is focused on ensuring people 'enjoy good health and wellbeing'. Positive mental wellbeing and physical activity are acknowledged as steps toward this outcome. The LDP provides an opportunity to help spatially manage development and its potential impacts on local air quality in a positive way.

### 5.9.2 Baseline Information

Relevant information is in the LDP Position Papers on 'Transportation' and 'Environmental Resilience'. This topic overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Transport and

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<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland Executive: Draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-2021

Accessibility, Climate Change, Natural Resources and Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage sections of this report.

### *Air Quality*

There are currently no active AQMAs in Ards and North Down<sup>1</sup>. Air quality across the area is ‘generally good’<sup>2</sup>. This is in part due to the Borough’s coastal location and also because there are only a few sources of industrial pollution<sup>3</sup>. However, both the transport and agricultural sectors are evident. It is important to consider appropriate locations for development so that air quality can be maintained.

Nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) are primarily released from the combustion of fossil fuels used in transport, energy and industry. These nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) can quickly contribute to the formation of acid rain and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), both of which are harmful to the natural and built environment<sup>4</sup>. Particulate pollution also occurs when fine particles are emitted during combustion of fossil fuels and from road transport. These particles are called particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) and can be breathed into the lungs<sup>5</sup>. Impacts on human health are referred to below. Aerial emissions of ammonia and methane are the primary air pollutants from the agricultural sector.

Information on the Borough’s air quality and monitoring can be accessed at [www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk) where progress reports and screening assessments can also be found.

### *Air Quality Monitoring*

Urban background levels of NO<sub>2</sub> have ‘remained relatively stable over the past number of years’ but at roadside sites, levels have been variable<sup>6</sup>. In 2016, NO<sub>2</sub> was monitored across 15 sites in NI including one at the North Down Holywood A2. Sites monitor annual and hourly mean levels against target values set under the UK Air Quality Strategy (AQS). The annual mean concentration of PM<sub>10</sub> across urban areas in Northern Ireland in 2016 was 17 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, almost three times the annual mean for the Lough Navar rural background monitoring site (6µg/m<sup>3</sup>)<sup>7</sup>. The A2 route is now the main area of concern within the Borough for air quality issues linked to transport emissions of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub><sup>8</sup>.

Monitoring since 2001 of ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) levels in urban and rural sites has shown exceedances of the annual 8 hour mean objective set under the UK AQS targets at an urban and a rural location. There has been a great deal of variability.

The LDP Position Paper Environmental Resilience refers to one automatic air quality monitoring site located on the A2 in Holywood for NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. The paper also refers to 15 NO<sub>2</sub> diffusion tube monitoring sites located along the A2 and in ‘hotspots where there is traffic congestion’ at rush hour in Newtownards, Holywood and Comber. In the 2018 Updating and Screening Assessment Report for Local Air Quality Management, monitoring showed no exceedances of air quality strategy objectives and ‘no particular trends’ from the NO<sub>2</sub> diffusion tube monitoring. However, two sites on the A2 and near flats were near to the objective limit and monitoring at all sites shows increased levels of NO<sub>2</sub><sup>9</sup>.

### *Transport Sources*

NO<sub>2</sub> is generated from the combustion of fossil fuels and the transport sector is a significant source. The UK Clean Air Strategy has highlighted traffic emissions as one of the top three sources of air pollution problems in Northern Ireland. There are several main roads located in and around the northern part of the Council which are principal routes into the city of Belfast. Reliance across the

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<sup>1</sup> [www.airqualityni.gov.uk](http://www.airqualityni.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>3</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>4</sup> [www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk)

<sup>5</sup> [www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk)

<sup>6</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 2018 (Published 31 May 2018)

<sup>7</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 2018 (Published 31 May 2018)

<sup>8</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>9</sup> ANDBC Updating and Screening Assessment Local Air Quality Management June 2018 - Figure 2.14

Council on road transport is high due to the rural nature of much of the Borough, which is acknowledged as suffering from less regular public transport services in the Transport Position Paper. The number of households with access to one, two or three vehicles is above the NI average. More information is in the Transport and Accessibility section.

Road transport is a significant contributor to air pollution. There is a planned phase out of diesel and petrol vehicles by 2040, which should help to significantly reduce air pollutants and improve air quality<sup>1</sup>. As part of the transition toward a cleaner transport system, seven electric charging points have been made available in the Borough. None of these are high speed chargers and over half are located in the north of the Borough between Holywood and Bangor<sup>2</sup>.

### *Agricultural Sources*

Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) is an air pollutant with sources in transport and industry but it is usually associated with the agriculture sector<sup>3</sup>. High emissions are associated with intensive dairy, pig and poultry farming and it has been identified in a UK Clean Air Strategy as one of the main sources of air pollution in NI<sup>4</sup>. In NI 93% of NH<sub>3</sub> emissions derives from livestock and 7% from fertilisers<sup>5</sup>. It is not included as an objective in the Air Quality Regulations but it can be linked to the deterioration of habitats and negative effects on species<sup>6</sup>. Since 2001, NH<sub>3</sub> emissions from livestock have increased by over 7.4% as the number of cattle, pigs and poultry has increased. Emissions from fertilisers have reduced since 2001 by 32.5% due to reduced applications on farmland. However, since 2001, overall NH<sub>3</sub> emissions have increased by 3%. More information is in the Climate Change section of this report.

### *Energy Sources*

In NI, there has been a rise in the use of natural gas for residential heating and a move away from oil and coal for domestic heating purposes. Electricity generated from renewables has also increased every year since 2001<sup>7</sup>. Diversification in our energy use means that pollutants such as sulphur dioxide and carbon emissions from fossil fuel combustion have been reducing. However, in the Borough where the gas network is limited<sup>8</sup>, over half of all households use oil heating and less than a quarter use gas<sup>9</sup>. The remaining households use coal and/or some other source. More information is in the Material Assets and Climate Change sections of this report.

### *Smoke Control Areas*

Some areas within the Borough have been declared as Smoke Control Areas<sup>10</sup>. These have been created to help improve local air quality by reducing air pollutants like smoke, sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and PM<sub>10</sub> from the burning of fossil fuels. In the Borough, there are few industrial processes<sup>11</sup> and homes are generally heated using oil 60% or gas 24%<sup>12</sup>.

### *Human Health*

There is an important link between air quality and human health. It is estimated that in the United Kingdom, life expectancy is shortened by eight months because of poor air quality<sup>13</sup>. Public Health England<sup>14</sup> estimates that in NI around 553 deaths annually may be attributed to pollution from

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<sup>1</sup> Climate NI website

<sup>2</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>3</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 10 May 2018

<sup>4</sup> BBC News: Clean Air Strategy: Traffic Pollution 'significant problem' in NI. January 2019

<sup>5</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 10 May 2018

<sup>6</sup> Air Pollution Information System UK

<sup>7</sup> DAERA, Carbon Intensity Indicators 2016

<sup>8</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>9</sup> NISRA: Census 2011

<sup>10</sup> DAERA Smoke Control Areas North Down and Ards District Council (found at <http://www.airqualityni.co.uk/laqm/smoke-control-areas?id=458>)

<sup>11</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>12</sup> NINIS: Ards and North Down as 100 households

<sup>13</sup> DAERA presentation for draft Programme for Government Air Quality Stakeholder Consultation, August 2016

<sup>14</sup> Public Health England (2014) Estimating Local Mortality Burdens Associated with Particulate Air Pollution, pp. 21

particulates, of which 59 occur in Ards and North Down. NO<sub>2</sub> can be a severe respiratory irritant and prolonged exposure can be particularly dangerous for children<sup>1</sup>. NO<sub>x</sub> readily mix with other chemicals to form acid rain and O<sub>3</sub>. Acid rain pollutes land and water systems whilst O<sub>3</sub> at the ground level acts as a respiratory irritant<sup>2</sup>. PM<sub>10</sub> can cause heart and lung issues with carcinogenic risks and the majority of PM<sub>10</sub> in urban areas is from road transport<sup>3</sup>.

NISRA publishes death rates for the number of related respiratory deaths for men and women under the age of 75. The figures for Ards and North Down Borough are well below the Northern Ireland averages<sup>4</sup>.

### 5.9.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, without up to date spatial information there may be a greater risk of declining air quality due to inappropriately located development. There may be fewer opportunities to spatially influence development that could help to maintain or improve local air quality.

### 5.9.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Air Quality

- There are no air quality management areas (AQMAs) in the Borough and air quality is generally good.
- There are smoke control areas in some parts of the Borough where authorised fuels must be used.
- Air pollutants from road transport can be linked to respiratory illnesses in NI but the Borough has below the NI average for deaths related to respiratory illnesses.
- Maintaining local air quality should be a consideration when zoning land for potential use or development so that inappropriate adjacent land uses are avoided.
- The A2 is an area of concern for air quality because of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) emissions from road transport.
- Measures will be needed to increase the number of electric charging points across the Borough and particularly in the Ards Peninsula.
- Measures to encourage people to use more sustainable transport options will be needed to help reduce reliance on cars and transport emissions.
- Measures to help reduce ammonia emissions from the agriculture sector could help to improve air quality in some rural areas.
- Support for appropriate renewables will help further reduce reliance on traditional energy sources that cause air pollution.

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<sup>1</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 10 May 2018

<sup>2</sup> [www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk)

<sup>3</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report Issue 10 May 2018

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Home.aspx>

## 5.10 Climate Change

### 5.10.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The typical weather conditions of an area are based on natural variabilities that create the climate. These variabilities can cause extreme weather events but also normal or expected conditions. Several factors that affect our climate include how near to the sea and how far from the equator we are, as well as local topography, wind direction and ocean current. During the last few decades, it has become more and more accepted that human activity has also affected usual weather patterns and climate, on a global level.

Since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Industrial Revolution, greenhouse gases (GHG) - carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and fluorinated gases - have been entering the atmosphere at an accelerated rate from man's activities. These additional gases are mostly from fossil fuel combustion but also deforestation and agricultural practices. They add to background levels and increase the natural warming of the planet - the 'greenhouse effect'. Climate scientists have estimated that the earth's atmosphere has already warmed from pre-Industrial Revolution times by nearly 1°C and that global sea levels have increased by 15-20 centimetres with thermal expansion and ice loss from glaciers and land<sup>1</sup>.

The RDS recommends we reduce our carbon footprint, adapt to climate change and deliver a sustainable and secure energy supply. Reducing GHG emissions is the only way to mitigate human-induced climate change. In the SPPS, climate change is viewed as a central challenge to achieving sustainable development. The SPPS promotes the planning system as a tool to shape new and existing developments to help combat climate change by promoting sustainable patterns of development and transport, with renewables, energy efficiency and green/blue infrastructure accounted for.

The first UK National Adaptation Programme (NAP) was published in July 2013 and the second published in July 2018. Northern Ireland's NAP was launched in 2014. The SPPS details mitigation and adaptation for climate change and was informed by the Northern Ireland NAP. The second Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) (2018-2023) will provide local level evidence with targeted local adaptation information. Flooding has been identified as 'potentially one of the most significant and urgent risks' in NI<sup>2</sup>.

The NI Executive's draft PfG includes 14 strategic outcomes based on 42 indicators. One of these outcomes is 'to live and work sustainably – protecting the environment'. There are nine indicators to help achieve progress on this outcome. These include increasing innovation in our economy, increasing use of public transport and active travel, increasing environmental sustainability (by measuring GHGs), increasing household waste recycling, and improving air quality<sup>3</sup>.

In the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, there are a number of objectives linked to people, prosperity and place. The vision for the Borough is to make it a 'more prosperous, vibrant, healthy, sustainable place where people enjoy an excellent quality of life'. The Council's Community Plan 2017-2035, recognises the importance of having a well-managed sustainable environment that is resilient to climate change. *'The Big Plan'* realises the significance of mitigating and adapting to climate change and proposes a number of actions in relation to increasing renewable energy generation, expansion of greenways, coastal management and protection of natural habitats. By taking account of climate change, the Council can help to ensure a resilient and sustainable LDP with future development planned for in the context of mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

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<sup>1</sup> UK Climate Change Risk Assessment Synthesis Report 2016

<sup>2</sup> Department of Environment (2014): Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme

<sup>3</sup> Northern Ireland Executive: Draft Programme for Government 2016-2021

### 5.10.2 Baseline Information

Relevant information is presented in the LDP Position Papers on The Coast, Environmental Resilience, and Natural Environment. This topic also overlaps with the Health & Well-Being, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Water, Natural Resources and the Historic Environment sections of this report.

#### *International context*

In 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was set up by the World Meteorological Organisation and the United Nations Environment Program. The IPCC's role is to provide Assessment Reports based on scientific and technical information, with response strategies – adaptation and mitigation - to the predicted impacts of human-induced climate change. The IPCC's first assessment report was in 1990 and helped create the international United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The IPCC delivers regular reports on climate change issues and its fourth in 2007, began to integrate climate change with sustainable development policies. The fifth Assessment Report (AR5) was released between 2013 and 2014. In it, levels of GHG are reported as the highest they have been since the pre-industrial era. Atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O are the highest they have been in the last 800,000 years. Their effects are extremely likely to be the dominant cause of observed global warming since the 1950s. It reports that GHG emissions need to reduce by 40-70% by 2050 to have a likely chance of avoiding the 2°C increase.

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, known as the Earth Summit, partially led to the UNFCCC - the Global Warming Convention. The UNFCCC led to countries committing to reduce their GHG emissions to help combat climate change under the Kyoto Protocol (1997). The Kyoto Protocol set internationally binding emission reductions. Heavier burdens were placed on developed nations, where the amount of GHG emissions were higher. The United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland were both signatories. Although the Protocol was adopted in the 1990s, the first commitment period did not start until 2008. We are now in the second commitment period, from 2013 to 2020, and an 18% reduction in GHG emissions on 1990 levels is expected<sup>1</sup>. The UNFCCC was created to help reduce global warming and cope with its consequences and it remains the key international treaty to do this<sup>2</sup>.

In 2016, the UNFCCC met in Paris to discuss strengthening the global response to climate change. With the support of 196 countries, the Paris Agreement was made. It aims to pursue efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C or less on pre-industrial levels. Ambitious GHG reductions from 2020 in Nationally Determined Contributions are requirements of this agreement. In total, 179 out of 197 countries have ratified the Paris Agreement, including the UK and Ireland<sup>3</sup>.

#### *UK Context*

The UK was the first country to have a legally binding commitment to reduce GHG emissions with the UK Climate Change Act 2008.<sup>4</sup> It led to the formation of the independent body, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), and the CCC's Adaptation Sub-Committee. These advise the UK and devolved administrations on carbon budgets and preparing for climate change. The devolved administrations of the United Kingdom (UK) are expected to contribute to the reductions stated in the Climate Change Act, which means by 2050 an 80% reduction of GHG emissions based on 1990 levels should be evident. The latest projections published by DAERA<sup>5</sup> in December 2017 indicate that GHG emissions will be 31.2% lower in 2030 than in 1990, which is close to the target. The 2008 Act also requires the

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Climate Change (UNCC) The Paris Agreement <https://unfccc.int/>

<sup>2</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) <http://www.ipcc.ch/index.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process/the-paris-agreement/status-of-ratification>

<sup>4</sup> Defra 2012: A Climate Change Risk Assessment for Northern Ireland

<sup>5</sup> DAERA Statistics and Analytical Services Branch Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Projections Update published 15/12/2016

UK to produce a report every five years on the risks and opportunities from climate change. The first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) was produced in 2012.

The second CCRA Evidence Report was due to be presented to Parliament in 2017. An interim report, The UK Synthesis Report 2017, helps to detail the priorities for the UK for the next five years with six key areas of climate change risk. The six key areas are:

- flooding and coastal change
- impact of high temperatures in the built environment
- risks to natural capital
- risks of future water shortages
- impacts on the global food system, and
- risks arising from new and emerging pests and diseases<sup>1</sup>.

NI is expected to respond with its own follow up National Adaptation Report in 2019<sup>2</sup> whilst the UK's second National Adaptation Programme is due to be published in 2018. The UK's second NAP has highlighted five areas at particular risks; soils, public water supplies, flood risk, infrastructure and people<sup>3</sup>.

The most recent land and marine climate projections for the UK (UKCP18) were published in November 2018. Prior to the publication of UKCP18 the previous climate projections used were UKCP09, published in December 2009.

#### *Northern Ireland context*

##### *NI Climate Scenarios*

According to the UKCP18, by 2100, winters and summers will both be warmer; winters will have more precipitation and summers will have less. However, natural variations mean that some cold winters, some dry winters, some cool summers and some wet summers will still occur and this may need to be factored into decision-making. Sea level rise at Belfast will be 0.18 to 0.64 metres higher than the 1981-2000 average in the mid-range emissions scenario; and extreme weather events will be more likely<sup>4</sup>. For example, over a month's worth of rain fell in a few hours at the end of July 2018, after a month of very hot weather due to a heatwave over northern Europe<sup>5</sup>. The top ten warmest years in the UK have been recorded since 1990<sup>6</sup>.

Queens University Belfast manages nine climate-monitoring stations across NI for temperature and precipitation. Climate projections informed by this monitoring predict that average temperatures will increase and become progressively warmer toward the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Temperature increase will occur in all seasons, with inland areas showing a larger degree of warming than coastal areas. Summers will be drier and winters wetter but overall precipitation will fall slightly<sup>7</sup>. The NI Environmental Statistics Report 2017 also predicts an increasing average temperature for NI and a trend for increasing levels of rainfall in winter months.

To help futureproof NI for climate change, the NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme (the Adaptation Programme) was published in 2014<sup>8</sup> and it presents a cross-sectoral approach to robust mitigation and adaptation strategies for climate change in NI. It is NI's response to the risks and opportunities highlighted in the CCRA 2012. The CCRA 2012, focused on five themes:

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on Climate Change UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Evidence Report 'The CCRA at a glance'

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-climate-change-adaptation-programme>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ciwem.shorthandstories.com/NAP2018/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> Department of Environment (2014): Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme

<sup>5</sup> Climate Northern Ireland eBulletin Issue 67 August 2018

<sup>6</sup> International Journal of Climatology: The State of the UK Climate 2017 Volume 38 Issue S2

<sup>7</sup> Mullan et al (2012): Developing site-specific future temperature scenarios for Northern Ireland: addressing key issues employing a statistical downscaling approach. International Journal of Climatology, 32(13): 2007-2019; and presentation from Dr D. Mullan QUB

<sup>8</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2014

- agriculture and forestry
- business
- health and well-being
- buildings and infrastructure, and
- natural environment.

Threats and opportunities for these were presented in the Adaptation Programme. Some adaptation activities on these themes include works to reduce the risk of flooding at water treatment works and reviews by Departmental bodies into the resilience of their buildings in extreme weather events. In NI, it has been estimated that approximately 17 deaths per year can be attributed to the effects of heat<sup>1</sup> with this figure likely to increase with predicted temperature increases and exposure to sun.

The vision of the Adaptation Programme is for “A resilient NI which will take timely and well informed decisions that are responsive to the key risks and opportunities presented by climate change.” To help achieve this vision, four primary areas for action have been targeted. These are:

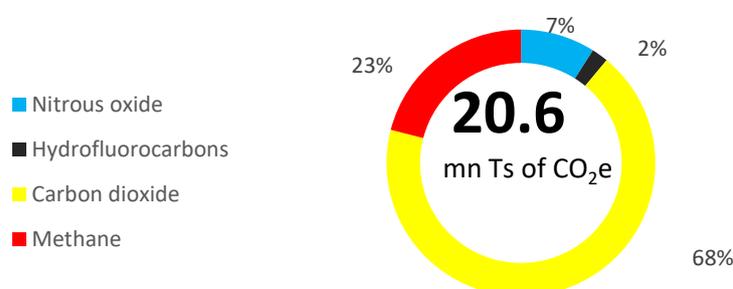
- Flooding
- Water
- Natural Environment, and
- Agriculture and Forestry

In total, 130 risks and opportunities were identified within these four primary areas. Climate change is expected to exacerbate threats to all of these. Objectives and adaptation principles for each theme are needed to help fulfil commitments under the UK Climate Change Act 2008. The Adaptation Programme identifies Councils as ‘particularly well placed to raise awareness and provide leadership through their responsibilities’, on climate change issues. The next Climate Change Adaptation Programme for NI is due in 2019.

#### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In 2016, NI accounted for 4.4% of UK GHG emissions. These were estimated to be equivalent to 20.6 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions accounted for 68% of all GHG emissions in Northern Ireland. It was the most common gas emitted from most sectors but not agriculture, or waste management. Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) was a more significant GHG from both of these sectors because of livestock and landfill. Nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) was the other significant GHG emission from the agriculture sector. This is a difficult GHG to both measure and reduce. NI accounts for a much larger share of the UK’s emissions of these gases due to the economic importance of agriculture in NI<sup>2</sup>. Overall, there was an increase in GHG emissions of 1.3% compared to 2015 but the longer-term trend showed a decrease of 16% compared to the 1990 baseline year<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 5.10.1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Northern Ireland 2016



Source: DAERA 2018, Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

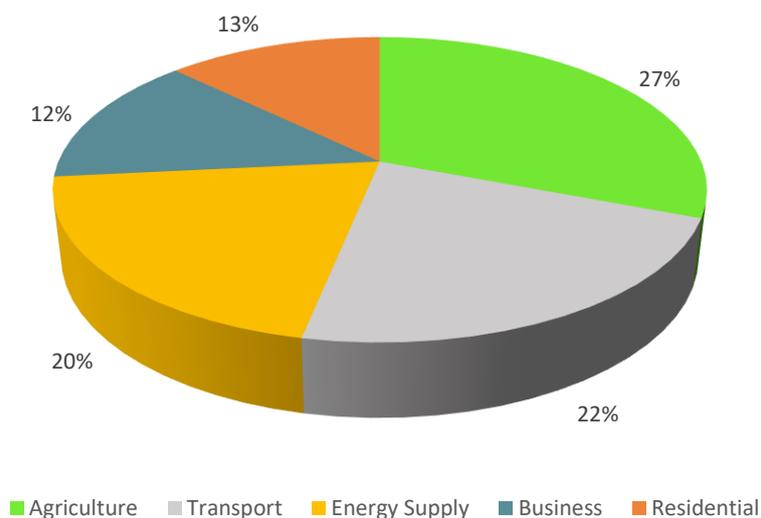
<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>2</sup> Defra 2012: A Climate Change Risk Assessment for Northern Ireland

<sup>3</sup> DAERA 2018: Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

The largest GHG emitting sectors in NI are agriculture (27%), transport (22%), energy supply (20%), business (12%) and residential (13%). GHG emissions from these sectors are by-products from farming practices, vehicle emissions and the general burning of fossil fuels for energy/electricity or heating. Most sectors have shown a long-term decreasing trend in emissions since the base year, with the largest decreases in the energy supply, residential and waste sectors. However, between 2015 and 2016, overall GHG emissions increased (1.3%) with the energy supply, agriculture, residential and transport sectors all contributing.

**Figure 5.10.2: Largest Contributors of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Northern Ireland 2016**



Source: DAERA 2018, Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

The transport and agriculture sectors both showed higher emissions in 2016 than in the baseline year with a 29.3% increase from the transport sector due to more vehicles on the road and a 1.6% increase from the agriculture sector due to more livestock. Four other sectors are also accountable for GHG emissions. These are industrial processes, land use change, public and waste management. Of these, the land use change sector has shown a 32% increase in emissions from the baseline year. This reflects losses in semi-natural land cover to developed land<sup>1</sup>.

The NI Executive's target to reduce GHG emissions on 1990 levels by at least 35% by 2025 is in place<sup>2</sup>. The draft PfG's outcome 'to live and work sustainably – protecting the environment' uses GHG emissions as an indicator of progress toward meeting this outcome. It uses NI's 2014 figure for MtCO<sub>2</sub>e and based on this, we are currently failing to meet that measure and outcome<sup>3</sup>.

### *Greenhouse Gas Emitting Sectors*

#### *Agriculture*

In 2016, the agriculture sector continued to be the main contributor of GHG emissions in Northern Ireland, totalling 27% of all emissions and an increase of 1.6% on baseline levels. Livestock and nitrogen fertiliser are two sources and account for 93% and 7% of all ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) emissions<sup>4</sup>. The agriculture sector is also the main source of CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O, accounting for 85% and 90% of total emissions. Although the sector emits a relatively low amount of CO<sub>2</sub>, it emits N<sub>2</sub>O to a significant level. Farming is an important part of NI's economy so there is a responsibility to develop effective measures that will help reduce GHG emissions like N<sub>2</sub>O and NH<sub>3</sub> even if they are difficult to estimate.

<sup>1</sup> DAERA 2018: Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

<sup>2</sup> www.theccc.org.uk

<sup>3</sup> DAERA 2018: Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2016 Statistical Bulletin

<sup>4</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report – March 2017

According to NINIS, there are 687 farms in the Borough. This is the second lowest of all the Councils in both quantity and area. Nearly 50% of these farms can be classified as very small but approximately 12.7% (115) are large<sup>1</sup>. Measures to reduce GHG emissions could include steps to avoid soil erosion, improve soil management, adopt organic farming methods, adopting new technologies. More information is in the Physical Resources section of this report.

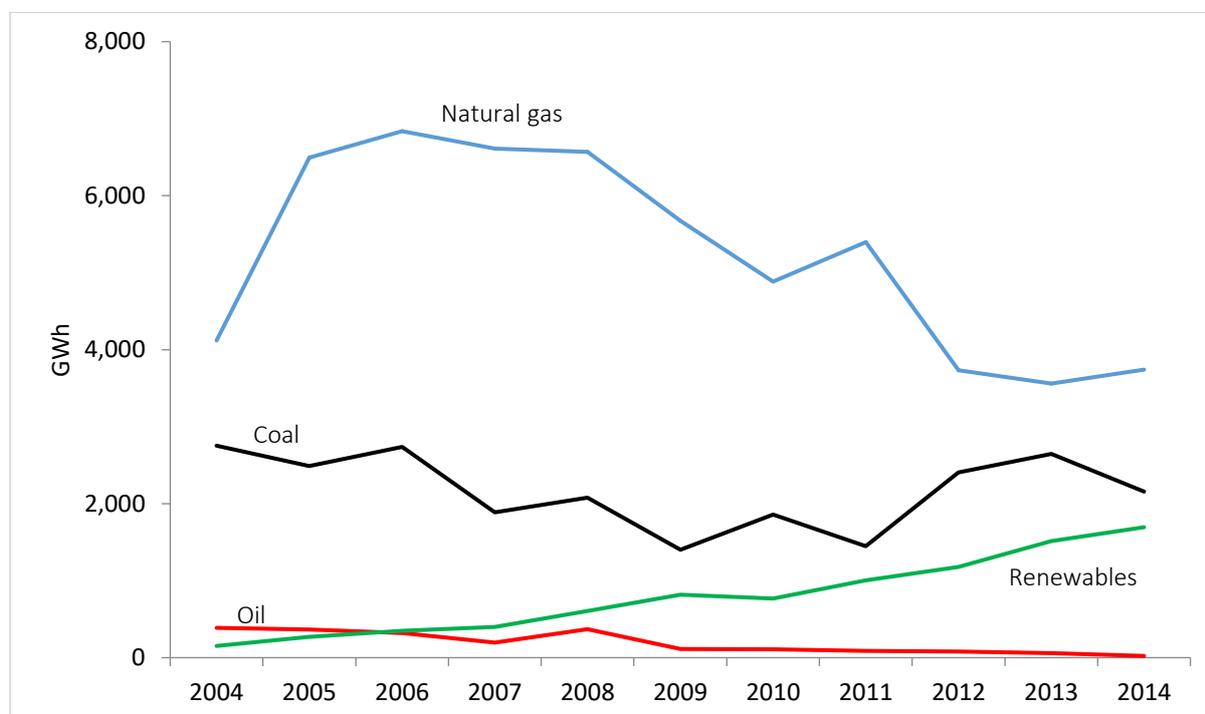
### Transport

In 2016, the transport sector accounted for 22% of all GHG emissions in NI and an increase of 29.3% on baseline levels. This reflects the reliance people have in NI for motorised vehicles and also reflects the rural nature of the country. It is a significant contributor of CO<sub>2</sub> but also nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) emitted from the combustion of fossil fuels. NO<sub>2</sub> can cause respiratory issues and is partly why in the UK from 2040, all vehicles will be electric or hybrid, as diesel and petrol vehicles will be banned<sup>2</sup>. By 2050, all cars in the UK are likely to be ultra low emission vehicles. New developments need to be encouraged to consider the infrastructure needed for these future changes in the transport system. Likewise, the LDP should be used to help reduce GHG emissions from transport by providing accessible walking and cycling routes as well as adequate public transport options<sup>3</sup>. Spatially planning land use to provide the most effective local and regional level travel routes, should help to ensure reduced car dependency and increased active travel. More information is in the Transport and Accessibility, and Air Quality sections of this report.

### Energy Supply

The energy sector (energy generation and heat production) has been one of the main contributors to reductions in GHG emissions from 27.8% in 1990 to 19% in 2015. The energy supply sector in NI has had the largest reduction in GHG emissions of all the sectors. This is due to the switch from coal and oil to natural gas; improved energy efficiency and the uptake in renewables<sup>4</sup>.

**Figure 5.10.3: Electricity Generated by Fuel Type**



Source: DAERA, Carbon Intensity Indicators 2016

<sup>1</sup> NINIS Farm Census (administrative geographies) 1999-2017

<sup>2</sup> www.climatenorthernireland.org

<sup>3</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan - Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>4</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2016 Issue 8 March 2016

There are currently two gas-fired power stations in NI and a third is planned<sup>1</sup>. Gas is less carbon intensive and more energy efficient than coal and oil, so preferred in terms of GHG emissions and efficiency. The change from coal and oil has helped to reduce GHG emissions from the sector. As policy directs the energy market toward reduced GHG emissions and a low carbon future, changes in sources and production will have to occur. These include diversity of renewables, battery storage and carbon capture projects, and a grid that can enable multiple renewable connections including for prosumers i.e. small-scale producers. More information is in the Material Assets section of this report.

### *Renewable Energy*

Renewable energy is not reliant upon fossil fuel combustion and can help reduce GHG emissions from the energy sector because it uses natural energy with a low or zero carbon footprint. The NI Executive endorsed a target of 40% of electricity consumption to be from renewables by 2020 whilst the UK has a target to reduce GHG emissions from 1990 baseline levels by 80% by 2050 (UK Climate Change Act). In 2015/16, 25.5% of NI's electricity needs were from renewables<sup>2</sup> and the Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group believes that the 40% target can be delivered<sup>3</sup>. In Northern Ireland Electricity's (NIE) 11kV Network Heat Map, land across the Borough has been classified as of significant potential for connection and additional generation, with relatively low costs<sup>4</sup>.

The Council area has a mix of renewables including wind (single turbines), solar, anaerobic and hydroelectric. The district's coastal location could provide potential for offshore wind, wave and tidal technologies, which could help to increase the diversity of renewables available. The Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2012-2020 identified the most suitable locations for appropriate renewable energy projects. A site for offshore wind was identified just off the Mourne and Strangford coastlines and two tidal sites were identified at the mouth of Strangford Lough and east of the Copeland Islands<sup>5</sup>. Although the SeaGen tidal turbine operated in Strangford Lough from 2008-2017 and surveys were carried out by First Flight Wind in support of an offshore windfarm application in 2012-14<sup>6,7</sup>, neither have led to existing operational sites. More information is in the Material Assets and Physical Resources sections of this report.

### *Residential*

The residential sector accounts for 12% of all GHG emissions in Northern Ireland and is a significant contributor of carbon dioxide<sup>8</sup>. Northern Ireland remains heavily dependent on fossil fuels for home heating but in recent years, there has been a transition away from coal and oil for heating purposes to gas. According to the 2011 Census, 60% of households in the Council area use oil but 24% use gas<sup>9</sup>. This is relatively high compared to other Councils. Emissions from houses can be linked to not just their source of fuel heating but also their energy efficiency, the materials used to build them and their location to key services<sup>10</sup>. The LDP could be used to help ensure 'the promotion of sustainable design of buildings and places' and help to reduce overall GHG emissions from the sector. Requiring green building design within the LDPs could help encourage promotion of measures that reduce GHG emissions but also help adapt to the impacts of climate change. Measures could include green roofs, passive solar design, natural lighting, access to renewables, planting greenery, incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and connecting to active travel routes. There are eight certified

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<sup>1</sup> Evermore Energy – Belfast Power Station (found at <https://evermoreenergy.com/belfastpowerstation/>)

<sup>2</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2016 Issue 8 March 2016

<sup>3</sup> RenewableUK NIRIG (Northern Ireland) (found at <http://www.renewableuk.com/page/NIRIG>)

<sup>4</sup> [www.nienetworks.co.uk](http://www.nienetworks.co.uk)

<sup>5</sup> DETI Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2012-2020

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.4coffshore.com/windfarms/first-flight-wind-united-kingdom-uk88.html>

<sup>7</sup> Down News "First Flight Wind Gathers Key Information From Survey Buoys" published October 3, 2014

<sup>8</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report – March 2017

<sup>9</sup> NINIS Local Government Districts (2014): North Down and Ards as 100 Households

<sup>10</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan - Position Paper Environmental Resilience

buildings in NI with passive home standards but only one is registered in the Ards and North Down Borough<sup>1</sup>.

### *Waste Management*

The waste management sector is responsible for 3% of GHG emissions and has seen a 68% decrease in GHG emissions from 1990 to 2015. Methane is a powerful GHG and the dominant GHG emitted from the waste management sector due to landfilling practices<sup>2</sup>. There has been a decreasing trend in emissions from the sector since the 1990 baseline year due to the closure of landfills. Currently there are no active landfill sites in the Council area and nine recycling centres. These help enable a 48% rate of reusing/recycling/composting of municipal waste<sup>3</sup>; well above the NI average of 44%. More information is in the Material Assets section of this report.

### *Impacts of Climate Change*

#### *Flooding*

Increased incidences of flooding is one of the predicted impacts of climate change. This is expected due to increased levels of precipitation, flash storm events, storm surges and higher sea levels. Flooding has been identified as '*potentially one of the most significant and urgent risks*' to NI<sup>4</sup>. It can occur near waterbodies but also from excess surface water. It is becoming increasingly accepted that having fully functional coastal and wetland ecosystems helps to absorb the impacts from flooding and storm surges<sup>5</sup>. Development in flood risk areas not only places it at risk but can increase flood risk on adjacent sites and downstream, as well as increase pressure on natural floodplains. This places risk on both the natural and built environment however, it is reported that one in ten homes in the UK is in a flood risk area<sup>6</sup>. One of the draft PfG outcomes is to '*connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure*' and this could be supported by avoiding development in or near to flood risk areas. More information on areas in the Borough at risk of significant flooding, further study and flood modelling, is in the Water section of this report.

#### *Coastal Flooding and Erosion*

A substantial amount of NI's coastline is located in the district and totals approximately 115 miles. The coastline of the Borough encompasses both that of the Irish Sea and Strangford Lough. The entire coastline is protected under various landscape and environmental designations. It is predicted that climate change will exacerbate coastal flooding from storm surges, higher sea levels, increased storm events and coastal erosion. It is 'likely that coastal erosion and sea level rise will become a significant problem for the Borough in the future'<sup>7</sup>. Coastal change including erosion is a feature of much of the district's coastline with 'coastal change hotspots' such as at Mount Stewart and Kearney already evident<sup>8</sup>.

Coastal flooding and erosion presents a very real risk to infrastructure, property, people and biodiversity. There can be health and safety issues as well as financial costs. In 2006, the DoE prepared a report to help achieve sustainable coastal management called '*Towards an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for NI 2006-2026*'. This sought to bring together all users of the coast and those involved in coastal development or management. New ideas to manage coastal erosion and defend coastal areas and communities from sea level rise, are based upon more sustainable solutions that enable ecological change and use the natural environment as opposed to concrete walls<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan - Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>2</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report – March 2017

<sup>3</sup> NINIS Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Recycling (administrative geographies) 2016

<sup>4</sup> DAERA Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2014

<sup>5</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan - Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>6</sup> [www.climatenorthernireland.org.uk](http://www.climatenorthernireland.org.uk)

<sup>7</sup> Ards and North Down Local Development Plan Position Paper The Coast

<sup>8</sup> Ards and North Down Local Development Plan Position Paper The Coast

<sup>9</sup> Ards and North Down Local Development Plan Position Paper The Coast

Any areas affected by erosion or land instability are likely to become more vulnerable but all of the Borough *'remains vulnerable to flooding events through both sea level rises and additional surface water from more frequent, prolonged rainfall'*<sup>1</sup>. There are likely to be several coastal management issues for the Council to deal with including defining its extent and acting as lead *'to pursue a co-ordinated approach'*<sup>2</sup>.

#### *Biodiversity Loss*

Climate change is expected to impact on local biodiversity, as changing climatic factors will cause habitats to alter and species to move<sup>3</sup>. In certain locations, such as coastal areas, these changes may lead to complete losses and in other areas, non-native species may be able to thrive and outcompete native species and habitats, which may attempt to relocate within their preferred climate. Buffer zones around nature conservation sites and green/blue infrastructure around priority habitats should be considered to aid movement of species due to climate change.

#### *Health*

The predicted effects of climate change include higher temperatures, milder winters, higher levels of rain and increased frequency of storm events. All of these weather events bring with them potential risks to human health, including death. The Council's LDP Position Paper Environmental Resilience also refers to the effect these potential threats can have on the *'overall mental health of a population'* and how the aging population of the Borough may be particularly vulnerable. There is an opportunity with the LDP to develop policies that can help combat climate change as well as improve physical health and mental well-being. These policy measures could promote active travel, provide G/BI, and holistically deliver lower carbon emissions.

### 5.10.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a LDP, there could be fewer opportunities to integrate holistically sustainable development patterns with measures to help combat climate change. This could include reducing or avoiding risks to infrastructure and people. There could be fewer opportunities to reduce GHG emissions from transport and energy usage. It could also become increasingly difficult to locate appropriate renewable energy projects concerning both infrastructure and users. Likewise, there may be fewer opportunities to develop more resilient communities that can cope with the impacts of climate change including flooding, extreme heat, water shortages and erosion.

### 5.10.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Climate Change

- There is an opportunity to mitigate for climate change by spatially influencing new and existing development so that journey times are reduced, connectivity improved and appropriate sources of renewable energy are available.
- There is an opportunity to adapt for climate change by incorporating measures such as green/blue infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems and building energy efficiency measures that increase resilience.
- Measures are needed to help people, organisations and nature to cope with the predicted impacts of climate change – flooding, coastal erosion, habitat loss, water pollution (urban and rural) - from run off, higher temperatures and extreme weather events.
- It is likely that sea level rise, coastal erosion and storm surges will become significant problems for the Borough Council to manage.
- Measures to encourage/ enable electric vehicles, active travel and car sharing are needed to help reduce reliance on the car and to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector.

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan - Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Local Development Plan Position Paper The Coast

<sup>3</sup> Carroll, M.J., Williams, M.A. & Bradbury, R.B. (2015). The Nature of Climate Change: Europe's Wildlife at Risk. Research Report 55. RSPB Centre for Conservation Science, Sandy.

- The agricultural sector is one of the top contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and where feasible within the Plan measures to reduce these should be applied.
- Oil is the most common fuel used in the Borough although a significant proportion of the population also uses gas.
- There is a higher than average reusing/recycling/composting rate for the Borough Council relative to other Councils and measures may be needed to ensure this trend will continue.
- It is important to protect habitats, coastal areas, floodplains and peatlands, which act as natural adaptation measures for climate change, as well as providing habitat for local biodiversity.
- Ensuring buffer zones exist around designated sites and priority habitats should help enable movement of species due to a changing climate.

## 5.11 Water

### 5.11.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

This topic encompasses water as a resource for ecological services, water supply and treatment. It also considers the management of water storage and flow, flood risk and measures to avoid or manage flood risk.

European Directives and regional legislation, plans and strategies seek to protect the quality and supply of water to maintain natural resources and protect human health. The 'Water Framework Directive' (2000/60/EC) requires waterbodies to be protected from deterioration and, where necessary and practicable, to be restored to 'good' status. The 'Groundwater Daughter Directive' (2006/118/EC) includes criteria for the assessment of 'good' chemical status and for identifying and reversing upward trends in pollution of groundwater. The Nitrate Directive (91/676/EEC) and Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive (96/61/EC) also require the implementation of standards for the control and prevention of pollution of water by nitrates from agricultural sources and phosphorus and other pollutants from agricultural, industrial and waste water sources.

The Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) (91/271/EEC) is designed to reduce the pollution of freshwater, estuarine and coastal waters by domestic sewage and industrial wastewater (collectively known as urban waste water). The Directive sets minimum standards for the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water. Minimum standards for the provision of sewerage systems and treatment of sewage are set by the Directive according to the population served by sewage treatment works, and the sensitivity of receiving waters. The 'Floods Directive' (2007/60/EC) requires flood risk to be assessed and mapped and management plans to be developed for the most significant flood risk areas.

At the Northern Ireland level, each of these Directives has been transposed into local legislation in order to facilitate their implementation. These include regulations to prevent pollution, to control the use of water through either abstraction or impoundment and to protect water supplies. There are also a number of pieces of drainage legislation to control water levels and flows.

Three River Basin Districts (RBD) have been identified in Northern Ireland under the Water Framework Directive (WFD): the North Eastern (NE), the Neagh – Bann (NB) and the North Western (NW) RBDs. River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the WFD, taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile, as well as wetlands which are directly associated with ground or surface water. In 2013, separate EU Directives for the protection of waters supporting shellfish and freshwater fish and to control the discharge of certain polluting substances were subsumed into the WFD, to allow the legislation covering water quality to be streamlined.

Under the WFD, each member state must also create and maintain a register of protected areas. The register consists of an inventory of protected area sites representing the protected area categories outlined below:

- Waters used for the abstraction of drinking water (drinking water protected areas);
- Areas designated to protect economically significant aquatic species (these are areas designated under the former Freshwater Fish and Shellfish Directives);
- Recreational waters designated under the Bathing Water Quality Directive (2006/7/EC);
- Nutrient Sensitive Areas (comprising nitrate vulnerable zones designated under the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and areas designated as sensitive under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC); and

- Areas designated for the protection of habitats or species (Natura 2000 sites) under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC). These also include Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention).

The Water Framework Directive includes coastal waters; marine policies are also considered under the 'Natural Environment' topic (Section 5.12) in this scoping report.

Every six years DAERA, in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure, (DfI) produces a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for each River Basin District within NI. The second and current RBMP cycle extends from 2015 – 2021. The WFD requires action to meet good ecological and chemical status and prevent deterioration of our water bodies by 2027. Each RBMP therefore sets out the current state of our water environment and the measures to be put in place to achieve further improvements to the water environment over their six year period. Ards and North Down is within the North Eastern RBD and therefore only the NE RBMP is relevant to this Council area.

It is essential that RBMPs are integrated with a wide range of strategies and initiatives impacting on the water environment in Northern Ireland. This exploits commonality across regional, national and European wide requirements and directives, ensuring efficient and cost effective delivery. A Long Term Water Strategy has been developed by the DfI in partnership with Northern Ireland Water (NIW), DAERA and the NIEA. The Strategy aims to encourage a sustainable and integrated approach to managing the different water needs within a catchment, while promoting regional development without compromising the environment or increasing flood risk.

DAERA is working with the agricultural sector to promote good practice in nutrient management and safer, more effective slurry spreading. The Nitrates Action Programme has been a key element in providing safeguards for the water environment since 2007 and farmers' cooperation has been a key factor in the success of this scheme. The Nitrates Directive has been applied across all of NI using the total territory approach. This is the main tool for reducing diffuse pollution through the Nitrates Action Programme and Nutrient Management Plans. This has delivered significant improvements to water quality in the last 10-15 years, reducing water quality failures due to nutrients from around 60% to 40%. An equivalent reduction of a further 20% is required by 2021 to meet WFD requirements.

The 'Bathing Water Quality Directive' (2006/7/EC) complements the WFD by setting quality standards for a number of parameters to safeguard public health and protect the environment. The most important of these are the standards relating to the coliform and streptococcal groups of bacteria, which, in general, can be taken as an indication of the amount of sewage or other faecal contaminants present. In addition to monitoring the bathing waters, DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division monitors rivers which run into the sea at beaches. Pollution problems at beaches often arise from within river catchments.

The Floods Directive, transposed through The Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) in 2009, has led to the identification of 20 Significant Flood Risk Areas (SFRA) in NI and the preparation of three Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs). The FRMPs have been developed to align with the six year cycle of the WFD and each FRMP corresponds to a River Basin District. The FRMPs highlight hazards and risks in the SFRAs from flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water and reservoirs. The FRMPs identify the measures that will be undertaken over their six year period to address flooding and they set out how the relevant authorities will work together with communities to reduce the flood risk. Ards and North Down is therefore covered by the NE FRMP.

The fundamental policy message arising from the SPPS is that the most effective means of managing flood risk is to avoid the risk, by locating new buildings and infrastructure outside flood risk areas. The LDP should ensure that land identified as being at risk of flooding is not zoned for development. Such development would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding, may cause flooding elsewhere and may impair the natural function of the floodplain in storing flood water. The Council should adopt a

precautionary approach to the identification of land through the LDP process and the determination of development proposals, in those areas susceptible to flooding where there is a lack of precise information on present day flood risk or climate change flood risk.

The RDS includes protective measures for water such as:

- Adopt grey water recycling;
- Minimise development in areas at risk from flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water run-off;
- Promote a more sustainable approach to the provision of water and sewerage services and flood risk management;
- Integrate water and land-use planning;
- Manage future water demand; and
- Encourage sustainable surface water management.

The SPPS states that planning authorities ‘*should encourage developers to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as the preferred drainage solution*’. The NIEA has also published ‘*A Strategy for Promoting the Use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) within Northern Ireland*’ which encourages the incorporation of measures to ameliorate the impacts of development on water quality and flow.

Our Corporate Plan recognises that Ards and North Down is a superb environment for the development of sailing and water sports. The key theme of the Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Economic Development in Ards and North Down has been derived through the understanding that “*the essence of this place which is a ‘watermarked’ place – a destination shaped by water, where encounters with the place and its people leave an indelible impression*”. It also identifies the Borough as having “*three particular strengths: The natural landscape of sea, loughs and land.*”

“*The Big Plan*” Community Plan recognises that it is important that “*the quality of the physical environment (natural and built) is managed to ensure natural spaces are protected and infrastructure such as roads, water, coastal defences and housing work in harmony.*” Protecting and enhancing water quality in the Borough underpins all of these themes.

### 5.11.2 Baseline Information

#### *River Basin Management Plans*

The WFD requires action to meet ‘good’ (or better) ecological and chemical status and prevent deterioration of our water bodies by 2027. ‘Good’ status is assessed using a broad range of parameters for water quality (such as nutrients and oxygen levels); aquatic biology (including plants, aquatic insects and fish) and physical environment (such as river flows and habitat). Classification of water bodies assists in planning what measures might be required for improvements. The WFD also recognises that some water bodies have been changed to such a degree that they can no longer be restored to their original condition without compromising their current use. These are called heavily modified (HMWBs) or artificial water bodies (AWBs). HMWBs and AWBs are classified according to their ecological potential rather than status, with the objective to achieve ‘good ecological potential’ (GEP) by 2027. The water quality status figures published at the conclusion of the first cycle of RBMP in 2015 showed that 37% of Northern Ireland’s water bodies met ‘good’ status<sup>1</sup>. Classification tools and standards, as well as water body boundaries have changed during the first River Basin Cycle, therefore it’s not possible to make a direct comparison between 2009 and 2015 data.

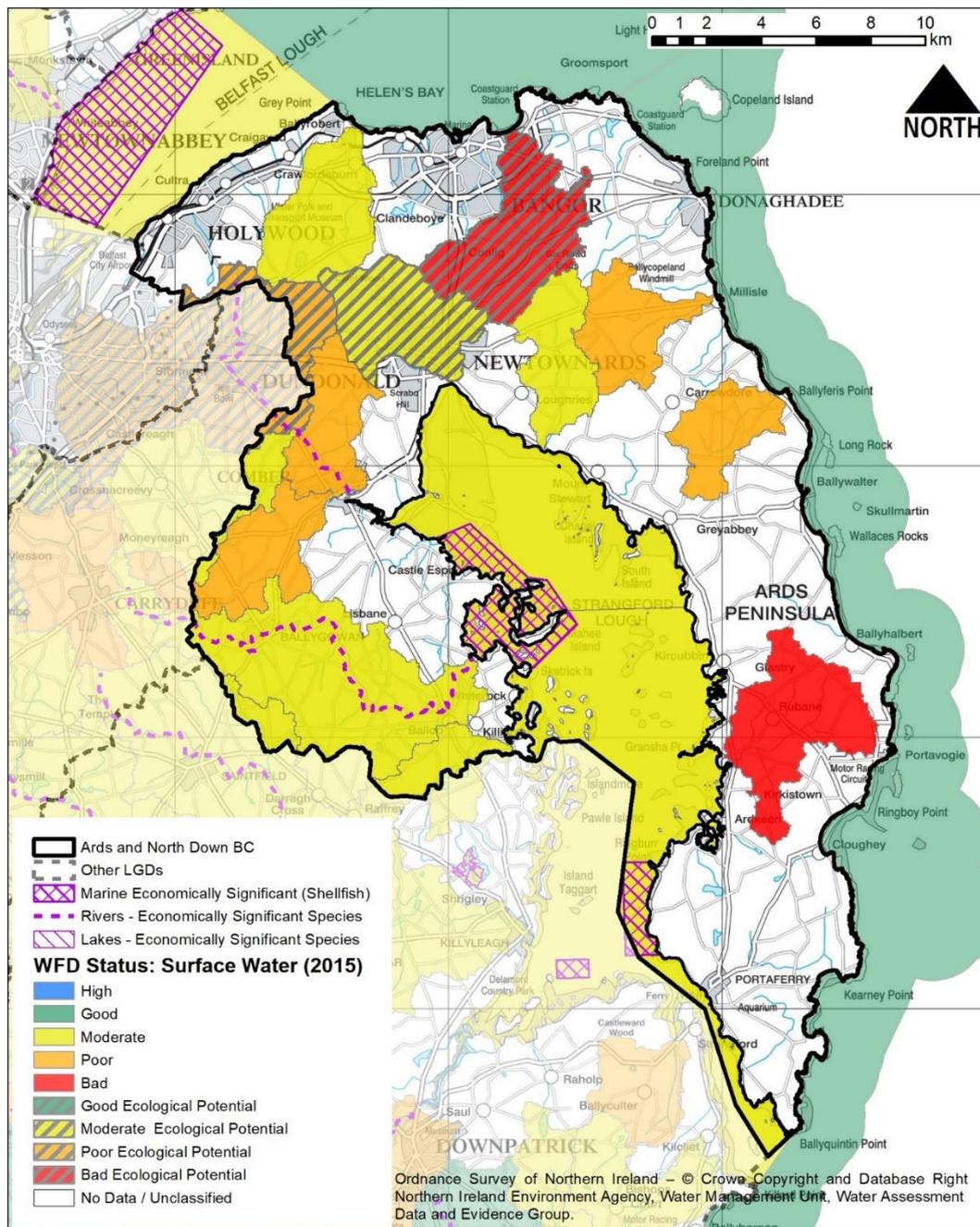
Ards and North Down (shown outlined in black in Figure 5.11.1) is wholly within the NE RBD and is therefore covered by the NE RBMP. The principal river systems in the Borough are the Crawfordsburn

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<sup>1</sup> A statistical report to update the position on water quality status since the start of the last cycle in 2015 was published on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018. However the spatial data to accompany these interim results was not yet available at the time of writing of this chapter and consequently these have not been used in reporting on the baseline.

and Ballyholme Rivers which drain into Belfast Lough and the Enler, Blackwater and Blackstaff Rivers which drain into Strangford Lough.

Figure 5.11.1: Water Framework Directive overall classification, 2015



Source: DAERA WMU Digital Dataset Downloads (Published 06 June 2017)

There are 14 river waterbodies (including artificial and heavily modified waterbodies) in Ards and North Down. Figure 5.11.1 shows the overall ecological status classification of the waterbodies within Ards and North Down at the conclusion of the first WFD cycle in 2015. Substantial areas of Ards and North Down have not been assigned a catchment status, as the watercourse catchments are below the size threshold (10km<sup>2</sup>) for characterisation. These areas are shown as white/transparent in Figure 5.11.1.

Table 5.11.1 summarises the classification results for river waterbodies. The Borough has no lake waterbodies designated under the WFD.

**Table 5.11.1: Summary of 2015 overall classification of river water bodies**

River Water Bodies		Heavily Modified Water Bodies*	
11	Total Number of RWB	3	Total Number of HMWB
-	High Eco. Status	-	Good Eco. Potential
-	Good Eco. Status	1	Moderate Eco. Potential
6	Moderate Eco. Status	1	Poor Eco. Potential
4	Poor Eco. Status	1	Bad Eco. Potential
1	Bad Eco. Status		
0	No data / unclassified		

\*includes river and lake waterbodies

Source: DAERA WMU Digital Dataset Downloads (Published 06 June 2017)

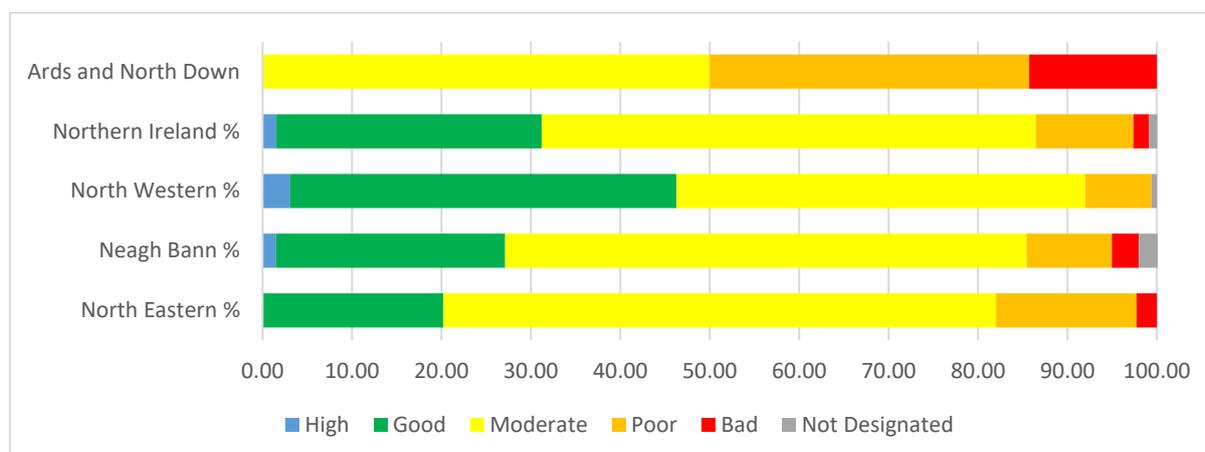
There are three heavily modified river waterbodies in Ards and North Down. Ballyholme River, Cully’s Burn and the Enler River (Dundonald). These are classified as heavily modified due to their having concrete banks in urban areas and being straightened and culverted along parts of their length.

Figure 5.11.2 shows that Ards and North Down had poorer river water quality in 2015 than the overall Northern Ireland average. None of the river waterbodies in the Borough (including HMWBs) have achieved ‘good’ or ‘high’ status (or good ecological potential) in comparison with the average of 31.3% for all river water bodies in NI.

50% of river waterbodies in Ards and North Down were classified as ‘moderate’, 36% as ‘poor’ and 14% as ‘bad’ status.

All of the river waterbodies in the Borough failed to meet the required standard in 2015, however by 2021 the target is that seven (50%) of river waterbodies will meet ‘good’ status or potential.

**Figure 5.11.2: Water Framework Directive overall classification (% River Waterbodies), 2015**



Source: DAERA WMU Digital Datasets and Northern Ireland Reported Water Body Status & Objective Figures 2015 (Published 07/11/2017)

Ards and North Down also adjoins three coastal waterbodies. These are listed below in Table 5.11.2:

**Table 5.11.2: Summary of 2015 overall classification of coastal water bodies**

Waterbody Name	Status (2015)
Belfast Lough Outer	Good
Belfast Lough Inner	Moderate
Strangford Lough North	Moderate
Strangford Lough South	Moderate
Ards Peninsula	Good

Two out of the five coastal waterbodies, Belfast Lough Outer and Ards Peninsula, achieved 'good' status. Belfast Lough Inner, Strangford Lough North, and Strangford Lough South, all of which contain designated Shellfish Areas, achieved 'moderate' status.

As part of the River Basin Planning process, a Programme of Measures (POMs)<sup>1</sup> has been established for each RBD to detail the improvements required to meet 'Good' status, the actions required and the delivery mechanisms. The POMs aims to address the key pressures by concentrating efforts on those pressures that pose the greatest threat to the water environment. The NIEA has indicated in correspondence sought as part of this scoping exercise that significant sources of pressure preventing water bodies in this Council area from achieving good status are diffuse pressures from agricultural sources and point source pressures from urban wastewater and development. Other pressures may include reductions in water quantity and flow, the physical condition of the water environment (in respect of man made changes to the natural habitat of rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters), the presence and spread of invasive alien species and any other factors that affect fish populations and habitat.

Nutrient enrichment has been identified in the NE RBMP as a principal reason for failure in lake, transitional and coastal waterbodies as it is linked to failures in diatoms, macrophytes and soluble reactive phosphorus, which have occurred in many waterbodies either individually or in combination.

At the Northern Ireland level there has been a gradual trend towards fewer and less severe pollution incidents and improved compliance for private and trade discharge consents since 2001.

Desktop studies and consultation have not identified any active catchment management projects in the Borough that have the aim of improving water quality.

### *Groundwater*

There are four groundwater bodies intersecting Ards and North Down, shown in Figure 5.11.3. The Belfast Mid groundwater body also covers a small portion (c.0.6km<sup>2</sup>) of the Borough. Of these waterbodies, none were classified as overall 'good' status at the end of the first RBMP cycle in 2015. All of the groundwater bodies in the Borough have been classified as having poor chemical status, but good quantitative status.

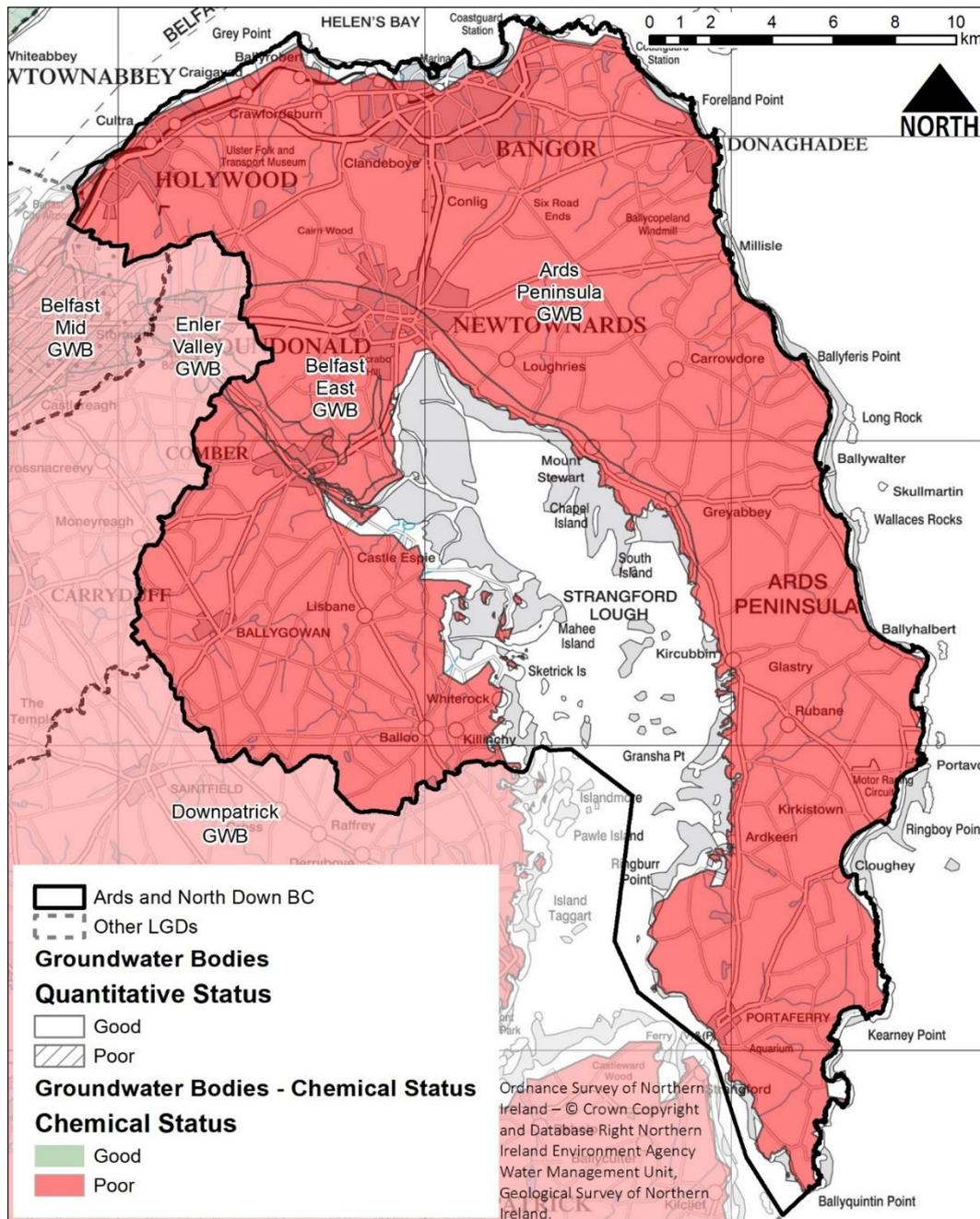
The NIEA has indicated in correspondence sought as part of this scoping exercise that the main pressure in the Ards Peninsula, Belfast East, Downpatrick and Enler groundwater bodies is diffuse phosphorus, which in turn contributes to phosphorus loading in surface water because of groundwater baseflow contributions. Possible sources include agricultural or septic tanks. Saline intrusion (increased chloride concentrations) has been detected in the Newtownards area. Increased Arsenic concentrations have also been measured in the Newtownards and Comber areas. However it is not clear yet whether this is due to anthropogenic or natural reasons.

The GSNI has indicated in correspondence sought as part of this scoping exercise that groundwater can be viewed as a natural resource that requires careful protection and as a water source that can be used for growth and economic development. Businesses and industry can use groundwater as a private water supply source at their own premises, making significant savings on mains water costs and increasing the resilience of the business. Recent data and studies show that between Dundonald, Newtownards and Comber, the properties of this aquifer are very favourable to large scale groundwater abstraction without any negative environmental impacts. Boreholes drilled in Newtownards tend to access a naturally pressurised part of the aquifer which causes the groundwater to flow out from boreholes at the surface without the need for additional pumping.

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<sup>1</sup> DAERA List of second cycle supporting documents for 2nd cycle River Basin Management Plans 2015. Date published: 03 August 2017. <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/list-second-cycle-supporting-documents-2nd-cycle-river-basin-management-plans-2015>

Figure 5.11.3: Groundwater Status, 2015



Source: DAERA WMU Digital Dataset Downloads (Accessed 02/03/18)

*Drinking Water Protected Areas*

Catchments used for the abstraction of drinking water and supplying Water Treatment Works (WTW) are included on the WFD Register of Protected areas. There are no surface water catchments to which this applies in Ards and North Down, however all of the groundwater bodies in Ards and North Down are on the Register of Protected Areas.

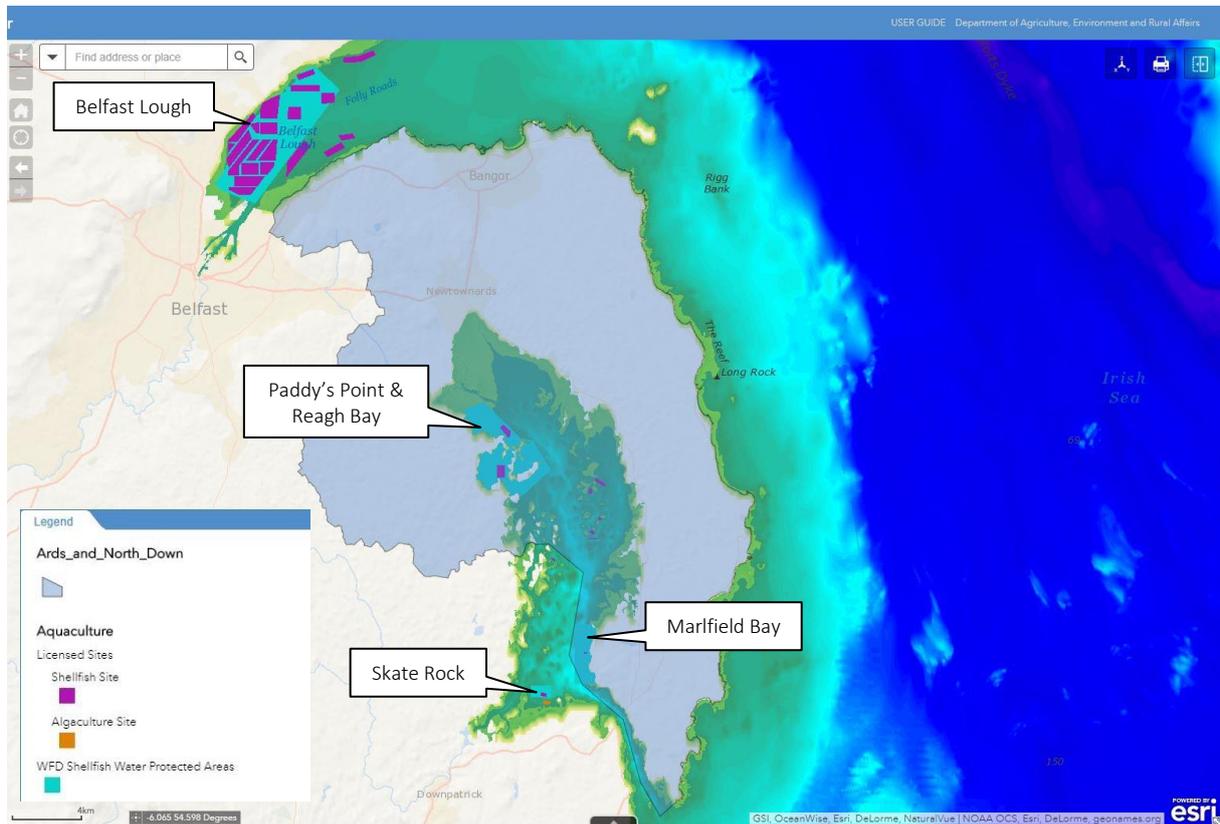
*Economically Significant Aquatic Species – Shellfish*

There are two Shellfish Water Protected Areas within Ards and North Down, Marlfield Bay and Paddy’s Point and Reagh Bay, shown below in Figure 5.11.4. Two further Shellfish Water Protected Areas, Belfast Lough and Skate Rock, are located in waters outside the LGD boundary, but have the potential to be influenced by activities occurring within Ards and North Down.

Ten aquaculture sites are licensed in Strangford Lough, of which eight are inside the boundary of Ards and North Down. These sites are mainly licensed for the cultivation of mussels, although two sites are given to oyster production. The 21 aquaculture sites that are currently licensed in Belfast Lough are for the harvesting of mussels.

Six of the licensed aquaculture sites in Strangford Lough and four of the licensed sites in Belfast Lough are outside the Shellfish Water Protected Areas.

**Figure 5.11.4: Aquaculture & Shellfish**



Source: DAERA Northern Ireland Marine Mapviewer <https://apps.diera-ni.gov.uk/marinemapviewer/>

Shellfish Water Protected Areas have a guideline microbiological standard for shellfish flesh which is set in the Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances and Classification) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. This guideline standard requires that 75% of samples contain  $\leq 230$  E. coli per 100ml of shellfish flesh and intervalvular liquid. Monitoring for the microbiological shellfish classification is carried out by the Food Standards Agency in NI.

It can be seen from Figure 5.11.5 that shellfish from the Paddy's Point & Reagh Bay, Marfield Bay and Skate Rock Shellfish Water Protected Areas have achieved the required standard over the past five years, however shellfish from Belfast Lough have not been able to achieve the required microbiological standards in any of the past five years. Skate Rock is the only production area in NI to have been awarded 'A' class (the highest rated) microbiological status for 2018.

Figure 5.11.5 Summary of Shellfish Waters Directive Compliance with Guideline E. Coli Standard

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Belfast Lough</b>					
<b>Paddy's Point &amp; Reagh Bay</b>					
<b>Marlfield Bay</b>		*	*	*	
<b>Skate Rock</b>					
		Met Guideline Biological Standards			
		Did not meet Guideline Microbiological Standards			

\*No data for Marlfield Bay 2014, 2015, 2016

Sources: Pollution Reduction Programmes 2015<sup>1</sup>; NI Environmental Statistics Report 2017<sup>2</sup>; Food Standards Agency<sup>3</sup>

Pollution Reduction Programmes<sup>4</sup> were published in 2015 for Belfast Lough and Strangford Lough. Belfast Lough suffers from persistent nutrient inputs from diffuse catchment loads, which prevented it from achieving its WFD objective of 'good' ecological status in 2015.

In Strangford Lough, the main pollution sources come from continuous and intermittent discharges throughout the lough. Of the discharges flowing into Strangford Lough, Ballyrickard Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) (which serves the catchment areas of Newtownards, Comber and surrounding areas) has the highest discharge volume. There are also various other non-point pollution sources associated with agricultural land use, tourism and wildfowl.

Many of the WWTWs discharging into Belfast Lough and Strangford Lough, including Ballyrickard and Kinnegar, have been upgraded within recent years to improve their efficiency and raise their treatment standards. No further improvements or upgrades have been identified for WWTWs in Ards and North Down in NI Water's PC15 funding programme which runs to 2021, however monitoring of all combined sewage overflows within 2km of Shellfish Water Protected Areas is to be introduced by NI Water during the PC15 period.

Higher annual rainfall with more intense episodes, which may occur more frequently in the future due to the effects of climate change (see section 5.10), may increase loads of diffuse pollutants from both urban and rural areas. This may increase loading of pollutants to the sea and increase the risk of the failure of microbiological standards in both shellfish and bathing waters.

#### *Economically Significant Aquatic Species – Freshwater Fish*

Ards and North Down has approximately 40km of rivers on the protected areas register for freshwater fish. These are the Blackwater (Ards) and Enler (Comber) Rivers. There are no protected lakes in Ards and North Down. Only 6 out of the 19 (32%) river waterbodies in the NE RBD that are monitored for fish population or habitat achieved 'good' or 'high' status for this element over the first WFD planning cycle. Failures in fish ecology can indicate a wide range of pressures, such as from physical modifications and abstraction and flow regulation.

#### *Nutrient Sensitive Areas*

A total territory approach has been adopted in Northern Ireland for the Nitrates Directives. Under the UWWTD, waters may be identified as sensitive areas if found to be eutrophic or likely to become eutrophic if protective action is not taken. There are seven UWWTD sensitive areas in the Borough:

- Paddy's Point and Reagh Bay Shellfish Water
- Ballyholme Bathing Water
- Ballyholme Bathing Water Catchment
- Inner Belfast Lough
- Inner Belfast Lough Catchment
- River Enler Catchment
- Strangford Lough (North End) Catchment.

<sup>1</sup> DAERA Pollution Reduction Programmes 2015

<sup>2</sup> DAERA Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2017

<sup>3</sup> Food Standards Agency Biotoxin and Phytoplankton Monitoring, Northern Ireland Results (accessed 16/05/2018)

<sup>4</sup> DAERA Pollution Reduction Programmes 2015 <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/pollution-reduction-programmes-2015>

If discharges from qualifying WwTWs (those serving a population equivalent of greater than 10,000) either directly or indirectly are found to cause (or may cause) eutrophication, or result in excess nitrate levels, the receiving water bodies are identified as 'sensitive'. A further level of treatment than secondary is required to protect these areas within seven years of the identification. This more stringent treatment involves reducing the levels of nitrogen and/or phosphorus discharging from the works to meet the standards set in the Directive.

Both Belfast Lough Inner and the tidal River Lagan were designated in 2001 as Sensitive Areas. Further to the 2009 Sensitive Area review, it was established that a number of WwTWs discharging into Belfast Lough, including Kinnegar WwTW in Ards and North Down, required additional treatment in the form of nitrogen removal.

There has been a trend toward significant reductions in mean nitrate concentrations in groundwater. Long-term trends show that average nitrate concentrations in rivers in Northern Ireland are predominantly decreasing or stable over the 20-year period, 1992-2012, which may be attributed to the measures implemented through the Nitrates Action Programme so that levels are well within EU standards.

### Bathing Waters

Ards and North Down currently has six beaches designated under the Bathing Water Quality Directive<sup>1</sup>. Designated beaches are monitored through the bathing season and a bathing water profile is published annually to allow the public to make an informed choice before bathing. DAERA maintains an interactive NI Beach Water Quality Map which reports on beach water quality and from which the bathing water profile for each beach can be accessed. Each Profile gives detailed information on the physical characteristics of each bathing water and describes their pollution risk.

Threats to bathing water quality for bathing waters are broadly divided into three categories waste water (sewage) treatment works discharges, waste water systems in urban areas and rural source pollution, including agriculture. Other threats include dogs, horses, litter and fly tipping. The bathing water results from the 2015 - 2018 seasons are summarised below in Table 5.11.2.

**Table 5.11.2: Bathing Water Quality Overall Classifications 2015 – 2018**

	2018*	2017	2016	2015
Ballyholme	Sufficient	Poor	Poor	Sufficient
Ballywalter	Sufficient	Sufficient	Good	Good
Crawfordsburn	Good	Good	Good	Excellent
Groomsport	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent
Helen's Bay	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Millisle	Excellent	Good	Good	Good

\*Provisional result

Source: [DAERA Bathing Water Profiles](#), Date published: 31 May 2018 and [About Bathing Water Quality 2018 - Bathing Water Compliance](#)

This table shows that Ballyholme is regularly failing to meet the mandatory compliance of the Bathing Water Directive. An investigation by DAERA<sup>2</sup> has indicated that the surrounding catchment of the beach and Cotton River is a complex one, and is vulnerable to pressures from both agricultural run-off and overflows from the wastewater treatment network. The urbanisation associated with Ballyholme and Bangor is a potential source of pollution, especially during and after periods of prolonged or heavy rainfall. In the event of very heavy rainfall a collection system may not be able to deal with all the flow received. This is also indicated as a risk to bathing water quality at Ballywalter<sup>3</sup>. Northern Ireland Water has an ongoing programme of upgrades to the wastewater treatment network in the

<sup>1</sup> DAERA 'About bathing water quality' <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/bathing-water-quality>

<sup>2</sup> DAERA – Bathing water Profile – Ballyholme – May 2018

<sup>3</sup> DAERA – Bathing water Profile – Ballywalter – May 2018

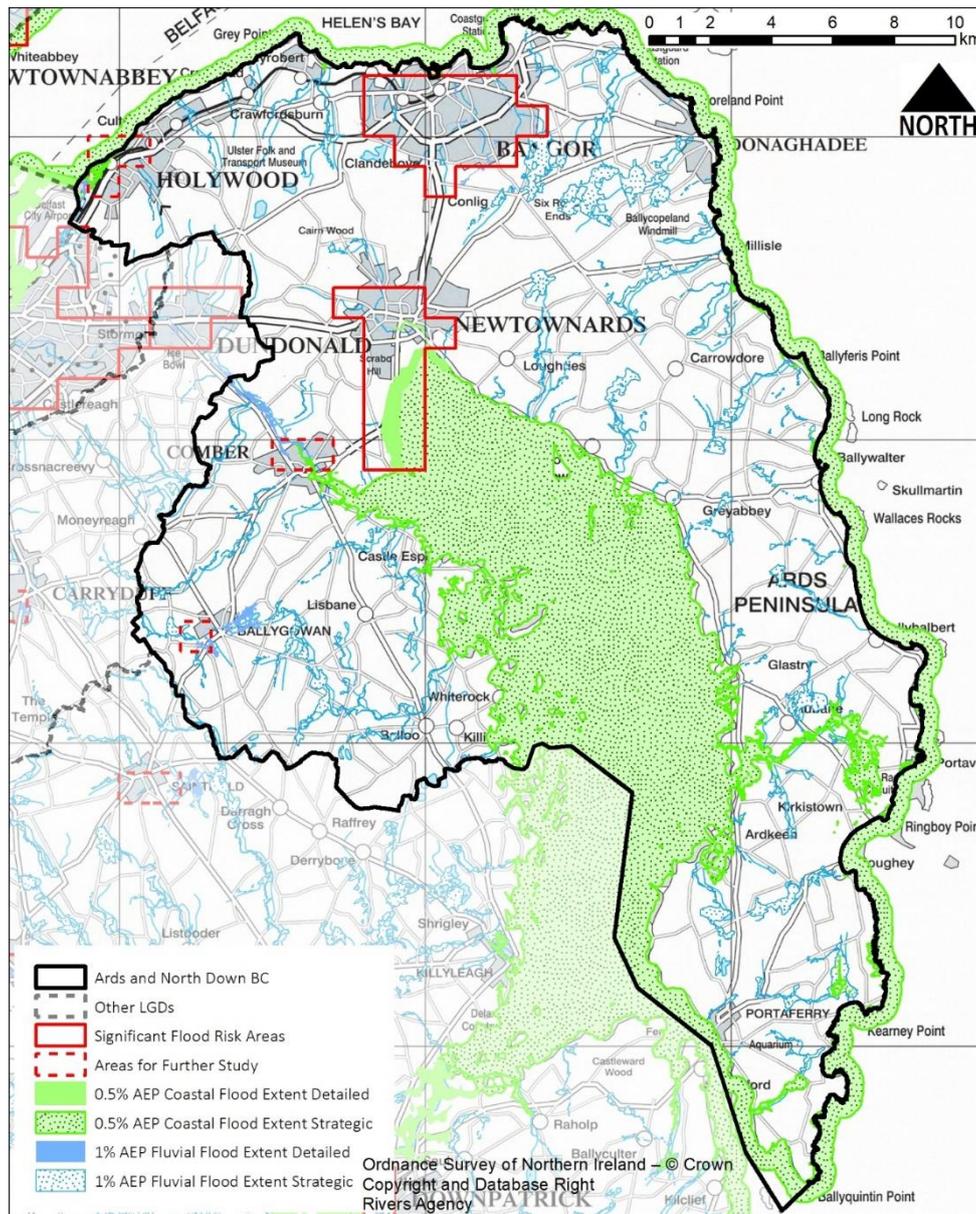
area, but other measures such as the incorporation of SuDS in to new development can also help to reduce pressure on drainage networks and can help to reduce urban pollution.

The 2017 Review of Bathing Waters in NI<sup>1</sup> has put forward a proposal for a new bathing water at Kilclief Beach in Newry, Mourne and Down. Although outside the Borough, if designated as a bathing water, this beach may also be influenced by discharges from Ards and North Down.

*Flood Risk*

The implementation of the EU “Floods Directive” (2007/060/EC) has resulted in strategic flood risk assessment and mapping being carried out for all of NI and the publication of detailed Flood Hazard and Risk Maps<sup>2</sup> for the areas determined to be at potential significant flood risk. These maps are continuously updated and are accessible from the DfI website.

Figure 5.11.6: Significant Flood Risk Areas and Areas for Further Study with River & Coastal Flood Plain



Source Department for Infrastructure (Rivers)

<sup>1</sup> DAERA ‘2017 Review of Bathing Waters in Northern Ireland – Consultation Document’

<sup>2</sup> Flood Maps (NI) is accessible through the DfI Mapping Portal <http://dfi-ni.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

There are two settlements in Ards and North Down which have been identified as SFRA (Figure 5.11.6). They are Bangor and Newtownards. The SFRA of Dundonald, in Belfast City Council, is also immediately adjacent to Ards and North Down. As it is upstream of the Borough, it is unlikely to be affected by development. Flood risk is further discussed in the Council’s LDP Position Papers ‘Flooding and Drainage’ and ‘The Coast’.

Three settlements, also shown in Figure 5.11.6, were identified in the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) for NI as having a moderate risk of flooding and have been classified as Areas for Further Study. These are Ballygowan, Comber and Holywood.

The Floods Directive aims to manage flood risk by:

- **Prevention:** avoiding construction of houses and industries in flood-prone areas; by adapting future developments to the risk of flooding; and by promoting appropriate land-use, agricultural and forestry practices.
- **Protection:** taking measures, both structural and non-structural, to reduce the likelihood and impact of floods.
- **Preparedness:** informing the public about flood risk and what to do in the event of a flood.

The multi-layered strategic Flood Hazard and Risk Maps provide information on flood defences, historical flood events and predicted extreme flood events for river and coastal flooding as well as the potential for surface water flooding. Additional information is available on Flood Maps NI, which shows the areas within the 1 per cent AEP<sup>1</sup> floodplain, taking account of the impacts of climate change.

The DfI has not undertaken any recent flood alleviation works in Ards and North Down. The ‘Flooding and Drainage’ Position Paper notes that Bangor is only considered to be at risk from fluvial flooding. Major improvements to the urban watercourses in Bangor were carried out by Rivers Agency in the 1990s. Subsequent to these works, few properties in the town appear to have been subject to inundation.

The Position Paper also comments that Newtownards is considered to be at significant risk from both tidal and fluvial flooding. A sea defence system helps to protect the town, however some of the watercourses are tidally influenced, which makes flood risk assessment more complex.

In addition to the above, tidal flood defences are also present in Comber and Holywood. In some coastal areas, landowners have privately constructed embankments to protect land from tidal flooding.

The Capital works programme published in the FRMPs includes the following works planned in Ards and North Down for the current FRMP cycle:

	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Planned Implementation</b>
<b>Drainage Infrastructure</b>		
Culvert Upgrading Kinnegar & Locksley Park	Construction	2015/16 - 2020/21

In the next FRMP cycle, DfI Rivers has indicated that capital projects will be looked at in the Bangor and Newtownards Significant Flood Risk Areas.

The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2012)<sup>2</sup> has noted that, based upon projected sea level rise, the frequency of coastal flooding events is expected to increase significantly. At Portrush, for example, a sea level with a current return period of 100 years (1% probability) will have a return

<sup>1</sup> AEP Annual Exceedance Probability – the 1% AEP floodplain outline for rivers has a 1per cent or greater chance of flooding in any given year (also referred to as a 100 year flood event).

<sup>2</sup> DEFRA UK 2012 Climate Change Risk Assessment - A climate change risk assessment for Northern Ireland

period of less than 10 years if mean sea levels increase by 0.25m, which is approximately the Medium Emissions Scenario of the UK Climate Projections 2009 (UKCP09) for the 2080s.

The DfI Rivers has indicated that it is beginning a programme of modelling and updating the coastal flood risk mapping for NI to accommodate UKCP09 climate change sea level rise projections while noting that UKCP18 projections have also been published in November 2018. Further information on coastal erosion and associated issues due to rising sea levels and increased frequency of storm events in the Climate Change section of this report.

### *Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)*

Increasingly, reliance on traditional drainage systems is proving inadequate to address the issue of storm drainage. Alone, such systems may not cope with the demands made by new development, in addition to the more intense and increasingly unpredictable rainfall arising from climate change. The SPPS (para. 6.118) advocates SuDS as the preferred drainage solution for new development, noting that such systems *'have been shown to be more effective than traditional piped drainage in reducing surface water flooding as well as providing other environmental, economic and social benefits'*.

While planning policy encourages SuDS, it does not currently make it a requirement for new development and to date SuDS have rarely been used in NI<sup>1</sup>, although SuDS principles are included in the design of new road schemes. In January 2019 the Welsh Government made the inclusion of SuDS mandatory in new development. It has published information indicating that the capital costs of SuDS solutions on new developments are lower than the capital costs of comparable traditional piped drainage solutions. It also states that evidence shows that operational and maintenance costs also tend to be lower for SuDS<sup>2</sup>.

In consultation carried out for this Scoping Report, the NIEA has indicated that in the design of SuDS, surface water should be dealt with as close as possible to where it falls as rain (source control). The use of two or more SuDS components can be used for the optimal solution to:

- Manage rainfall to mimic natural drainage by:
  - reducing runoff rates;
  - reducing additional runoff volumes and frequencies; and
  - encouraging natural groundwater recharge.
- Minimise impacts on quantity and quality of runoff by:
  - reducing pollution and protecting the quality of receiving waters;
  - preventing direct discharge of spillage; and
  - reducing the volume of surface waste runoff to sewers.
- Maximise amenity and biodiversity opportunity by:
  - contributing to the amenity and aesthetic value of the development; and
  - providing habitat for wildlife and biodiversity

Examples of localised source control measures include green roofs, permeable paving and soakaways, while larger passive treatment areas such as ponds and wetlands can be incorporated into wider green-blue infrastructure (see Section 5.8).

A flagship SuDS project within the Borough is the rainwater garden at Clandeboye Primary School<sup>3</sup>. This is a simple system which collects runoff from the school buildings and playgrounds and directs it into storage tanks and ponds. The attenuation of rainfall helps reduce the risk of flooding from the

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<sup>1</sup> NI Assembly Research and Information Service Paper 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016 (found at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2016-2021/2016/infrastructure/3816.pdf>)

<sup>2</sup> Welsh Government Written Statement - Implementing sustainable drainage systems on new developments (found at <https://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2017/sustainabledrainage/?lang=en>) Last updated 16 November 2017

<sup>3</sup> NI Water Press Release "£70,000 Rainwater Garden Complete at Clandeboye Primary School!" published 12 January 2018

Clandeboyne Stream, whilst also enhancing the environment and providing a valuable educational resource.

### *Water Supply*

Information on water supply, quantity and quality is not reported at Council level and must be extracted from regional data sets or trends described at a Northern Ireland level. Some of this has been presented in the 'Public Utilities' Preparatory Studies Paper.

The provision of water supply in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of NI Water. There are five water supply zones wholly or partially within Ards and North Down:

- ZS0108 Belfast Purdysburn
- ZS0401 Drumaroad Bangor
- ZS0404 Drumaroad Ards
- ZS0501 Drumaroad Lisburn
- ZS0601 Drumaroad Ballynahinch

Source : NI Water Annual Report on Water Quality. Appendix 3 Ards and North Down District Council (2016)

There are no WTW located within Ards and North Down. The Borough's drinking water is supplied from the following reservoirs:

- Drumaroad WTW near Castlewellan in neighbouring Newry, Mourne and Down District
- Dunore Point WTW in Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council Area
- Castor Bay WTW located in Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Area

These WTWs are supplied with raw water from catchments in the Mourne mountains and Lough Neagh and supply water via 19 service reservoirs.

Significant investment in water treatment works, service reservoirs and mains distribution has resulted in improvements in compliance with the drinking water standards across NI, from 99.22% in 2004 to 99.86% in 2016<sup>1</sup>. The % compliance in Ards and North Down in 2016 was 99.99%. The most recent Drinking Water Annual Quality Report (2016) lists 19 Capital Works Programmes affecting Ards and North Down. These include works to improve energy efficiency, pipe replacement programmes, water mains rehabilitation and works to improve resilience to pressures on supply, such as drought and freeze-thaw events. NI Water has indicated in correspondence to the Council in August 2018 that, at the time of writing, it is satisfied with the sufficiency of the water supply to Ards & North Down Borough area over the indicated timeframe of the Local Development Plan.

NI Water and its partners / stakeholders the RSPB and the NIEA have developed a SCaMP (Sustainable Catchment Management Planning) NI strategy to improve the quality and reliability of the water received at NI Water's raw water abstraction points. In addition to improving water quality, SCaMP also focuses on protecting and enhancing the natural environment. There are no current SCaMP projects in Ards and North Down, as the Borough has no drinking water catchments, however a number of pilot projects under way elsewhere may be rolled out in future to help improve local water quality more generally.

### *Reservoirs*

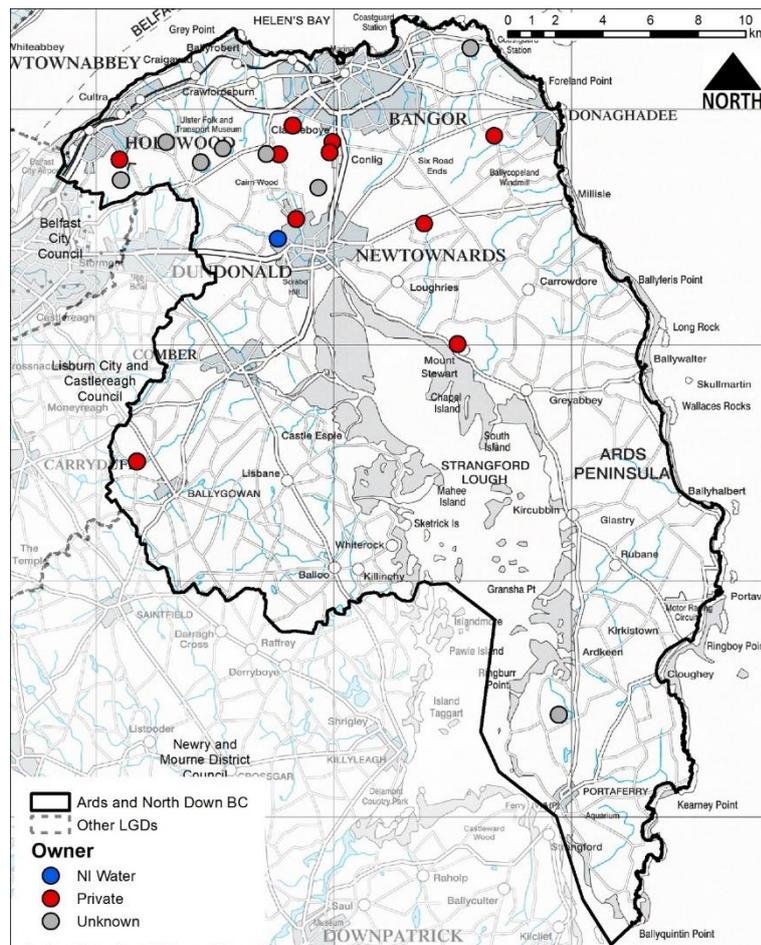
There are 19 impoundments and reservoirs in Ards and North Down, of which some are "controlled reservoirs" (i.e. an impoundment  $\geq 10,000$  cubic metres). Their locations are shown the figure below. Most of these reservoirs are in, or close to, rural settlements. Flood mapping of controlled reservoirs for emergency planning has been carried out by DfI Rivers<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> NI Water Drinking Water Quality Annual Report 2016 <https://www.niwater.com/drinking-water/> (accessed 15 May 2018)

<sup>2</sup> Reservoir Flood Mapping for Emergency Planning on DfI Mapping Portal <http://dfi-ni.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

Figure 5.11.7: Water Impoundments in Ards and North Down



Source: Rivers Agency (NI) Hydrography (INSPIRE View Service)

### Wastewater Treatment

The provision of WwTWs in the Plan Area is also the responsibility of NI Water. NIW has provided the Council with information on the current capacity of WwTWs<sup>1</sup> serving the district as well as an estimate of future capacity based on applying a settlement growth factor of 10%, 20% and 30%. As of August 2018 there are 24 settlements in the Borough served by ‘large’ WwTWs. Of these, 13 settlements have capacity available and new connections are permitted. Treatment plants for these settlements can also accommodate the projected growth rates to 30%. One settlement has limited capacity and restrictions are in place on new connections. Six settlements have no capacity and new connections are refused. Four settlements have no public sewerage network.

In 2016, NI Water carried out rehabilitation works to the sewerage system in Comber. The project involved localised repairs, the installation of “liners” in existing sewers, replacing sewers which were beyond their natural lifespans as well as other associated work. The works provide the local community with improved sewerage systems that are less prone to failure from blockages and sewer collapses and will also reduce the risks of ‘out of sewer’ flooding and environmental pollution.

In 2014 NI Water carried out a £3.1M programme of works for sewerage improvement at Bangor. The project delivered extra storage capacity into the system, to reduce the adverse effects of heavy rainfall. The upgrades should also help improve the quality of the bathing water along the Bangor coastline. Sewerage upgrades were also carried out in Bangor town centre, to coincide with public realm works. During these works, archaeological investigation work was carried out to ensure that the

<sup>1</sup> NIW Consultation response, August 2018

project would not impact upon any buried remains of the important Early Christian monastic site of Bangor Abbey and the scheduled monument, Malachy's Wall.

The Council will continue to work closely with NI Water in its LDP production as the capacity of waste water treatment works may have an influence on the distribution of proposed development in towns and villages. NI Water operates a six year business plan called a Price Control. The current Price Control, known as PC15, spans the period 2015/16 to 2020/21. Eight settlements with no capacity have upgrade of works programmed for 2019/20 or 2020/21.

### 5.11.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan there will be less certainty about the need for supply or treatment of water therefore infrastructure may not be developed in the most efficient manner. There is a risk that cumulative effects from development will counteract the goals of plans such as the 2015 River Basin Management Plans to achieve good ecological status. While planning policies address issues such as flood risk, the opportunity to take a more strategic approach would be missed. There is a risk that taking decisions in the absence of an up to date plan could result in development that does not make the most sustainable use of infrastructure or which subsequently requires further measures to address knock on effects.

The plan will enable space for surface water management to be identified when zoning land. LDP policy could require, either generally or for specific zonings, that schemes are put in place at design stage so as to minimise surface water runoff.

### 5.11.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Water

- River water quality is significantly lower than the NI average in Ards and North Down. None of the surface water catchments or groundwater bodies has achieved 'good' status.
- Marine water quality in Belfast Lough and Strangford Lough is not meeting 'good' standard.
- The shellfish production areas in Belfast Lough have failed to meet Water Framework Directive microbiological targets for all years 2013-2017.
- Bathing water quality is good / excellent at four out of six of the Council's bathing beaches. Ballyholme received a rating of 'poor' bathing water quality in 2016/17.
- Development may lead to contaminated runoff which may increase pollution of waterbodies.
- Developments without access to mains sewers can incorporate sewage treatment on site. However, it is important that there is capacity for safe disposal of treated discharges and for maintenance of the treatment system to ensure that it remains effective in the long term.
- Other wastes may also cause water pollution at the point where they are used or disposed of, e.g. wastes from livestock production, food processing or primary treatment such as sewage or anaerobic digesters.
- Bangor and Newtownards are identified as Significant Flood Risk Areas and there are three other settlements at moderate risk of flooding.
- It is predicted that the risk and extent of flooding, particularly coastal flooding, will be increased by climate change.
- Development should be planned to avoid areas at significant risk from flooding, now or in the future, or where development may increase the flood risk elsewhere.
- Development may lead to changes in the rate of surface water runoff, or the capacity of a receiving watercourse may be altered which in turn has the potential to increase flood risk.
- Constructed flood alleviation and defence measures are expensive and should be avoided.
- There are benefits in retaining and restoring natural flood plains and watercourses as a form of flood alleviation - this can also support objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- A safety issue arises because legal requirements relating to impounded water have not been fully implemented in legislation. There are considered to be risks in potential inundation zones below reservoirs.

- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) measures could be incorporated and maintained in new development and redevelopment or regeneration schemes.
- Plan proposals should be compatible with the Flood Risk Management Plans published by Rivers Agency in December 2015.
- Development in general requires a water supply. It can therefore increase demand for raw water sources, treatment and distribution infrastructure. Although NI Water has indicated that there is sufficiency of the water supply to AND over the indicated timeframe of the Local Development Plan, increased demands could be offset by measures to make more efficient use of water.
- A number of large wastewater treatment works have insufficient capacity for new connections. This may limit or delay potential for development.

## 5.12 Natural Resources

### 5.12.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Natural resources covers biodiversity, fauna, flora, green/blue infrastructure (G/BI) and ecosystem services (ES). It includes intertidal and coastal zones as well as the wider marine area. Natural resources are protected in our regional policy which aims to conserve, protect and enhance our natural environment using a spatial approach. It also aims to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality.

The Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009 and the Marine Act (NI) 2013 require planning authorities to consider the UK MPS and the NI Marine Plan when preparing their Local Development Plans (LDPs). The Marine Plan for NI will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of our marine area through a strategic framework with spatial elements. It will consist of a series of policy statements covering cross-cutting marine planning issues that apply to all decision making in the marine area and to relevant sectors. It will not bring forward new policies governed by other departments but will align with and contribute to the policy objectives for key marine activities as set out in the UK MPS and will support and complement existing plans and policies. A draft Marine Plan for NI was consulted on during 2018.

The draft PFG recognises that we all benefit from the goods and services that our natural environment provides, including food, renewable energy, water purification, flood mitigation and places for recreation, education and inspiration. One of the outcomes of the draft PFG is that as a society *'we live and work sustainably - protecting the environment'*. Between the draft PFG and the SPPS, the benefits of protecting the natural environment for goods and services, and an improved quality of life, are clear.

Regional strategies and policy highlight the diversity of Northern Ireland's natural environment. They provide protection of designated sites, species, habitats and other natural features as assets and directly link these to economic, social and environmental benefits. Local Biodiversity Action Plans aim to protect the natural environment and its biodiversity value but they can also ensure provision of a recreational value.

One mechanism to help achieve future protection of our natural resources is the LDP. The Plan can help to protect the natural heritage resource of the Borough and promote ecological networks by integrating parks, street trees, waterways and other G/BI, to help connect open and green space across urban and rural areas. These measures can deliver regional policy by helping to protect the natural environment and ecosystem services, as well as helping to combat climate change. The Council also has a statutory duty to *'further the conservation of biodiversity in exercising any functions'* under The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, aims for the Ards and North Down Borough to be 'the best place to live, work, visit and invest'. Its vision aims for people to be 'proud' of the area and to be able to 'enjoy an excellent quality of life'. The extensive coastline of the Borough with its coastal path, and Strangford Lough, are both referred to as important environmental features. These are key tourist attractions but the Plan also recognises the positive impact they have for residents too. Within one of its three key objectives, 'place', commitments to protecting and investing in the natural environment aim to support local economies and communities.

The Borough's Community Plan, *The Big Plan*, has a vision for the area to be *'a vibrant, connected, healthy, safe and prosperous place'*. There are five outcomes to help achieve this vision and two are particularly relevant to the conservation and sustainable management of the natural environment. Outcome 2 aims for people to have good health and wellbeing, while outcome 5 aims for people to be able to access a well-managed sustainable environment. Some of the aspirations aim for people to be able to access the benefits of the natural environment and for protection of the quality of the natural

environment. Consideration of the natural environment within the LDP process will be fundamental to achieving these outcomes.

### 5.12.2 Baseline Information

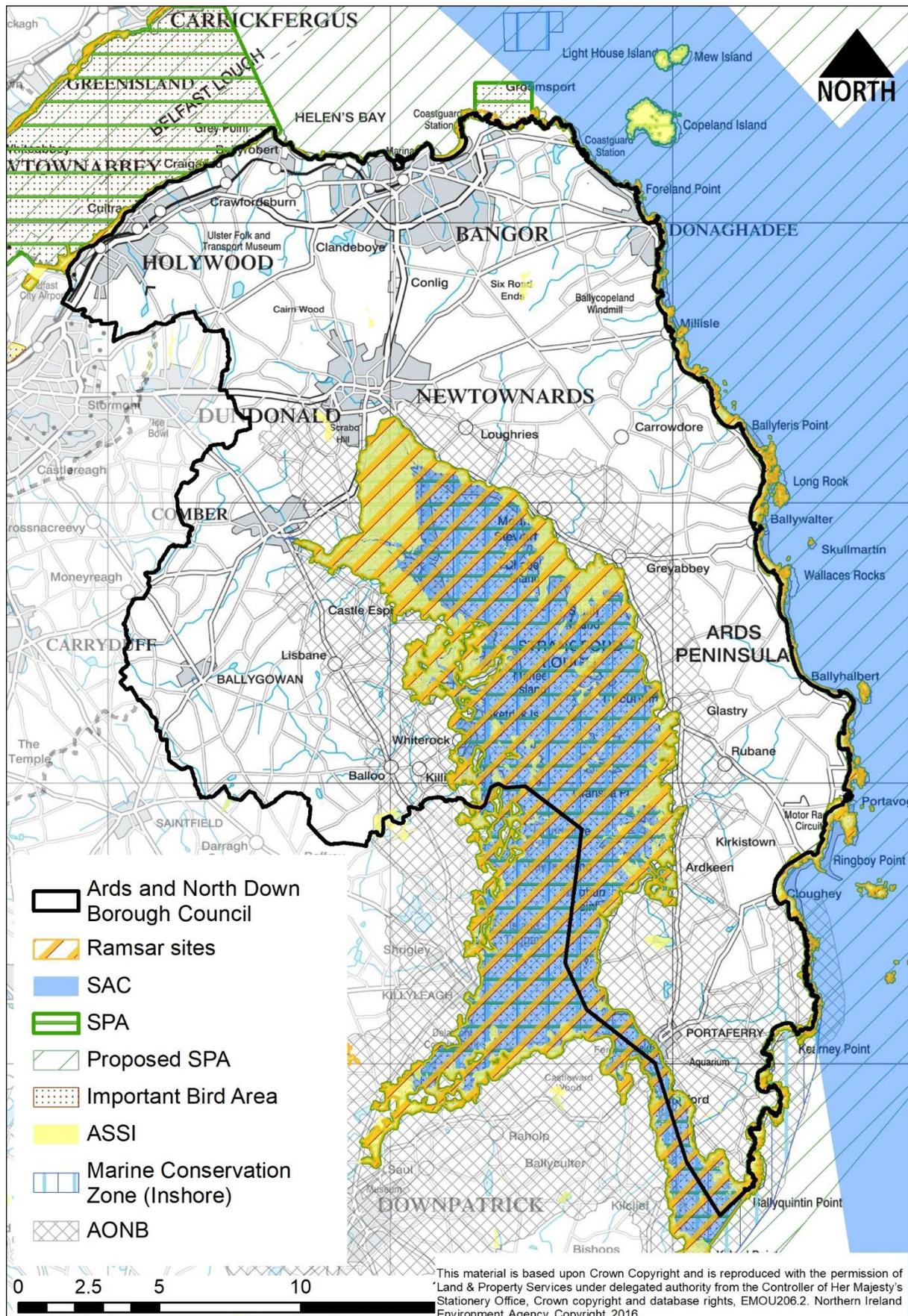
Relevant information is presented in the LDP Position Papers on the Natural Environment, the Coast, Landscape Character, Environmental Resilience and Transportation. This topic overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Climate Change, Water, Landscape and Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage sections of this report.

#### *Nature Conservation Sites*

Ards and North Down Borough extends to 735 km<sup>2</sup> and has an extensive coastline of approximately 115 miles. There is a variety of habitats present including wetlands, grasslands, heathlands, coastal and marine. This natural diversity is protected using International, European, regional and local level nature conservation and landscape designations. These designations help to protect the most important areas for nature conservation and help to maintain green/blue infrastructure (G/BI) across the Borough. At the same time they can also provide for amenity interests.

There is one AONB in the Borough, the Strangford and Lecale AONB. It is partially located within the Borough but is also shared with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. It covers the entire lough but also an extensive area of land and coastline. There are also several nature conservation sites of International and national/regional importance. These include three Ramsars, three Important Bird Areas, four Special Protection Areas (SPAs), three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and sixteen Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs). Strangford Lough in itself has nine designations protecting its natural heritage and is NI's first Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ). Ards and North Down Borough Council must consider the marine area due to the Borough's coastal location. There are four separate marine designations within its jurisdiction. These include the proposed marine East Coast SPA, the North Channel Special Area of Conservation (designated February 2019) and two MCZs that include the Belfast Lough Open Water MCZ. All sites are shown in Figure 5.12.1.

Figure 5.12.1: Nature Conservation Designations of International, National and Regional Importance



Source: DAERA Digital Datasets (published March 2019)

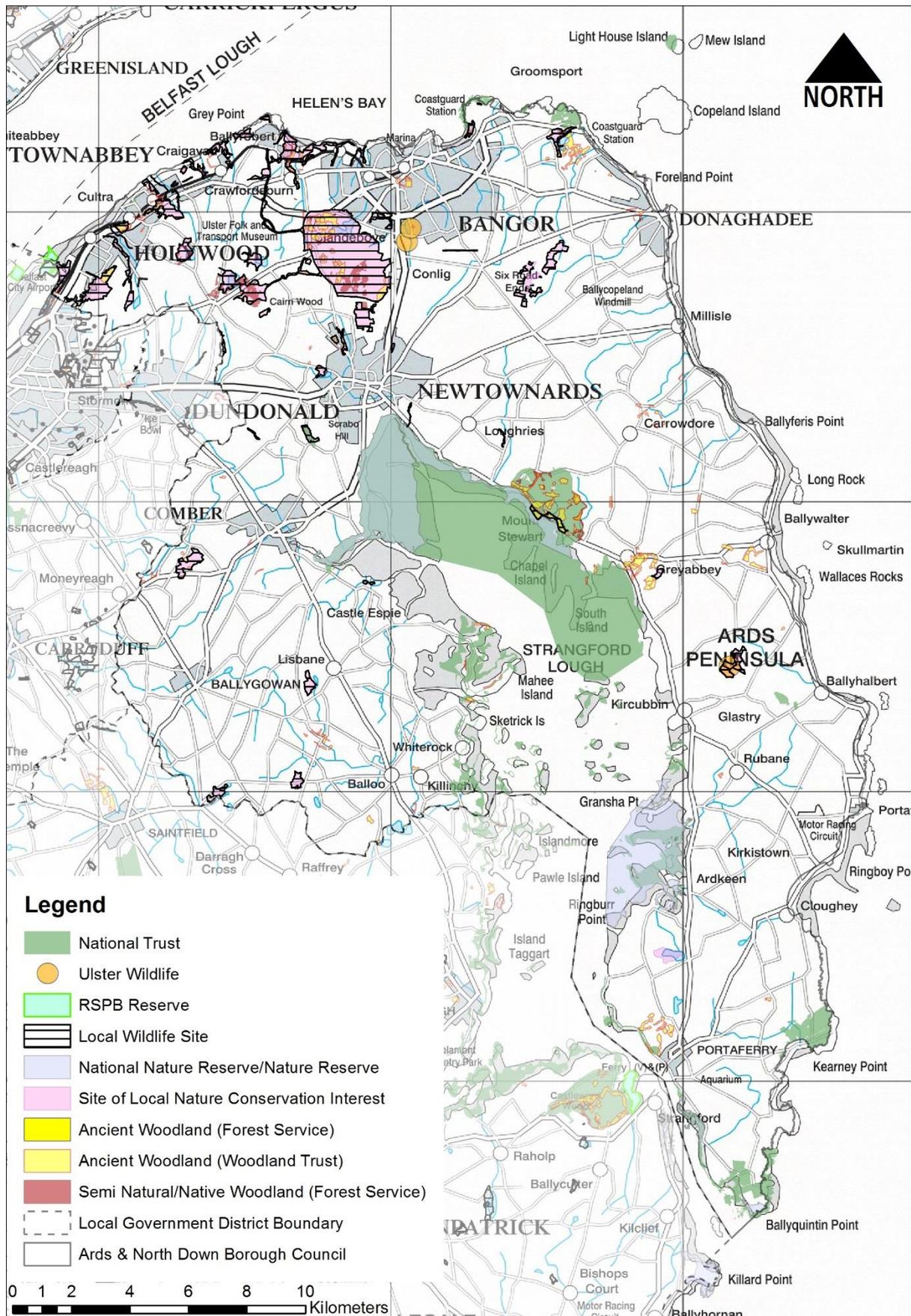
At approximately 115 miles, the coastline is of particular importance to the Borough as a significant natural heritage asset that supports species and habitats, whilst also providing amenity, recreational and educational value to residents and visitors. It also contributes to adaptation to coastal flooding and change. More information is in the Climate Change section of this report.

Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) are located across the Borough with most in and around the north of the Council area between Hollywood, Bangor and Newtownards. There are several to the west of Strangford Lough including Ballymacashen Bog and Ballalloly Lough but less SLNCIs are evident to the east of Strangford and down the Ards Peninsula. In total, there are 47 and most of these are also Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) but some like Lough Cowey are just SLNCIs. The Borough has three Ulster Wildlife reserves. Two are on the outskirts of Bangor whilst Inishargy Bog is on the Ards Peninsula. This is also a LWS and a SLNCI. The National Trust manages a significant amount of land in the north of Strangford Lough and sections on the east and coastal south of the lough. National Trust also manages parts of the coast at the southern tip of Strangford Lough in around Ballyquintan and Kearney Points but also on the Council's north coastline at Ballymacormick and Orlock Points. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) manages a reserve at Belfast Lough, which lies adjacent to the Ards and North Down Borough's boundary. The RSPB also has a reserve at Strangford Bay and Sandy Island within the Newry and Mourne District Council jurisdiction but within one km of the Ards and North Down Council boundary. There are also two national nature reserves located on the shores of Strangford Lough. Ancient woodland habitat is still present within the council and is particularly evident between Hollywood and Bangor, around Mount Stewart and Greyabbey, north of Portaferry. There are a few small patches along the Ards Peninsula. Ancient woodland is a unique habitat with a rich biodiversity formed over hundreds of years. It covers only 2% of land in the UK<sup>1</sup>. A few Forest Service sites are also located in and around the Hollywood and Mount Stewart areas with tracts of native and semi natural woodland present. These are mostly evident in similar locations to the larger areas of ancient woodland at Ballysallagh, Clandeboye and Mount Stewart. Although widely dispersed, these habitats help to maintain local biodiversity levels. The Council also benefits from Country Parks – Killynether, Crawfordsburn, Redburn and Whitespots – important for biodiversity and amenity value. Local level nature conservation sites including nature reserves and ancient woodland are shown in Figure 5.12.2.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/about-us/ancient-woodland-restoration/ancient-woodland/what-is-ancient-woodland/>

Figure 5.12.2: Local Level Nature Conservation Sites and Ancient/Native Woodland



### *Biodiversity*

Currently a new Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is in progress, which should better reflect the new Council area and help guide its biodiversity conservation<sup>1</sup>. All Councils now have a duty to help conserve biodiversity within their functions under The Wildlife and Natural Environment (NI) Act (2011). LBAPs and Biodiversity Implementation Plans are appropriate measures to help achieve this and halt the loss of biodiversity.

The previous LBAP (2013-2017) from the legacy councils of North Down and Ards, highlighted the threats to local biodiversity as:

- habitat loss;
- non-native species;
- pollution;
- climate change; and
- land management practices.

It also highlighted the following habitats at particular risk to impacts:

- unimproved grasslands
- species rich hedgerows, and
- inter-drumlin wetlands.

A variety of habitats were referred to including upland grasslands, woodlands and inter-drumlin wetlands. Strangford Lough and the rest of the coastline including the Copeland Islands adds further diversity with rocky coastline habitats and intertidal shores.

The LBAP focused on the following priority habitat types:

- woodlands;
- grassland, hedgerows and farmland;
- marine;
- coastal and island habitats; and
- wetlands.

The previous LBAP also focused on priority species that were either listed as a Northern Ireland priority species, or classed as Local Priority Species. Species included red squirrel, bats and bumblebees but half were birds and included gulls, terns, yellowhammer, tree sparrow, linnet and several other coastal/marine species including Light-bellied Brent geese and Manx Shearwater<sup>2</sup>. More information on partnership working for nature conservation and other benefits follows in the Ecosystem Services section.

### *Green/Blue Infrastructure*

In the SPPS, Local Development Plans are referred to as a means to plan for and integrate the natural environment into neighbourhoods. It encourages biodiversity to be considered as a feature of plans and designs<sup>3</sup>. All green and blue features can be classified as green/blue infrastructure (G/BI) which can connect natural habitats and open space together across landscapes. G/BI can be ponds, gardens, allotments, rivers and even parks and Sustainable Drainage Systems. When protected and planned for, it can help maintain and enhance local biodiversity by conserving, creating or adding to wildlife corridors. The SPPS recognises this and the value it can bring to people's health and quality of life. Likewise, its consideration can help to strengthen natural infrastructure that may act as a floodplain or coastal defence, a carbon or water store, or the effects of the urban heat island effect. G/BI is often multifunctional land with possibilities for incorporation of active travel routes. More information on

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council 2018 (local biodiversity officer)

<sup>2</sup> North Down and Ards Area Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2017

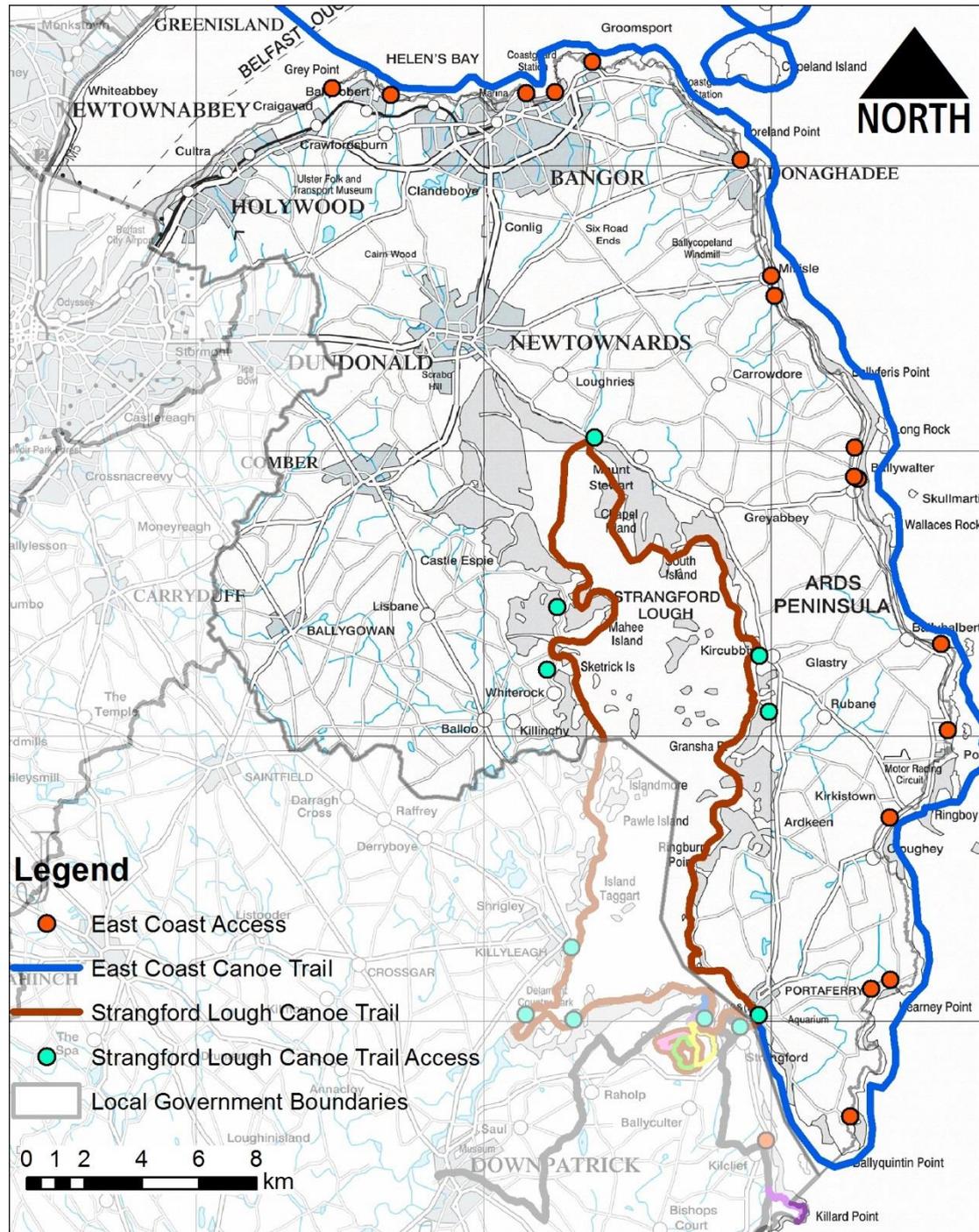
<sup>3</sup> DoE (September 2015): Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) Planning for Sustainable Development

walking and cycling routes and greenways is in the Transport and Accessibility section of this report, whilst coastal flooding is referred to in the Climate Change section.

### Canoe NI

Canoe NI is part of Outdoor Recreation NI and helps to ensure access to NI’s canoe trails is safe and feasible. Although there is an absence of canals in the Ards and North own Borough, there are a significant amount of canoe trails and access points available. These are located around the full length of Strangford Lough and along the entire coastline of the Ards Peninsula. Both trails are shown in Figure 5.12.3.

Figure 5.12.3: Accessible Canoe Trails from Ards and North Down Borough



Source: Canoe NI

### *Ecosystem Services*

In recent years, the natural environment has become increasingly recognised for the range of beneficial services that it provides to economic performance, health and well-being and people's quality of life. The provision of these benefits is 'ecosystem services' (ES) and the SPPS recommends the appropriate integration of them into the LDP process, highlighting the importance of ES in spatial planning<sup>1</sup>. ES can be grouped into four main categories – provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting<sup>2</sup>. Provisioning refers to providing food and materials; regulating refers to physical processes such as pollination and climate; cultural refers to meeting peoples' recreational, spiritual or aesthetic needs; and supporting refers to processes such as the water cycle and soil formation.

There are several ES projects across Northern Ireland. These focus on more sustainable approaches to managing land that provide positive benefits for stakeholders like reduced costs. Northern Ireland Water is involved in several ES projects with economic benefits that have also delivered environmental gains including restored upland bog<sup>3</sup> and wildflower meadows<sup>4</sup>. ES projects can often help to combat climate change, increase local biodiversity and provide an amenity area/value for local people.

Currently the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is working with over 70 farmers on a project called, 'Working together with Nature'<sup>5</sup>. The project encompasses a significant amount of land including the entire Ards and North Down Borough. It is an example of farmers integrating new measures to support seed eating birds that helps to maintain and enhance local biodiversity.

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

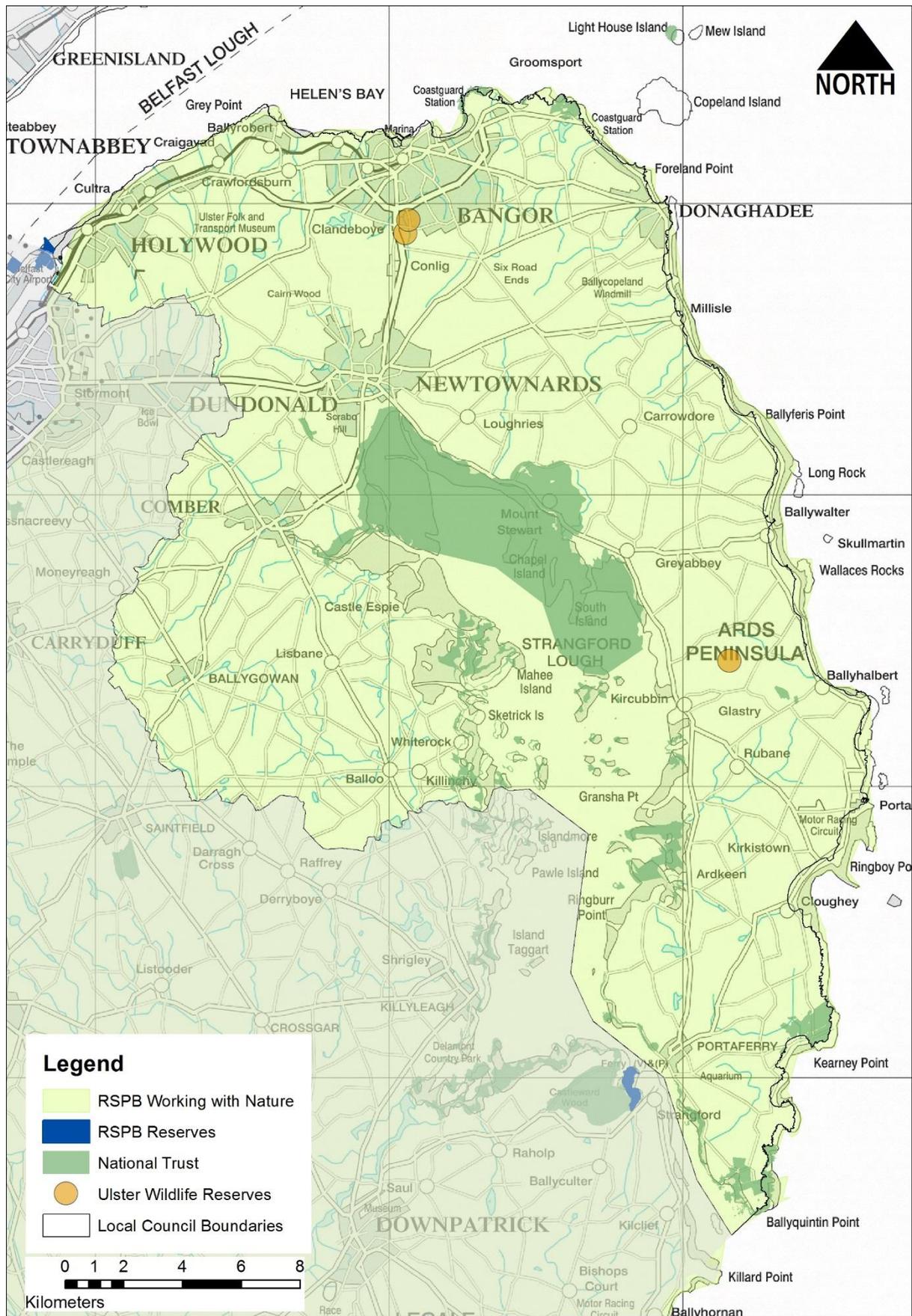
<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan – Position Paper Environmental Resilience

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.climatenorthernireland.org.uk/cmsfiles/ClimateNI\\_RSPBFINAL.pdf](https://www.climatenorthernireland.org.uk/cmsfiles/ClimateNI_RSPBFINAL.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ulsterwildlife.org/news/2016/08/25/former-sewage-lagoons-be-transformed-wildlife-haven>

<sup>5</sup> RSPB NI Conservation Team 2018

Figure 5.12.4: Working together with Nature project area and NGO Reserves in Ards and North BC



Source: RSPB NI, Ulster Wildlife, National Trust

Forest Service owned lands like Clandeboye, Mount Stewart and Ballysallagh can also be accounted as ES that provide multiple benefits to users and the physical environment. Appropriately managed Forest Service lands can provide sources of timber, locations for recreational and leisure facilities, habitat for priority species, and act as carbon and water stores. ES have been incorporated to regional level landscape assessments, including for the Ards Peninsula. The uniqueness of the area is recognised as providing and enabling multiple economic, social and environmental benefits by supporting local industry and business, as well as amenity value. Further information is in the Landscape section of this report.

### 5.12.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without a Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there could be a risk of inappropriate development with negative impacts on the natural heritage resource including loss of priority habitat. It could become increasingly difficult to manage pollution risk, particularly in areas under development pressure. It could also become increasingly difficult to mitigate the impacts of climate change on habitats and species, particularly in coastal areas. Without up to date information, spatially managing development to avoid impacts on local biodiversity and G/BI would be less feasible. With a new LDP in place, up to date information on the natural heritage resource would be available and protection and enhancement of it as a key asset would be more feasible. There could also be an opportunity to highlight ES opportunities.

### 5.12.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Natural Resources

- There are 115 miles of fully protected coastline due to its environmental importance with multiple benefits for the environment, health and well-being and the local economy.
- Most of the Borough's settlements are located along the coastline.
- Strangford Lough is a valuable natural resource protected by several designations to ensure its site integrity is conserved, protected and enhanced.
- The Borough has a variety of designated sites to help protect its natural heritage resource – one Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, three Ramsars, four Special Protection Areas, two Special Areas of Conservation, 16 Areas of Special Scientific Interest, 47 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance, two National Nature Reserves as well as Country Parks.
- Development pressure must be managed near all designated sites but particularly around Strangford Lough and the rest of the coastline as valuable natural resources providing ecosystem services.
- There may be potential for new local level nature conservation sites in the south of the Borough and along the Ards Peninsula.
- Ancient woodland, native/semi natural woodland and woodland cover is of particular importance in the Borough.
- There may be opportunities at a local level to add to the number and/or quality of sites.
- A new Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) that reflects the new Borough Council area and its local biodiversity is needed to help protect, manage and enhance biodiversity conservation (currently in progress).
- There is a need for the Council to define the 'coastal zone' to help enable management of it.
- There are opportunities for green/blue infrastructure across the Council including disused railway lines and opportunities to extend the Comber Greenway.
- Opportunities for ecosystem services projects could help raise awareness of the physical and economic importance of the natural environment.
- The coastline and areas of Ards are already recognised for their ecosystem services value – fisheries, crops, culture, tourism, health, and amenity and so on.
- Unregulated activities that affect Strangford Lough may need to be appropriately addressed under provisions in the Marine Act (NI) 2013.

- The inter-relationship between onshore and offshore activities need to be appropriately considered.
- There is a need to identify stakeholders to engage with on shared coastal and designated site issues including other Councils and landowners – Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Belfast City Council and the National Trust.
- The National Trust has identified coastal change hotspots at Mount Stewart and Kearney.
- More sustainable defence and protection measures than the traditional practice of hard sea defences are likely to need to be considered as alternative approaches to coastal realignment.
- Futureproof the Council by advocating a precautionary approach to coastal development and coastal defence by researching erosion and flooding issues to improve coastal knowledge and lead zoning areas of constraint.

## 5.13 Landscape

### 5.13.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Landscape protection in Northern Ireland is evident at the regional level with a key aim in the RDS to protect and enhance the environment for its own sake. The environment in Northern Ireland is seen as one of its greatest assets and regional policy encourages protection of natural heritage assets and landscape character.

The SPPS recognises the importance of the countryside as a significant asset. It aims to avoid inappropriate development and provide a high standard of landscape protection that also reflects regional and local differences. Protection of landscape as a consideration is evident within several SPPS subject policies including development in the countryside, minerals, open space, sport and outdoor recreation, renewable energy, telecommunications and other utilities. It also recognises the importance of the coastline in terms of landscape value. Planning Policy Statement 8 Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation refers to a broad range of open spaces of public value that can be considered important aspects of local landscape character and people's well-being – forest parks, amenity green space, green corridors, natural and semi-natural green spaces and allotments.

The North Down coastline was designated within the BMAP but due to its ruling, the statutory development plan for the Borough remains the North Down and Ards Area Plan 1984-1995 (NDAAP). The NDAAP is now well out of date and a new LDP could provide opportunities for policy areas such as Special Countryside Areas or Areas of High Scenic Value (AoHSV), to help conserve unique landscapes. These could add to existing designations including the Strangford and Lecale AONB and its associated Action Plan that aims to manage the site sustainably. The ADAP 2015 also recognises the importance of coastal areas in terms of landscape.

Much of what is valued in a landscape is a blend of natural features and social and cultural history. It is the viewer's perception that provides an intrinsic value. This can help to define a region and provide a sense of place. All of this is in keeping with the European Landscape Convention (ELC), also known as The Florence Convention. It aims to protect, manage and plan for all landscapes, including everyday or degraded ones. The ELC also aims to help reconnect people with place<sup>1</sup>.

Landscape is increasingly being realised in economic terms as an asset for tourism or as a motivator to encourage people to purchase a home or to invest in a new location. In the Executive's draft PfG 2016-2021, a strategic outcome aims for society to live and work sustainably whilst protecting the environment. One of the draft PfG indicators to measure success of its outcomes includes improving the attractiveness of the country as a destination. In turn, this is measured by total spend by external visitors and directly links to tourism. Fundamental to the attractiveness of the country will be the preservation of the landscape for people to enjoy.

In the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, its purpose *'to make Ards and North Down the best place to live, work, visit and invest'* is presented. Strangford Lough and its islands, and the extensive coastline, are both prominent within the Plan's description of the Borough, as too is reference to the strong presence of the historic environment. To help achieve the purpose of the plan, *'ensuring we make the very best of the natural, cultural and environmental assets in our Borough'* is committed to as one of three objectives. This is of particular relevance to the protection and sustainable management of landscape as an asset and should help protect it as the foundation to local and regional tourism, and the natural environment.

The Council's Community Plan, *'The Big Plan'*, sets out a holistic approach to achieving its vision and outcomes. The Plan recognises the *'rich diversity of scenic countryside'* that makes the setting of the Borough. It acknowledges the importance of Strangford Lough as a landscape feature of 'global

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/policy/13732-2/>

environmental importance'. Aspiring to protect the natural environment, while connecting people to it for its health and economic benefits, is part of achieving the outcomes of the Community Plan. Fundamental to this will be appropriate consideration of landscape within the development of the LDP.

### 5.13.2 Baseline Information

Detailed information on landscape has been provided in the Local Development Plan Position Papers on Landscape Character Assessment; The Coast; and Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation. This topic also overlaps with the Health & Well-being, Economy & Employment, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Natural Resources, Climate Change, and Historic Environment and Cultural heritage sections of this report.

#### *Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty*

AONBs are designated for their landscape value but also '*wildlife importance and rich cultural and architectural heritage*'<sup>1</sup>. The Ards and North Down Borough has a variety of landscape types including extensive coastlines, drumlin lowlands, and arable farmland. Its central area is dominated by Strangford Lough – an AONB since the 1960s. This was re-designated as the Strangford and Lecale AONB in 2010, under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order (1985). Its extents are shown in Figure 5.13.1.

The AONB is a marine lough, mostly located within the Council area but it also crosses into the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's jurisdiction. The designation protects the entire lough and its shores where a diversity of low-lying wetland habitats, farmland and drumlin hills are located. It is an internationally important wetland site for migrating, wintering and breeding birds, as well as being nationally and regionally important for a variety of birds, habitats and species. More information on its nature conservation value and designations including that of a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is in the Natural Resources section of this report.

In 2010, a voluntary management plan, dated 2013-2018 was drawn up for the site by the Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership. The Action Plan aimed to conserve the built and natural heritage of the AONB whilst enabling people to engage with it as a resource for health and well-being, economic or educational/research purposes<sup>2</sup>. It promoted the need for people to work together to ensure appropriate activities and developments<sup>3</sup>. The Plan is due to be renewed for the Strangford and Lecale AONB, which is in Map 6 of the LDP Position Paper on Landscape Character Assessment.

#### *Landscape Character Areas*

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) were designated under the NI Landscape Character Assessment (2000). There are 130 LCAs in Northern Ireland and these are shown in Map 1 of the LDP Position Paper on Landscape Character Assessment. LCAs are based on local conditions including landform and use but also geology, cultural and ecological features. They can provide, 'an understanding of how the landscape functions to support communities, cultural heritage and development, local and macro economies, as well as the wildlife and natural resources of the area.'<sup>4</sup>

Ten LCAs are located either wholly or partially within the Borough and these are listed in Appendix One of the Position Paper. They are also shown on Figure 5.13.1. They range in character from the exposed rocky shorelines and uninhibited sea views of the Ballyquintan and Lecale Coast; to the Hollywood Hills with its 200-metre hills, steep wooded slopes and historic estates; to the Strangford Drumlins and Islands with its stone bridges and causeways, winding roads, castles and mottes. Each LCA has a report, which identifies pressures on landscape and guidelines for their sustainable

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<sup>1</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan Position Paper – Landscape Character Assessment

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.strangfordlough.org/images/publications/6283Action\\_Plan\\_low\\_res\\_2.pdf](http://www.strangfordlough.org/images/publications/6283Action_Plan_low_res_2.pdf)

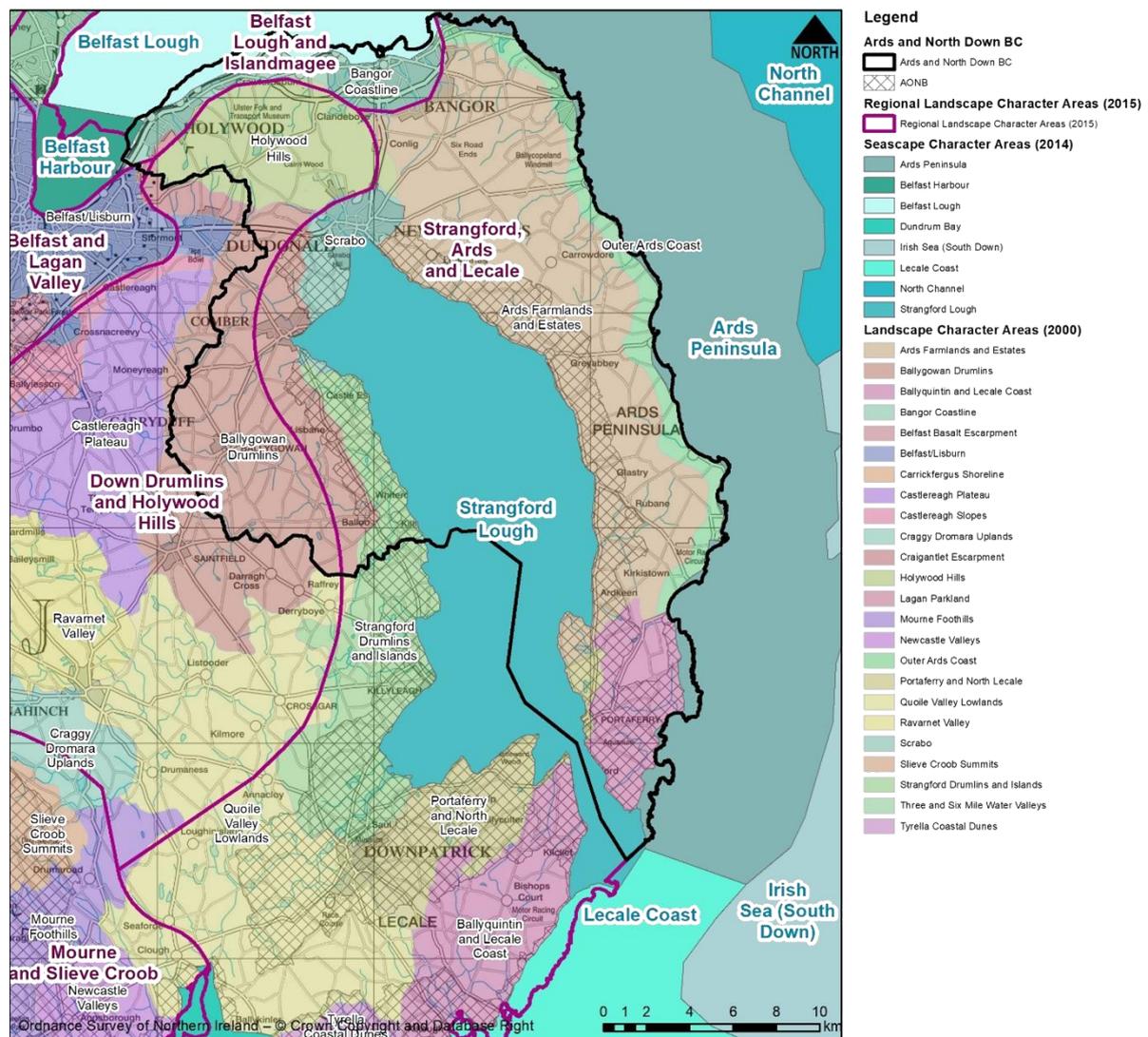
<sup>3</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan Position Paper – Landscape Character Assessment

<sup>4</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan Position Paper – Landscape Character Assessment

management. In spite of the information provided by LCAs and their potential use in decision-making, they are accepted as being dated<sup>1</sup>. Since 2000, the type of likely development pressure to be considered on landscape has evolved and more information is presented below under *Development Pressure*.

The LCAs provide important information to guide landscape management and any new development in those areas. It is evident from these principles that in some LCAs there is a risk of further development leading to a loss of rural character through merging settlements, or a risk that some built development may be inappropriately located on high ridges. Likewise, appropriate styles and designs using traditional colours, native planting, and ideally, conversion of traditional buildings, are recommended to help maintain local character and integrate new development<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 5.13.1: Landscape Designations in Ards and North Down



Source: DAERA Digital Datasets

### Regional Landscape Character Areas

The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) 2015 divided the country into 26 distinct areas known as Regional Landscape Character Areas (RLCAs). These provide a more strategic approach to landscape than the LCAs and are based upon information to do with people,

<sup>1</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council's Local Development Plan Position Paper – Landscape Character Assessment

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/landscape-character-northern-ireland>

place, nature, culture and perception<sup>1</sup>. There are four RLCAs in the Borough and these are shown in Map 3 and Appendix 3 of the LDP Position Paper on Landscape Character Assessment. These range in character from developed coasts and urban areas (Belfast Lough and Islandmagee RLCA, and the Belfast and Lagan Valley RLCA), to extensive drumlins and rural lowlands with views of the Mourne (Down Drumlins and Holywood Hills RLCA), to Strangford Lough and Dundrum Bay with sandy beaches and rocky shores (Strangford Lecale and Ards RLCA). Descriptions for each include subjects like location, setting, key characteristics, forces/ indicators of change, and ecosystem services<sup>2</sup>. The inclusion of ES within a landscape related designation is important as it highlights the multiple benefits feasible from an area primarily conserved for its landscape value. More information on ecosystems services is in the Natural Resources section of this report.

Although development pressure is a threat to landscape, the RLCAs recognised other ‘forces for change’<sup>3</sup>. In addition to various types of development, potential forces include climate change, coastal processes, intensive agriculture, plant disease and minerals.

### *Seascape Character Areas*

In 2014, the Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment was published with 24 Seascape Character Areas (SCAs) – a strategic approach to understanding the different areas along the coast and the interactions played out between land, sea, man and nature<sup>4</sup>. Ards and North Down Borough has an extensive coastline of 115 miles. This encompasses Belfast Lough in the north and the towns of Holywood and Bangor, the harbour of Donaghadee on the coast of the Irish Sea, and the Ards Peninsula. The shores of Strangford Lough are also accountable as coastline with the towns of Comber, Newtownards and Portaferry located on its shores. In total, there are five SCAs that fall wholly or partially within Ards and North Down’s jurisdiction. These include Belfast Lough, Strangford Lough, Lecale Coast, and Ards Peninsula. SCAs are shown in Figure 5.13.1. The location of the Council’s key settlements and villages along the coastline highlights the importance of it to residents and visitors and the ‘close connection’ between the Council area and the sea<sup>5</sup>.

### *Local Landscape Policy Areas*

Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) protect landscape features within or near to settlements that are important for their local significance, amenity value or landscape quality. LLPAs can also include features important for their historical or cultural value, as well as the setting, which helps to protect the feature from visual intrusion. There are 101 LLPAs in the Borough and these are in Map 7 of the LDP Position Paper on Landscape Character Assessment.

### *Area of High Scenic Value*

One of the ten LCAs in the Borough has been identified as an Area of High Scenic Value (AoHSV) to help protect the setting of local settlements. The Craigantlet Escarpment lies between Belfast and Holywood, and is shared with two other Council jurisdictions – Belfast City, and Lisburn and Castlereagh City. It is in Map 8 of the LDP Position Paper on Landscape Character Assessment.

### *Development Pressure*

As referred to in the Health and Well-being, and Community sections of this report, there is a growing and aging population in the Borough. This brings with it an increased level of development, which includes housing, public utilities, infrastructure and business. The LDP Position Paper Public Utilities refers to how utilities can ‘impact on visual amenity and environmentally sensitive features and locations’. The LDP Position Paper on Landscape also highlights how, ‘the built form has changed’ since 2000. Some examples include evolving residential designs, as well as new types of energy generation i.e. renewables. NI has a high suitability for wind energy but this must be balanced with

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<sup>1</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper – Landscape Character Assessment

<sup>2</sup> DAERA NI RLCA <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/regional-landscape-character-areas-map-viewer>

<sup>3</sup> <https://daera-ni.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=dee491ff43c0415fbb986f74c92f39a9>

<sup>4</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Papers – The Coast

<sup>5</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Papers – Landscape Character Assessment; The Coast (Map 1)

landscape considerations ‘particularly given the designation of much of the western portion of the Peninsula as an AONB’<sup>1</sup>. Although the Borough may have a relatively low presence of wind generation compared to other Councils, it has a widespread distribution and yet 90% of the LCAs in the Borough have been assessed as of a high sensitivity to wind energy<sup>2</sup>. Development pressure across the Borough from renewables, housing and industry, presents different threats and opportunities depending on local topography, landscape character and existing development pressures.

### 5.13.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there could be an increased risk overtime of losing or degrading landscape value because of over development or inappropriate development - siting or design. Without up to date information, it could become increasingly difficult to spatially manage new development in the context of local landscape character. Without an up to date plan there could be a higher risk of negative impacts on landscape in areas particularly sensitive to change because of the evolving type and amount of development pressure, including housing, industrial uses, renewables and recreational activities. It could also become difficult to futureproof existing landscape designations vulnerable to the predicted impacts of climate change<sup>3</sup>. Likewise, there could be missed opportunities to improve local landscape.

### 5.13.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Landscape

- The Borough has one AONB – the Strangford and Lecale AONB – with a draft Action Plan 2017-2022.
- There are a variety of landscape types across the Borough ranging from farmland, to rocky shores and coastline, to wooded estates and urban centres.
- A variety of measures may be needed to help protect the different landscapes from visual intrusion caused by new development pressure linked to energy, minerals, housing and/or business projects.
- There are 10 Landscape Character Areas in the Borough (defined by 1999 survey) and 9 have been identified as of a high sensitivity to wind energy.
- Some parts of the Borough are well developed and any additional development would be detrimental to rural character and individual landscape settings.
- Some parts of the Borough have been affected by new development that has detracted from the local rural character, which highlights the need for appropriate design.
- Some parts of the Borough have been affected by neglected boundaries, which highlights the need for continuous and active landscape management.
- There are 4 Regional Landscape Character Areas in the Borough (defined by NIRLCA survey).
- There are 115 miles of coastline in the Borough and 7 Seascape Character Areas (SCAs) (defined by NIRSCA) including 2 offshore SCAs.
- Ecosystem services is likely to become more of a consideration in landscape related decisions since its inclusion in the NIRLCA 2015.
- There are 101 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) in the Borough but there may be sites of a similar significance across the wider countryside and particularly in the rural Ards Peninsula that cannot fall under the LLPA designation.
- Landscape management is likely to require new working partnerships as many of the landscape related designations are shared with the new neighbouring Councils of Newry, Mourne and Down, Belfast City, and Lisburn and Castlereagh City.
- Working with landowners and voluntary organisations including community groups, is likely to become even more important to help ensure sustainable landscape management into the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper - Public Utilities

<sup>2</sup> Ards and North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper – Landscape Character Assessment

<sup>3</sup> Ards & North Down Borough Council’s Local Development Plan Position Paper – The Coast

## 5.14 Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage/Resources

### 5.14.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe 1992 and the European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe 1987 (known respectively as the 'Valetta Convention' and the 'Granada Convention') place responsibility on member states to consider the conservation of archaeological resources and to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. The Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas (2005) aims to contribute through legislation, policies, planning processes and management to better protect and conserve the world's heritage structures, sites and areas in their settings. In the regional context PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage, along with its addendum, sets out planning policies for the protection and conservation of archaeological remains and built heritage features. Supplementary planning guidance in the form of booklets incorporating local policies, design guides and baseline audits are published for Conservation Areas.

The regional strategic objectives in the SPPS are to:

- 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.
- Encourage the link between conservation and economic prosperity.

More specific policy is set out in items 6.28 and 6.29 of the SPPS. These link directly with the aims of the above-mentioned European Conventions.

The overarching policy recognises that townscape, built heritage, archaeology and cultural heritage form an important part of the character and appearance of our cities, towns, villages, small settlements and countryside. They are also part of our culture and can contribute to our quality of life. The historic environment has the potential to benefit our community and our economy in terms of tourism and regeneration. They contribute to the sense of place in our towns, villages and smaller settlements and are part of what is unique about places in the Borough.

Regional guidance recognises that quality natural assets, interesting architecture, and built heritage can contribute to a feeling of being somewhere unique, which contribute to the tourism offer. Reuse of both listed and locally important buildings can contribute to urban and rural renaissance, which can help vitality and footfall in settlement centres, supporting the local economy.

Our Corporate Plan notes that the Borough has a strong link to early Christian heritage through St Columbanus and Bangor Abbey, Nendrum Monastery and Movilla Abbey. It is part of the legend of St Patrick. Our built heritage extends to many medieval tower houses and the Cistercian Grey Abbey. The National Trust House and Gardens at Mount Stewart are also exemplary.

It also recognises that the area experienced significant change during the 17<sup>th</sup> century Plantation of Ulster, when there was a large influx of migrants from, in particular, Scotland. The effect of this period is still very evident today in the place names, surnames, dialect and a strong sense of an Ulster Scots culture. These historical and cultural assets should be capitalised on to support the Plan's objective to ensure we make the very best of the natural, cultural and environmental assets in the Borough.

*The Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032* includes the outcome that "all people in Ards and North Down feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment". *The Big Plan* acknowledges the value of quality open and heritage spaces. It recognises that people benefit from having access to a well preserved historic environment, the benefits of which are often overlooked. The historic environment is intertwined with intertwined with the interests of the natural

environment, landscape character and natural biodiversity as all these characterise the interaction between people and place over millennia, each exerting influence over the other. The historic environment provides interesting ways to learn about the complexity of our past; it has proven positive impacts on health and wellbeing and has a key economic role to play through encouraging tourism and increasing quality of life. It is a finite resource that should be nurtured and promoted.

#### 5.14.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in a number of LDP Position Papers including 'Historic Environment', 'Landscape Character Assessment' and 'Settlement and Placemaking'. The Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities (DfC) has also published its digital datasets of the historic environment online<sup>1</sup> and has created a Historic Environment Web Map Viewer<sup>2</sup>. This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Education, Economy and Employment, and Landscape sections of this report.

##### *Overview*

The historic environment in Ards and North Down includes built heritage and artefacts from all periods of human settlement in Ireland from around 7,000BC to the 20th century. The settlement of Bangor has monastic origins but its present form and character largely reflect its growth as a seaside resort in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, following the arrival of the railway line in 1865. Hollywood Conservation Area was designated in May 2004. A mix of Medieval, Victorian and Edwardian architecture, a well preserved historic street pattern and a unique landscape setting all contribute to the unique character of Hollywood. Crawfordsburn originated in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century as a small settlement on an important routeway. It has retained elements of its 17<sup>th</sup> Century history, including the coaching inn in the village.

The quality of the built environmental heritage in parts of the Borough is therefore high and with this comes the need and responsibility to protect and conserve for our own and future generations to enjoy and experience.

##### *Listed Buildings*

There are a total of approximately 668 Listed Buildings in the Council area, 16 of which have been assigned Grade A status<sup>1</sup>. These are shown in Figure 5.14.2 and include Mount Stewart, Bangor Town Hall, the Manor House at Donaghadee, Helen's Bay station and three 19<sup>th</sup> Century bridges. A further 157 buildings and structures (approx.) are listed, but are 'record only' or have not yet been allocated a grade.

##### *Buildings at Risk*

The Ulster Architecture and Heritage Society, in conjunction with the DfC, has compiled an online list of Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup>. These are buildings and monuments of architectural and historic interest whose future seems threatened and may be suitable for restoration and repair. There are 35 such buildings in the Council area identified on the list, including houses, gate lodges and a water tower. While these are not exclusively 'listed' buildings, the vast majority are. Some of the buildings on this list have been repaired or restored since the list was compiled, however a number of buildings remain at 'critical' risk.

##### *Sites and Monuments Record*

Ards and North Down has a rich record of archaeological sites and historic monuments, especially along its coastlines. Scheduled sites are archaeological and historic sites and monuments that are afforded protection under Article 3 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 and there are 122 such Scheduled sites in the Council (see Figure 5.14.1). The Record of Historic

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities Historic Environment Digital Datasets (Date published: 19 July 2018)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/historic-environment-map-viewer>

<sup>3</sup> Department for Communities Buildings at Risk Register for Northern Ireland (accessed 22/06/2018)

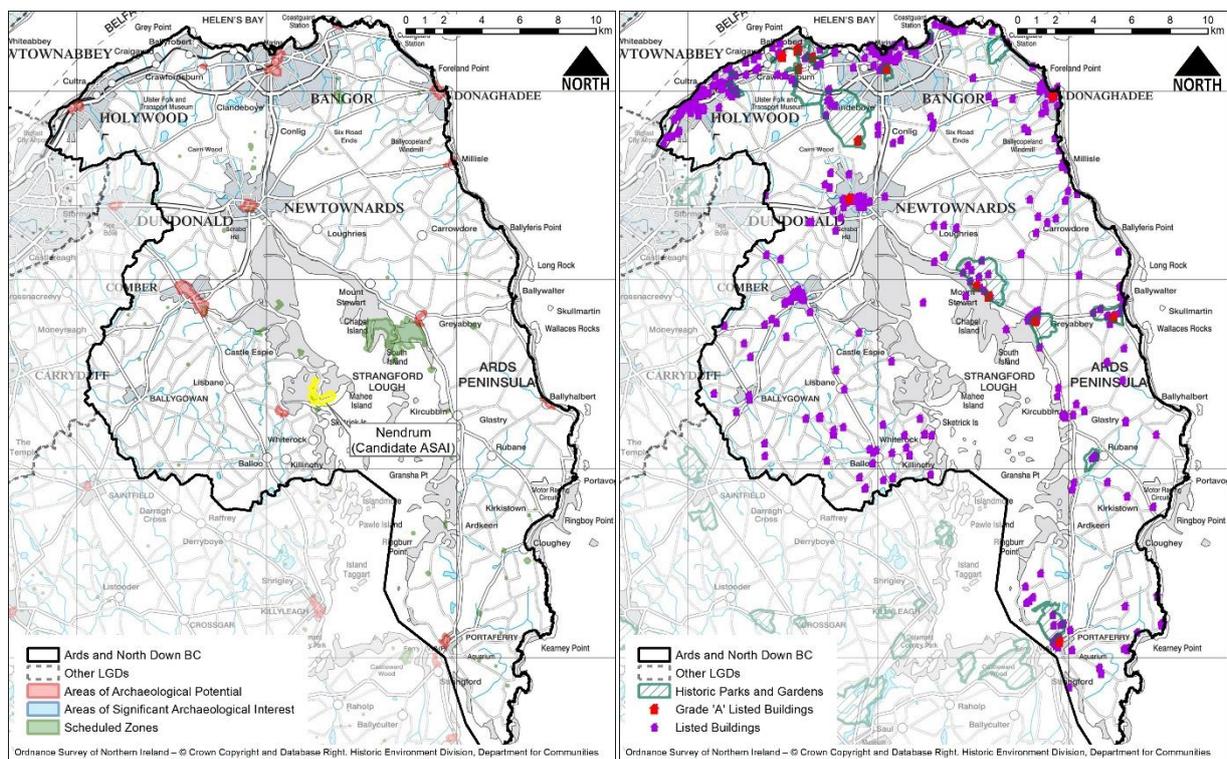
Monuments maintained by the HED lists a further 687 unscheduled Sites and Monuments located across the Council area. Two sites are currently proposed for scheduling. The record includes assets such as prehistoric cairns and standing stones, early Christian era raths and a tidal mill, medieval fish traps, 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> Century infrastructure for processing seaweed and more modern features such as World War II airfields, pillboxes and anti-aircraft defences. Important sites may continue to be discovered in the future through planned archaeological excavations, site works associated with new development and agricultural activity.

The Council area has 15 Monuments in State Care, including Scrabo Tower, Ballycopeland Windmill and Kirkistown Castle. With the exception of the newly added Grey Point Fort, these are listed in Appendix B of the 'Historic Environment' LDP Position Paper.

### Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest

Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) are non-statutory designations that seek to identify distinctive areas of the historic landscape in Northern Ireland. There are currently no ASAI in Ards and North Down, however a site at Nendrum (on Mahee Island) is currently under consideration for designation and is a Candidate ASAI. The built remains at Nendrum are considered to be NI's best example of a pre-Norman monastic enclosure with buildings.

Figure 5.14.1 & Figure 5.14.2: Historic Environment: ASAI, AAP and Scheduled Zones



Source: DfC Historic Environment Digital Datasets (Date published: 19 July 2018) and DfC scoping consultation response 07/08/2018

### Area of Archaeological Potential

There are 12 settlements in Ards and North Down with identified Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP). These are listed in Appendix A of the Historic Environment LDP Position Paper and shown in Figure 5.14.1.

The Gazetteer of Nucleated Historic Settlements is the result of a program of work within the DfC to identify historic settlement centres and from these, in some cases, identify new AAP or modify existing AAP. The draft Gazetteer includes 26 entries within the Borough, of which 15 do not have an existing AAP associated. These include areas of Ballywalter, Carrowdore, Craigantlet and Killinchy.

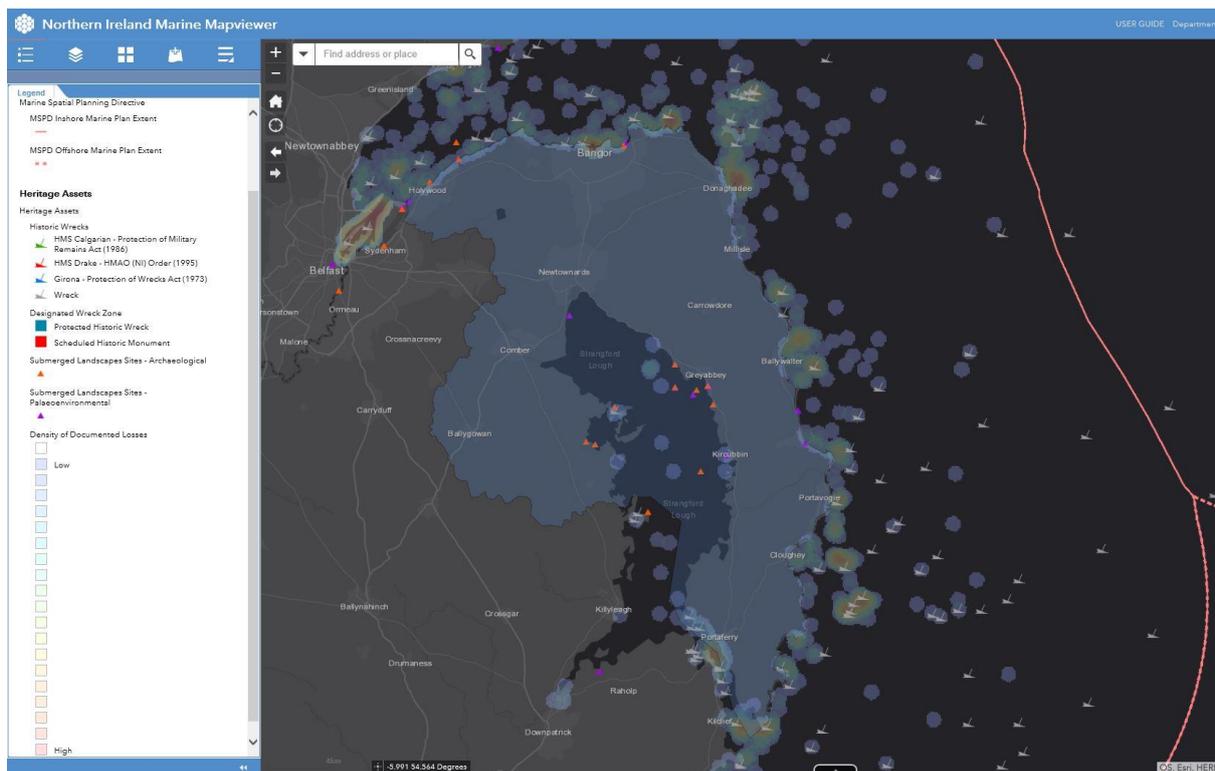
There are various existing policies for AAP and ASAI under the ADAP 2015 and BMAP 2015. The new LDP will consider the designation of new ASAI and AAP through consultation with the DfC.

### Marine Historic Environment

The nature of our coastline has resulted in several areas with high densities of documented marine losses (see Figure 5.14.3), in particular Donaghadee, Bangor and South Briggs (located between the former two sites). Around 17 historic shipwrecks are known to be located close (<500m) to our coastline, however many more documented shipwrecks remain unlocated. There are no wrecks with protected status located in waters adjacent to the Council.

Submerged Landscape Sites include palaeoenvironmental peat artefacts dating from around ten to twelve thousand years before present which were discovered at Roddan's Port and submerged tree stumps dated to around eight thousand years at Greyabbey Bay. Submerged archaeological finds dating from the early Mesolithic period (7,000-8,000 years ago) have been discovered at Holywood and a log boat dating from the Neolithic period (c. 3,500-3,000 years ago) was discovered at Greyabbey. There are 13 of these submerged archaeology sites in the Council area, shown in Figure 5.14.3. Intertidal or offshore development, such as undersea cables, offshore wind farms or tidal/wave energy arrays, has the potential to discover new evidence of the marine historic environment and may result in new sites requiring protected status.

Figure 5.14.3: Historic Environment Mapviewer: ASAI, AAP & Density of Documented Marine Losses



Source: Department for Communities Historic Environment Map Viewer

### Industrial Heritage

The Borough also contains a wealth of remains from the industrial past, which are reminders of the economic as well as the social development of the area. Sites of industrial heritage can be found not only in the city and main towns, but also in rural locations. They include many remnants of the former flax and linen industries, corn mills, windmills, slate quarries and gasworks. There are numerous bridges and other engineering features remaining from the former Belfast and County Down Railway. There are also several coastguard stations, reflecting the strong maritime tradition in the Borough. As discussed in section 5.8, the Comber greenway follows the route of the former

railway from Comber to Belfast. Other parts of former railway routes in the Borough are under consideration for the development of new greenways.

#### *Defence Heritage*

Ards and North Down contains many defence heritage assets, largely associated with World War II, many of which are focused around the coast and in Newtownards. Defence heritage assets include former airfields, air raid shelters, pillboxes and trenches. Many of the assets on the defence asset database are in very poor condition or have already been destroyed. The majority of former airfields in the Borough are now derelict, some have been reused or altered (e.g. part of the former RAF Kirkistown is now a motor racing track), and others are in a state of decay or have been demolished.

#### *Historic Parks and Gardens*

Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes reflect planned and managed landscape enhancement carried out since the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Ards and North Down has a total of 13 Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes on the Register which are considered to be of exceptional importance within NI. These are shown in Figure 5.14.2 and include 560ha at Clondeboye Estate and 352ha at Mount Stewart. A further four supplementary sites have also been identified as having a high level of interest and are included as an appendix to the main Register.

#### *Conservation Areas*

The Borough has a total of three Conservation Areas. They are:

- Donaghadee
- Holywood
- Portaferry

The ADAP 2015 highlights Greyabbey as a historic village that possesses a special character and historic significance worthy of future designation as a conservation area. The aesthetic reasons for retaining the best of the built heritage has helped grow public awareness of conservation. Many environmental and economic benefits can also be derived from Conservation Area designations, such as tourism and heritage related leisure activities, making them desirable places to live, work, shop and do business.

#### *Areas of Townscape Character*

A total of 18 Areas of Townscape Character and Areas of Village Character have been identified in the Borough. Their locations are shown on Map 5 of the 'Historic Environment' LDP Position Paper and they are also listed in Appendix E of the Position Paper.

#### *Local Landscape Policy Areas*

Owing to the unique nature of the Council area in terms of its landscape, seascape, nature conservation importance, archaeological sites and monuments and their surroundings, there is a high number (101) of Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPA) within the Borough. Their locations are shown in Map 7 of the Landscape Character LDP Position Paper and they are listed in Appendix D of the 'Natural Environment' LDP Position Paper.

### **5.14.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan**

In the absence of a new plan, opportunities to consider and realise the value of the historic environment in future growth plans and place-shaping may be missed. Without a new LDP in place, opportunities to designate new ASAI and to identify new AAP might be missed. Opportunities might also be missed to take advantage of the potential that archaeological, industrial, and defence heritage assets have as part of our tourism industry, leading to reduced economic benefits for local communities. The protection, conservation and regeneration of historic places can contribute to well-being in society through providing people with enjoyment, inspiration, learning opportunities, mental and physical health benefits, and a sense of place and identity.

There is also a risk of incremental erosion of landscape or townscape character or quality. Development might have a significant impact on the historic environment and/or people's enjoyment of it. In the absence of a LDP the 'setting' of historic assets or places, which may extend far beyond the boundary or curtilage of the site, may not be taken into consideration. A new LDP is an opportunity to consider the reasons for these issues and identify the positive role that planning can play.

#### 5.14.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage/Resources

- The vitality of historic town centres can be supported and enhanced by heritage-led development;
- The Borough's rich cultural and heritage assets can contribute to a high quality built environment that helps to create attractive places for living, investing in and visiting;
- The Borough contains centres, villages and towns which each have a unique sense of place, and character. Protecting this sense of place aspect has benefits for people and their pride in their community;
- Certain types of permitted development may have effects on the historic environment;
- Heritage assets are at risk from vacancy, neglect, decay, and development pressures;
- 'Buildings at Risk' should continue to be identified and efforts made by the relevant authority to maintain their regular use and/or support their restoration;
- The innovative reuse of existing historic building stock should be promoted;
- The Borough has a rich archaeological heritage. This could be further explored through identifying new Areas of Archaeological Potential;
- The setting and landscape of the ASAs and any potential new ASAs should be preserved. Many archaeological settings are associated with particular landscapes, such as hill tops, ridges and drumlins;
- Undesignated marine Heritage Assets such as Shipwrecks and Submerged Landscape Sites, whilst not statutorily protected, must be given appropriate evaluation and consideration;
- The Borough has a rich industrial heritage through cereals milling and flax production, along with its 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century transport engineering;
- Defence and other heritage that has not been designated through other methods (e.g. listed building, scheduled zone) has no planning protection;
- Regionally important historic buildings, such as Mount Stewart, are set in a natural environment. The natural and built environment can add value to each other;
- Heritage based tourism and promoting awareness involvement and understanding of the historic environment;
- Encouraging and nurturing traditional skills and using the historic environment as an educational resource;
- Appreciating the value of built heritage should also apply to new buildings;
- There is ongoing loss of certain non-designated heritage assets such as historic farmsteads and buildings in the countryside, industrial and defence heritage, and historic shopfronts in some towns and settlements. Non-designated buildings which are of heritage or architectural importance in the context of overall landscape, townscape or heritage value should be recognised for their role in conserving these settings;
- There may be opportunities to maintain or reflect historic routeways and townland boundaries;
- Traffic pollution, poor air quality and noise pollution may adversely affect the historic environment;
- Heritage assets may be at risk from effects of climate change, including coastal erosion.

## 6. THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainability objectives have been identified through consideration of international, national, regional and local policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives; baseline information at regional and, where available, at local level and apparent trends.

The following Sustainability Objectives are informed by the topic review and key sustainability issues identified in Chapter 5. The rationale for selecting each is outlined. The prompts used to assess plan options against the Sustainability Objectives are presented in the Sustainability Appraisal Guide in Appendix 5.

### 6.1 The Sustainability Objectives

The objectives for sustainable development in Ards and North Down Borough Council are to:

#### 1...improve health and well-being.

Public policy seeks to increase healthy life expectancy, reduce preventable deaths, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities. Evidence shows that there is a need to address obesity, increase physical activity and reduce inequalities in health. It is also necessary to provide for the needs of an aging population and minimize the detrimental impacts of noise. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is clean and attractive; encourages healthy lifestyles; protects tranquil and quiet areas and enables access to health care facilities for all.

#### 2...strengthen society.

Regional policy is directed towards improving community relations and creating a safe society which is more united. Success will be represented by places which are inclusive, respect culture and identity, promote social integration and create a sense of pride. They will also be designed to feel safe and to reduce opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.

#### 3...provide good quality, sustainable housing.

The population is growing and therefore there is ongoing need for new housing in locations that meet regional policy, are accessible and balance the needs of society and the environment. The make-up of households is changing therefore design needs to meet long term requirements with good quality build to be sustainable. This objective should reduce homelessness and ensure decent, affordable homes with a mix of types.

#### 4...enable access to high quality education.

Good education improves opportunities for employment and also contributes to avoidance of poverty and healthier lifestyles. The provision of suitable accommodation for educational establishments in appropriate, accessible locations should play a part in making schools more sustainable and reducing inequalities in education.

#### 5...enable sustainable economic growth.

Regional policy seeks to develop a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy. It is necessary to provide suitable locations for employment, with flexibility where necessary, to reflect current and future distribution of jobs across sectors, encourage new business start-ups, facilitate innovation, regenerate areas, attract investment and make employment as accessible as possible for all. This will reduce unemployment and poverty by helping more people to earn a living and increase their income.

#### 6...manage material assets sustainably.

Material assets such as infrastructure and sources of energy production are essential for society and the economy but need careful planning to ensure that they are designed for efficiency and to minimize adverse impacts. The concept of circular economy treats waste as resource which should be managed sustainably to reduce production and increase recovery, recycling and composting rates; new or adapted facilities may be required.

#### 7...protect physical resources and use sustainably.

Land, minerals, geothermal energy and soil are resources which require protection from degradation and safeguarding for future use. Sustainable agriculture, tourism and sustainable use of minerals and geothermal energy can help to support the economy.

#### 8...encourage active and sustainable travel.

There is a common goal to reduce traffic emissions and congestion which means reducing car use and increasing other forms of transport. Better access to public transport and opportunities for active travel makes travel more affordable, with added health benefits and also reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Measures that help reduce car use and improve accessibility to encourage a shift to travel by public transport, walking and cycling will contribute to this goal.

#### 9...improve air quality

Air pollution has serious impacts on human health as well as degrading the natural environment. This objective can be achieved through reducing sources of air pollution. Where air pollution cannot be totally excluded careful siting of development should avoid impacts on sensitive receptors.

#### 10...reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.

International commitments require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to lessen their effects on climate. Measures that help reduce energy consumption and enable renewable energy helps mitigate greenhouse gas emissions however adaption is also required to plan for the impacts of climate change.

#### 11...protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.

This objective encompasses reducing levels of water pollution, sustainable use of water resources, improving the physical state of the water environment and reducing the risk of flooding now and in the future. It meets the requirements of Northern Ireland legislation, strategies and plans in support of the Water Framework Directive and other Directives that relate to water and it takes account of the future impacts of climate change.

#### 12...protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.

International obligations which are adopted in Northern Ireland legislation and policies require the protection of biodiversity including flora, fauna and habitats. This is for their intrinsic value and for the wider services that they provide to people, the economy and the environment for example as carbon stores which lessen the effects of climate change. This objective includes protecting and enhancing biodiversity as well as protection of green and blue infrastructure to enhance the services that natural resources provide.

#### 13...maintain and enhance landscape character.

International and national policies seek to conserve the natural character and landscape of the coast and countryside and protect them from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development. This objective seeks to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes and to protect and enhance open spaces and the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors.

#### 14...protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.

The historic environment and cultural heritage are resources that inform our history and bring character and sense of place. They also attract visitors and contribute to the economy and bring vibrancy to the places where we live, work and relax. This can be achieved by protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas, townscapes and other sites of historic and cultural value including their setting.

### 6.2 Compatibility of the Sustainability Objectives

A comparison has been drawn between all of the Sustainability Objectives to identify any conflicts between them and is presented in Appendix 3. No Sustainability Objectives were considered to be incompatible with the rest of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. In some cases the effect is uncertain. The Sustainability Objectives will therefore be reviewed at the next stage and the rationale updated to address this uncertainty.

### 6.3 Next Steps

This scoping report provides the Sustainability Appraisal Framework that has been used to appraise the Preferred Options Paper and prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report. The Scoping Report will be reviewed and updated at each subsequent step of plan preparation to reflect new context and baseline information.

### 6.4 Difficulties Encountered in Compiling the Scoping Report

With the establishment of the Council in 2015 and the new statutory Community Planning duty there has been a great deal of data collection for a variety of purposes including the Community Plan. It has not always been possible to align all of the evidence used for this scoping report with other evidence as timeframes and purpose for which data was collected may differ. Evidence papers for the LDP have also been updated prior to publication and it has not always been possible to reflect these however they will inform future updates to this report. The scoping report evidence will be reviewed and updated where necessary before publication of the draft Sustainability Report at Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan.

Predicting effects and trends always involves an element of uncertainty or a need for assumptions to be made. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by gaps in the baseline and understanding of future trends. In some cases information is either not available at Council level or there is not a series of data to inform trends.

## APPENDIX 1: COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Schedule 2 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 lists the following information required for environmental reports, according to Regulation 11(3), (4). The location of this information in this Scoping Report or the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report is identified.

Requirement	Location
1. An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	An introduction to the Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP) is presented in Chapter 3.  Appendix 4 outlines the relationship with other plans, programmes, policies and strategies.
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.	Baseline information is presented in Chapter 5, under topic sections. Each section highlights the likely evolution of the baseline without the LDP.
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	The environmental characteristics of Ards and North Down are outlined in Chapter 5. More detail will be added to this at Plan Strategy stage.
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including. In particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.	Chapter 5 identifies environmental problems. Appendix 4 of the SA Interim Report outlines sites to which these Directives apply and potential pathways and effects that could arise from development.
5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Appendix 4 outlines the relationship with other plans, programmes, policies and strategies.  The main policy themes for each topic are outlined at the start of each section of Chapter 5.
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as – (i) biodiversity; (ii) population;	These issues are all covered in the 14 sustainability objectives in the Sustainability Appraisal Framework used to assess the options and reported in Appendix 5 of the SA Interim Report.  Interrelationships are discussed in Chapter 2 and Appendix 3 of this report.

Requirement	Location
(iii) human health; (iv) fauna; (v) flora; (vi) soil; (vii) water; (viii) air; (ix) climatic factors; (x) material assets; (xi) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (xii) landscape, and (xiii) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub paragraphs (i) to (xii).	
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Measures are reported in Chapter 3 of the SA Interim Report and also in the matrices presented in Appendix 4 of the SA Interim Report.
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Chapter 2 of the SA Interim Report considers this in general. Chapter 3 and Appendix 4 of the SA Interim Report provide more detail on the options appraised and assumptions and limitations encountered in the appraisal.
9. A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 16.	Not required at this stage
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.	A non-technical summary is provided at the opening of this report.

## APPENDIX 2: SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES AND RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) TOPICS

The objectives for sustainable development are to...	SEA Directive Topic
1...improve health and well-being.	Population Human Health
2 strengthen society.	Cultural Heritage including Architectural and Archaeological Heritage Population
3...provide good quality, sustainable housing.	Population Human Health
4...enable access to high quality education.	Population
5...enable sustainable economic growth.	Population Human Health
6 manage material assets sustainably.	Material Assets
7...protect physical resources and use sustainably.	Material Assets Soil
8...encourage active and sustainable travel.	Human Health Population Climatic Factors
9...improve air quality	Air
10...reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	Climatic Factors
11...protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.	Water
12...protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.	Biodiversity Flora, Fauna
13...maintain and enhance landscape character.	Landscape
14... protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.	Cultural Heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage Landscape

## APPENDIX 3: COMPATIBILITY OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

Sustainability Objectives	1 Improve health and well-being.	2 Strengthen society.	3 Provide good quality, sustainable housing.	4 Enable access to high quality education.	5 Enable sustainable economic growth.	6 Manage material assets sustainably.	7 Protect physical resources and use sustainably.	8 Encourage active and sustainable travel.	9 Improve air quality.	10 Reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	11 Protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.	12 Protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.	13 Maintain and enhance landscape character.	14 Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.
1 Improve health and well-being.														
2 Strengthen society.	✓													
3 Provide good quality, sustainable housing.	✓	✓												
4 Enable access to high quality education.	✓	✓	✓											
5 Enable sustainable economic growth.	✓	✓	✓	✓										
6 Manage material assets sustainably.	✓	✓	0	0	✓									
7 Protect physical resources and use sustainably.	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓								
8 Encourage active and sustainable travel.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0							
9 Improve air quality.	✓	✓	✓	0	?	✓	✓	✓						
10 Reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	✓	✓	✓	0	?	✓	✓	✓	✓					
11 Protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.	✓	0	✓	0	?	✓	✓	0	✓	✓				
12 Protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.	✓	✓	0	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
13 Maintain and enhance landscape character.	✓	✓	0	0	✓	?	?	0	✓	✓	✓	✓		
14 Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	0	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Compatible	✓	No relationship	0	Uncertain relationship	?	Incompatible	✘
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## APPENDIX 4: REVIEW OF POLICIES, PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES

### Introduction

This is a list of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies that have been considered in scoping the Sustainability Appraisal. It will be updated at each stage of plan preparation. Some additional documents, including local plans, may be referred to in the plan evidence papers or the body of the SA Scoping Report and these will be incorporated in this table in the updated Scoping Report which will accompany the draft Plan Strategy.

A number of cross cutting publications are presented first. Following that the publications are listed according to the most relevant topic however some may apply to two or more topics. Year is the year of publication and scale indicates the spatial area it applies to. The lead is the department or organisation currently responsible for the publication and was not necessarily the one responsible for preparation of the publication.

For each publication a summary of the key objectives, requirements or advice is given with emphasis on what is most relevant to the LDP. A short comment is included on the implications of these for the LDP and/or how they will be addressed in plan preparation.

Acknowledgement is given to work carried out by Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and the Strategic Planning Division of the Department for Infrastructure which contributed towards the source information for this review of plans, policies, programmes and strategies.

	TITLE	YEAR	SPATIAL SCALE	LEAD ORGANISATION	OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR LDP
Sustainable Development	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	2015	International	UN	Seeks to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. It also aims to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities. Expressed through 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets.	Through the influence of the sustainability appraisal the LDP seeks to contribute to these goals where they are within the scope of development planning.
Sustainable Development	Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Cohesion Policy 2014-2020	2014	Europe	EC	Almost 70% of the EU population lives in an urban area, and these areas generate more than two thirds of the EU's GDP. However, they are also the places where persistent problems such as unemployment, segregation and poverty, as well as severe environmental pressures, are concentrated. Measures concerning physical urban renewal should be combined with measures promoting education, economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection.	The policy sets out principles for integrated sustainable urban development.
Sustainable Development	General Union Environmental Action Plan (2020)	2013	Europe	EC	This will guide European environment policy until 2020 but has a longer term vision: "In 2050, we live well, within the planet's ecological limits. Our prosperity and healthy environment stem from an innovative, circular economy where nothing is wasted and where natural resources are managed sustainably, and biodiversity is protected, valued and restored in ways that enhance our society's resilience. Our low-carbon growth has long been decoupled from resource use, setting the pace for a safe and sustainable global society." It identifies three key objectives: to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital; to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy; to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing.	The LDP should support the four key areas of work set out in the EAP.
Sustainable Development	The Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)	2004	Europe	EC	The Environmental Liability Directive (ELD) has the objective of making operators of activities which cause environmental damage financially liable for that damage (the 'polluter pays' principle). It imposes duties on operators of economic activities to take immediate steps to prevent damage if there is an imminent threat, and to control damage which is occurring so as to limit its effects.	The LDP will take account of this Directive and local relevant legislation.
Sustainable Development	Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment	2001	Europe	EC	Provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The LDP will take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies derived from the Directive at the national level. Requirements of the Directive will be addressed through the Sustainability Appraisals.
Sustainable Development	A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development	2001	Europe	EC	A framework for a long-term vision of sustainability in which economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection go hand in hand and are mutually supporting. Particular environmental protection objectives include increasing the use of clean energy and natural resources to combat climate change, reducing noise and air pollution through promotion of sustainable transport, and conserving and managing the overall use of water and air.	This Strategy aligns with many of the objectives of the LDP including those related to transport and natural heritage, as well as renewable energy. In applying the policy requirements of the SPPS the LDP will also contribute to the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.
Sustainable Development	Securing the Future - delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy	2005	UK	Four Nations (DAERA)	The Strategy takes account of developments since the 1999 Strategy, both domestically and internationally; the changed structure of government in the UK with devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; greater emphasis on delivery at regional level and the new relationship between government and local authorities. The five guiding principles are: living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly. Four agreed	The SPPS has a strong sustainable development theme, which aligns with the priorities of this Strategy, most notably in terms of climate change, renewable energy, sustainable consumption, waste management etc. In complying with the SPPS and carrying out sustainability appraisal the LDP will support this.

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					priorities are sustainable consumption and production, climate change, natural resource protection and sustainable communities.	
Sustainable Development	Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 Establishing a Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning	2014	NI	Council of Europe	Competition for maritime space – for renewable energy equipment, aquaculture and other uses – has highlighted the need to manage our waters more coherently. Aims include: Reduce conflicts between sectors and create synergies between different activities. Encourage investment – by creating predictability, transparency and clearer rules. Increase cross-border cooperation – between EU countries to develop energy grids, shipping lanes, pipelines, submarine cables and other activities, but also to develop coherent networks of protected areas. Protect the environment – through early identification of impact and opportunities for multiple use of space.	Identification of potential conflict areas and considering developments that have potential for connectivity with the marine area will contribute to this.
Sustainable Development	Everyone's Involved – Sustainable Development Strategy (May 2010)	2010	NI	DAERA	Everyone's Involved – Sustainable Development Strategy, aims to put in place economic, social and environmental measures to ensure that we can continue to grow our economy, improve our society and communities and utilise our natural resources in an environmentally sustainable manner. The Strategy also intends to strengthen the framework to address global issues such as climate change and sets out the following six principles: 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.	Plan objectives largely support the strategy and the sustainability appraisal will help shape proposals to be sustainable.
Sustainable Development	DOE Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS): Planning for Sustainable Development	2015	NI	DfI	Sets out the Department's regional strategic policies for securing the orderly and consistent development of land in Northern Ireland. Planning authorities should pursue social and economic priorities alongside the careful management of our built and natural environments in order to achieve sustainable development. The SPPS sets out five core planning principles: Improving health and well-being; 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.	The provisions of the SPPS must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans, and are also material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.
Sustainable Development	Regional Development Strategy 2035	2012	NI	DfI	This document provides an overarching strategic planning framework influencing spatial development for the Region up to 2035, facilitating and guiding the public and private sectors. Taken into account are key drivers such as population growth and movement, demographic change, increasing number of households, transportation needs etc. It addresses economic, social and environmental issues aimed at achieving sustainable development and social cohesion. The eight aims of the RDS are to: Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of NI; Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Derry/Londonderry as the principal city of the North West; Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential; Promote development which improves the health and well-being of communities; Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places; Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake; Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaption to climate change; and Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world. The RDS contains a Spatial Framework and Strategic guidelines.	The LDP will support the RDS as part of the wider Government policy framework and should therefore be closely aligned with its objectives.
Sustainable	Draft Programme for Government 2016-2021	2016	NI	NI Executive	The PfG contains 14 strategic outcomes which touch on every aspect of government, including the attainment of good health and education, economic success and confident and peaceful communities. The outcomes are supported by 48 indicators which will show how the Executive	The LDP is required to support delivery of the Programme for Government. How it achieves this will be assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal.

	TITLE	YEAR	SPATIAL SCALE	LEAD ORGANISATION	OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR LDP
					is performing in relation to the outcomes and will provide a basis to monitor progress. In due course, the Programme for Government will provide the strategic context for other key Executive strategy documents, including the Investment Strategy, the Economic Strategy and a Social Strategy.	
Sustainable Development	Focus on the Future - Sustainable Development Implementation Plan	2011	NI	NI Executive	While this implementation plan has expired some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. DHSSPS committed to liaise with DOE Planners on the benefits of Health Impact Assessments and their potential to assist in encouraging the development of Healthy Urban Environments. DOE proposed to make legislation to enable the designation of National Parks by 2012.	The health impact assessment approach is not a statutory requirement but will be considered if there is development on this during plan preparation. Health and well-being is considered through sustainability appraisal.
Sustainable	Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006	2006	NI	NI Executive	Requires departments and district councils to exercise their functions in the manner they consider best calculated to promote the achievement of sustainable development.	Implementing sustainability appraisal throughout plan preparation will help achieve this requirement.
Sustainable Development	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015	2015	Regional	DCs	The aim of the Plan is to provide a planning framework which is in general conformity with the RDS in facilitating sustainable growth and a high quality of development in the Belfast Metropolitan Area throughout the Plan period, whilst protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the natural and man-made environment of the Plan Area.	The plan will supersede BMAP for the part of our plan area to which it applied. Its preparation involved recent consideration of a wide range of planning issues, preparation of policies and detailed spatial zoning all of which were subject to strategic environmental assessment and habitats regulations assessment. It is therefore an important evidence base.
Sustainable Development	Ballyhalbert Village Plan	2016	Local	Ards and North Down Borough Council	The plan has been developed by The Paul Hogarth Company on behalf of Ards and North Down Borough Council and seeks to underpin the future sustainable growth of this rural community through a total of 46 proposals identified in collaboration with local residents and community groups. A draft shared vision statement has also be formulated for the village.	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.
Other Cross Cutting	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	1982	International	United Nations	Lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources. It enshrines the notion that all problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be addressed as a whole. The Law of the Sea Convention defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources.	Public authorities must consider shipping activity and freedom of navigation through decision making processes, and must not authorise proposals that would interfere or impede with navigational safety.
Other Cross	European Spatial Development Perspective (1999)	1999	Europe	EC	Economic and social cohesion across the community. Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage. Balanced competitiveness between different tiers of government.	Through the influence of the sustainability appraisal the LDP should make a contribution towards fulfilling the goals of the ESDP.
Other Cross Cutting	Aarhus Convention - United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 1998	1998	Europe	UNECE	The Aarhus Convention and its Protocol empower people with the rights to access easily information, participate effectively in decision-making in environmental matters and to seek justice if their rights were violated. They protect every person's right to live in an environment adequate to his or her health and well-being. Ratified in UK in 2005. Established a number of rights of the public with regard to the environment. Local authorities should provide for: The right of everyone to receive environmental information; The right to participate from an early stage in environmental decision making; The right to challenge in a court of law public decisions that have been made without respecting the two rights above or environmental law in general.	The plan will achieve this through the consultation process, as outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement. Ensure that public are involved and consulted at all relevant stages of SA production. This should be reflected in the Statement of the Community Involvement

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Other Cross Cutting	Our Passion, Our Place - Northern Ireland Environment Agency Strategic Priorities 2012 to 2022	2012	NI	DAERA	The plan outlines the strategic direction for NIEA. Four priority areas: healthy natural environment, people and places, sustainable economic growth and using resources well with a series of strategic goals. In respect of development planning NIEA will make sure planning decisions and business practices are guided by sound environmental principles and apply a risk based approach to its regulatory activities. Provide timely and authoritative input to strategic planning and development projects. Adopt an ecosystems approach in the advice it provides.	The majority of the sustainability appraisal objectives can be linked to the strategic aims of this document. NIEA advice and evidence will be used to inform plan preparation.
Other Cross Cutting	The Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (as amended)	2009	NI	DAERA	Implements the Environmental Liability Directive in Northern Ireland and introduces financial liability on the 'polluter pays' principle for environmental damage which has significant adverse effects on reaching or maintaining favourable conservation status of species and natural habitats protected under EC legislation; damage that significantly adversely affects the ecological, chemical and/or quantitative status and/or ecological potential of waters falling within the scope of the water framework directive; land contamination that creates a significant risk of human health being adversely affected as a result of direct or indirect introduction in, on or under land of substances, preparations, organisms and micro-organisms. Note subject to amendments.	Development arising from the LDP will be subject to these regulations with the operator being responsible for liability should damage within the terms of these regulations occur.
Other Cross	Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2018	2018	NI	DEARA	Report on a range of environmental indicators and provide links to government strategies.	Regionally significant provides strategic clarity on climate change issues.
Other Cross Cutting	Framework for Co-operation Spatial Strategies of Northern Ireland & the Republic of Ireland	2010	NI & RoI	DfI	This document examines the key planning challenges faced by both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland and discusses the potential for co-operation in spatial planning. It sets out a framework for cooperation at different levels within the public sector which should result in mutual benefits. These benefits can be at the local border area level and at the wider level. Four priority areas for cooperation are: Enhancing Competitiveness, Competitive Places (i.e. linked cross-border cities), Environmental Quality and Spatial Analysis.	At the local level it will be important that the guidance in the RDS and [Irish] NSS is incorporated into regional planning guidelines, development plans, community plans and regeneration schemes and that there is support for cross border projects and initiatives for both urban and rural areas. Integrated planning processes at the local level, where agencies and authorities in both jurisdictions work together on a cross border basis, are essential in enhancing the potential and quality of strategic places on the island, that straddle such cross-border locations.
Other Cross Cutting	A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland	1993	NI	DfI	In seeking to protect the environment and encourage sustainable development the PSRNI set out policies to meet the development needs of the rural area. The majority have been superseded by PPSs and SPPS however Strategic Policies 2, 3, 4 and 18 still apply relating to Towns, Villages, Regeneration of Rural Settlements and Design in Towns and Villages.	The remaining provisions of 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland' will be cancelled when all eleven councils have adopted a new Plan Strategy for the whole of their council area. However, to ensure that there is continuity in planning policy for taking planning decisions whilst councils bring forward operational policies tailored to local circumstances within new LDPs, transitional arrangements shall apply.
Other Cross Cutting	Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011	2011	NI	NI Executive	Part 2 of the act details the requirements of local development plans and Section 5 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires those who exercise any function in relation to local development plans to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development. Sections 8(6) and 9(7) of the 2011 Act requires an appraisal of sustainability to be carried out for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, respectively.	The LDP will take account of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. This scoping report forms part of the SA process.
Other Cross	Building a Better Future: The Investment Strategy	2011	NI	NI Executive	The Investment Strategy sets out the forward programme for investment in public infrastructure. It identifies priority areas for investment in sustainable 21st century infrastructure and is intended to assist government and private sector partners to plan ahead.	The 'Procurement Pipeline' available on the home page identifies infrastructure projects across networks, environment, health and education and when they are anticipated to be procured.

	TITLE	YEAR	SPATIAL SCALE	LEAD ORGANISATION	OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR LDP
	for Northern Ireland 2011-2021 (ISNI)				The 'Procurement Pipeline' identifies 197 infrastructure projects across networks, environment, health and education and when they are anticipated to be procured.	
Other Cross Cutting	Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Equality of opportunity	1998	NI	NI Executive	Section 75 promotes 'equality of opportunity' which means that everyone in society should be able to compete on equal terms. All government departments, agencies and councils must also give the nine key groups consideration when creating a policy. These are people with different religious belief, people of political opinion, people of different racial groups, people of different ages, people of different marital status, people of different sexual orientation, men and women generally, people with a disability and people without, people with dependants and people without	The council is required to ensure that their local development plans are prepared in accordance with Section 75 statutory obligations. Consequently, a council will have to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to determine if there will be any potential impacts upon Section 75 groups as a result of the policies and proposals contained in their local development plans.
Other Cross Cutting	Strangford Lough and Lecale Action Plan 2013 - 2018	2013	Regional	Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership	The landscape, built heritage and natural environment of Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are fundamental to the well-being and vibrancy of local communities. They attract and interest visitors, and they generate wealth for local and wider economies. For these reasons, as well as for their intrinsic value, we must work together to protect and enhance our heritage, while fostering appropriate human activities and developments. AIM 1: To conserve and engage people with the built and natural heritage. AIM 2: To use heritage to promote the health and well-being of local people and visitors. AIM 3: To build prosperity and facilitate Research and Development through the environmentally sustainable use of the heritage.	This is a non-statutory plan however the aims of this plan should be taken into account in LDP preparation. The LDP can help to support the aims of the plan.
Other Cross Cutting	Integrated Strategy for Tourism - Regeneration-Economic Development 2018-2030	2018	Council	Ards and North Down Borough Council	The Integrated Strategy aims to stimulate tourism, regeneration and the economic development sector. 'Blue Green, Creatively Connected' is the vision for the Integrated Strategy which aspires to maximise the economic opportunities associated with the Boroughs blue green economy whilst protecting its natural assets. The plan recognizes the social benefits of greater connectivity between blue green space and the potential creative and cultural opportunities associated with it.	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.
Other Cross Cutting	<i>The Big Plan</i> for Ards and North Down (2017-2032)	2017	Council	Ards and North Down Borough Council	Ards and North Downs community plan entitled ' <i>The Big Plan</i> ' aims to create positive outcomes for everyone in the Borough. The overarching, cross-cutting ambition of the Big Plan is: To have empowered, resilient individuals and communities; to reduce inequality; to promote good relations and sustainability; and to improve the accessibility of all public services. The plan has identified 5 outcomes that will form part of the overarching vision for the Borough. These outcomes are centred around enabling citizens to fulfil their lifelong potential, enjoy good health and wellbeing, feel safe and secure in their communities, benefit from a prosperous economy and have access to a sustainable environment.	This strategic plan will complement the LDP and the two plans will work in tandem towards the same vision.
Other Cross Cutting	Ards and North Down Corporate Plan (2015-2019)	2015	Council	Ards and North Down Borough Council	The corporate plan sets the overall strategic direction for the council in the 2015-19 period. The plan has a number of objective linked to people, prosperity and place. The vision for the Borough is to make it a 'more prosperous, vibrant, healthy, sustainable and where people enjoy an excellent quality of life'.	This strategic plan will complement the LDP and the two plans will work in tandem towards the same vision.
Other Cross Cutting	Ards and Down Area Plan 2015	2015	Council	DOE	The plan sets out the Plan Framework comprising allocations, designations, policies and proposals relating to the Plan Area as a whole, intended to complement, and with reference to, the Regional Policy Context; and defines and translates broad policies and proposals into site specific designations, policies, proposals and zonings for the individual Council areas included in the Plan Area	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.

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Health & Well-being	Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise (the Environmental Noise Directive (END))	2002	Europe	Council of Europe	The END is the main EU instrument to identify noise pollution levels and to trigger the necessary action both at Member State and at EU level. It focuses on three action areas: (1) the determination of exposure to environmental noise (2) ensuring that information on environmental noise and its effects is made available to the public (3) preventing and reducing environmental noise where necessary and preserving environmental noise quality where it is good	The Directive applies to noise to which humans are exposed, particularly in built-up areas, in public parks or other quiet areas in an agglomeration, in quiet areas in open country, near schools, hospitals and other noise-sensitive buildings and areas. It does not apply to noise that is caused by the exposed person himself, noise from domestic activities, noise created by neighbours, noise at work places or noise inside means of transport or due to military activities in military areas.
Health & Well-being	Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland	2014	NI	DAERA	Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise the Noise Policy aims to: (1.) Avoid or mitigate significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life; (2.) Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and (3.) Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.	These LDP can help with applying the shared principles that underpin the Executive's Sustainable Development Strategy: Living within environmental limits - Ensuring a strong, healthy, just and equal society - Achieving a sustainable economy - Using sound science responsibly - Promoting opportunity and innovation - Promoting good governance.
Health & Well-being	Sport Matters: The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Recreation, 2009-2019	2009	NI	DfC	The Strategy's vision of "a culture of lifelong enjoyment and quality, quantity and access to places for sport" is a key input to the two primary development outcomes of increased participation in sport and physical recreation and improved sporting performances. In particular, the Strategy will ensure that every person in Northern Ireland has access to a range of new, improved and shared world-class and locally available sports facilities. The Strategy outlines a broad Government commitment to sport and physical recreation. It sets key strategic priorities for sports and physical recreation over the 10 year period; informing future investment by all stakeholders across the public, private and community/voluntary sectors underpinning three areas: 'Participation', 'Performance' and 'Places'. The successful delivery of the Strategy requires stakeholders to reflect the Strategy in their business and development plans.	This is supported by the inclusion of Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation in the Subject Policies list for the SPPS, which must be taken into account in the LDP.
Health & Well-being	Exercise Explore Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways	2016	NI	DfI	Sets out the plans for a network of greenways, connecting towns and cities to the villages and countryside from east to west and north to south across all eleven councils. Objectives include: improving health and wellbeing, increasing access to greenways, improving safety, improving social inclusion, economic development.	Greenways can produce both environmental and social benefits, because they are easily accessible and can bring nature and people together. The development of traffic free infrastructure, particularly greenways, can also have a positive impact on social inclusion and encouraging new and harder to reach groups to take up cycling and walking. The LDP can help to support these objectives. Also relevant to the Transport, Natural Resources and Landscape Objectives.
Health & Well-being	Department for Infrastructure Strategic Plan for Greenways	2016	NI	DfI	This is the base report for 'Exercise Explore Enjoy: A Strategic plan for Greenways'. It presents a strategic approach and overview to the development of a shared greenway network which is planned at a regional level and allows people to link to places locally, regionally and nationally by active modes of travel.	Greenways can produce both environmental and social benefits, because they are easily accessible and can bring nature and people together. The development of traffic free infrastructure, particularly greenways, can also have a positive impact on social inclusion and encouraging new and harder to reach groups to take up cycling and walking. The LDP can help to support these objectives. Also relevant to the Transport, Natural Resources and Landscape Objectives.
Health & Well-being	Design and Access Statements - A guide for Northern Ireland	2015	NI	DfI	Planning applications meeting certain criteria must be accompanied by a design and access statement. These include: An application which is a major development, or where any part of the development is in a designated area; and development consisting of – (i) the provision of	Provides for early consideration of the need and provision for open space, access and landscaping and addressing external factors such

	TITLE	YEAR	SPATIAL SCALE	LEAD ORGANISATION	OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR LDP
					one or more dwelling houses, or (ii) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space created by the development is 100m <sup>2</sup> or more.	as noise and traffic safety. Also relevant to the Housing and Transport Objectives.
Health & Well-being	The Planning (Hazardous Substances) (No.2 ) Regulations (NI) 2015	2015	NI	DfI	The Regulations transpose Directive 2012/18/EU (The 'Seveso III Directive') on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances in respect of land-use planning in Northern Ireland.	The LDP must take account of the aims of the Directive in planning policies and decisions, including maintaining appropriate safety distances between major hazard sites (referred to as establishments”) and other development and protecting areas of natural sensitivity.
Health & Well-being	Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020	2011	NI	DfI	Sets out the vision and presents measures for improving road safety in Northern Ireland up to 2020, including targets for reductions in deaths and serious injuries to be achieved over that period. Key Challenges include:	The LDP may have scope to contribute to addressing the challenges in its transport, infrastructure and rural development policies.
Health & Well-being	Planning Policy Statement 8 Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (DOE 2004)	2004	NI	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for the protection of open space, in association with residential development and the use of land for sport and outdoor recreation, and advises on the treatment of these issues in development plans.	Six policies are incorporated in SPPS. Incorporation of the policies will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Health & Well-being	A Fitter Future For All - Outcomes framework 2015 - 2019	2015	NI	DoH	Following a review of the first years of the plan an updated framework has been published for 2015-2019.	Creating a safe environment to encourage and promote increased physical activity.
Health & Well-being	Making Life Better: A Whole Strategic Framework for Public Health 2013-2023 Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (June 2014)	2013	NI	DoH	The strategic framework for public health designed to provide direction for policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of people in Northern Ireland and to reduce health inequalities. The framework is not just about actions and programmes at government level, but also provides direction for work at both regional and local levels with public agencies, including local government, local communities and others, working in partnership. Through strength of coordination and partnership, the framework will seek to create the conditions for individuals and communities to take control of their own lives, and move towards a vision for Northern Ireland where all people are enabled and supported in achieving their full health and well-being potential.	Many aspects are directly relevant for example promoting age friendly environments and Quiet Areas.
Health & Well-being	Connected Health Economy	2013	NI	DoH	Developing a connected health economy: the economy and jobs initiative included a number of measures to help support economic growth, including a commitment to establish a Task and Finish Group under the remit of the Connected Health and Prosperity Board, to exploit the economic opportunities from the health and social care (HSC) sector.	This may inform future economic investment in the health and social care sector.
Health & Well-being	A Fitter Future For All: Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland	2012	NI	DoH	Fitter Future for All is a framework to help reduce the harm related to overweight and obesity. This framework aims to: empower the population of Northern Ireland to make health choices, reduce the risk of overweight and obesity related diseases and improve health and wellbeing, by creating an environment that supports and promotes a physically active lifestyle and a healthy diet. New outcomes to aid implementation of the framework over the 2015-19 period have been developed.	Creating a safe environment to encourage and promote increased physical activity.
Health & Well-being	Transforming Your Care Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety	2011	NI	DoH	Twelve major principles for change including: providing the right care in the right place at the right time; population-based planning of services; ensuring sustainability of service provision; incentivising innovation at a local level. 99 separate proposals for change across the range of health and social care services. There is a Strategic Implementation Plan and Population Plan for each Health Care Trust.	Can inform where facilities may be required to improve access to and quality of health services.

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Health & Well-being	Transforming your Care: Strategic Implementation Plan	2013	NI	HSCNI	This Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) describes a planned approach for the delivery of the TYC proposals over the next 3 to 5 years (starting from 2011/12 baseline). Section 4.2 sets out the key commitments and the major changes which will drive service transformation. Main themes for each of the Programmes of Care over the next 3 to 5 years across the 5 Local Commissioning Group (LCG) areas are presented in section 4.4. At the heart of this are the 5 local Population Plans, which provide the building blocks for this SIP. These set out in detail the service transformation initiatives for delivery of the TYC proposals for each of these local areas. There will be continuing focus on reducing delayed discharge from hospital with investment in community infrastructure.	Identifies need for health infrastructure, including for community care.
Health & Well-being	The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006	2006	NI	NI Executive	Transposes into NI legislation the requirements of the European Noise Directive (END). The three main actions that the END requires of Member States are to: (1) determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping (2) make information on environmental noise and its effects available to the public (3) establish Action Plans based on the mapping results. The END requires that noise mapping and action planning be completed every five years. The END also requires Member States to 'preserve environmental noise quality where it is good' through the identification and protection of designated Quiet Areas within agglomerations (urban areas with a minimum population density).	Existing 'quiet areas' must be preserved. Further areas could be identified and designated. Zoning of residential areas should have regard for existing noise generators such as roads, rail, airports and industry.
Health & Well-being	Mountain Bike Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014 - 2024.	2014	NI	Outdoor NI	This strategy aims to generate approximately £25 Million to the local economy per annum as a direct result of mountain biking by 2024.	Informs on a potential source of outdoor recreational activity and tourism opportunity. Also relevant to the Economy & Employment Objective.
Health & Well-being	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Population Plan	2013	Regional	SEHSCT	This sets out in detail the service transformation initiatives for delivery of the TYC proposals for this trust area. It includes the capital implications and requirements over the 3 year planning period. There will be continuing focus on reducing delayed discharge from hospital with investment in community infrastructure.	Although expired may inform unmet infrastructure requirements.
Strengthening Society	Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	2016	NI	DAERA	The Act received Royal Assent in May 2016 and once commenced in 2017 will place a duty on public authorities, including district councils, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services. It also requires public authorities to provide information to DAERA on how they have fulfilled this duty on an annual basis to be published in a monitoring report to be laid before the Assembly.	Rural needs have been fully considered in plan preparation, assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal and appropriate provisions are or will be included in the plan.
Strengthening Society	Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing	2015	NI	DAERA	The objective is to ensure robust consideration and integration of rural issues at the outset of the policy making process. It should help to ensure fair and equitable treatment for rural areas through the development of policies which are proportionate to need.	The LDP can support the objective to provide for vital and vibrant rural communities whilst protecting the countryside in which they live, by accommodating sustainable growth within the countryside proportionate to the extent of existing rural communities.
Other Cross Cutting	Rural White Paper Action Plan	2012	NI	DAERA	This document sets out the vision for NI's rural areas and the actions which Departments will take in support of achieving that vision and to help ensure the future sustainability of rural areas. The vision includes vibrant and strong rural communities; improved infrastructure, transport and key services; strong community infrastructure which can avail of economic, social and cultural opportunities; and better linkages between rural and urban areas.	Policies are proposed in relation to sustainable development in the countryside, transport and land use. Planning policy will promote sustainable development, well-being and economic development which are aligned with the vision for rural areas. There does seem to be a focus on town centres and city centre vitality, which could take attention away from rural issues. The LDP objectives support this. It sets out to support vibrant rural communities, facilitate development of new, accessible, community facilities, and improve connectivity

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						between/within settlements in terms of telecommunications and transport infrastructure in particular. The Plan will promote sustainable development, well-being and economic development which are aligned with the vision for rural areas.
Strengthening Society	Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation	2012	NI	DAERA	This framework sets out the goals, objectives, priority action areas and outcomes for the Programme for Government commitment to bring forward a package of measures to help target the root causes of social isolation and help those in poverty in rural areas. In addition it aims to provide the necessary tools to identify the needs of vulnerable people/groups in rural areas, develop programmes/interventions to help alleviate poverty/social isolation and complement/add value to existing government strategies intended to tackle these issues.	Plan preparation includes consideration of the needs of those living in small settlements and the countryside to ensure that they have access to suitable and affordable housing as well as facilities. The Sustainability Appraisal incorporates Rural Proofing.
Strengthening Society	Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework	2013	NI	DfC	This Policy Framework sets out the Department's policy objectives for urban regeneration and community development in Northern Ireland for at least the next decade. It will provide a clear strategic direction for the Department and inform its partners in central and local government and in the voluntary and community sector. The Framework sets out four Policy Objectives that will form the basis of any future policy or programme development in urban regeneration and community development: 1. To tackle area-based deprivation. 2. To strengthen the competitiveness of our towns and cities. 3. To improve linkages between areas of need and areas of opportunity. 4. To develop more cohesive and engaged communities. It also contains a set of four Supporting Actions: 1. We will maximise the potential of regeneration and community development by supporting an evidence-based policy environment. 2. We will maximise the resources available to regeneration and community development by supporting an innovative financial environment. 3. We will support the development of skilled and knowledgeable practitioners in regeneration and community development. 4. We will promote an effective and efficient voluntary and community sector	This Policy Framework is wide-reaching in terms of the subjects it covers, for example Policy Objective 3 contains key actions relating to environmental improvement, protection and improvement of (historic) buildings and open spaces and developing an integrated transport network, whilst other Objective actions include development of commercial sites. LDP objectives may align with this framework, in particular strengthening the hubs, improving connectivity and facilitating community development. The LDP can indirectly support aims of the policy by, for example, accommodating development for disadvantaged groups, such as the elderly and disabled, with emphasis on 'sustainable growth', facilitating new community facilities and promoting 'shared spaces'. Also relevant to the Economy and Employment Objective.
Strengthening Society	Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside	2010	NI	DfI	PPS 21 sets out planning policies for development in the countryside. For the purpose of this document the countryside is defined as land lying outside of settlement limits as identified in development plans. The provisions of this document apply to all areas of Northern Ireland's countryside.	A series of 16 policies which allow for development in the countryside in tightly defined circumstances. Many of these are carried forward through the SPPS. The LDP will have to comply with these and other regional policy in any variation of these policies. Also relevant to the Housing Objective.
Strengthening Society	Community Safety action plan 2015 to 2017	2015	NI	DoJ	The action plan includes an action for the DOE and councils: to support a sense of pride and ownership within neighbourhoods, to address the disorder (graffiti, litter, vandalism) that acts as a signal for ASB by contributing to the development of legislative framework to deal with the growing amenity problems associated with dilapidated or unsightly buildings and neglected sites.	The LDP may have scope to contribute to addressing this through place shaping.
Strengthening Society	Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities: A Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012-2017	2012	NI	DoJ	Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities' sets the direction for reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime in Northern Ireland over the next five years. It builds on the positive progress made in recent years in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, both by continuing to focus on what works, as well as a stronger emphasis on the guiding principle that prevention is better than cure. This Strategy provides the overall direction for community safety in Northern Ireland, and will help guide the work of a range of stakeholders including the Executive, local government, the voluntary and community sector and local communities.	The LDP will take account of this Strategy. It can help support objectives to accommodate cultural differences between Catholic and Protestant communities whilst promoting "shared spaces" to bring people together with equality and opportunity.

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Strengthening Society	The Child Poverty Strategy	2016	NI	EO	The four high-level outcomes are, that: Families experience economic well-being; Children in poverty learn and achieve; Children in poverty are healthy; and Children in poverty live in safe, secure and stable environments. Indicators of success against these outcomes include those relating to employment levels in households with children, levels of obesity, hospital admissions for accidents at home or on the road and number of homeless families. Some of the most relevant actions to spatial planning are: Create jobs; Upskill the workforce and support young people and their family members into higher skilled, more secure and better paid employment; Reduce living costs; Ensure childcare is accessible and affordable; Promote health and well-being; Promote child, road, home and community safety.	Promotion of employment opportunities, provision for housing, increasing accessibility and creating safer environments will contribute to the objectives of this strategy.
Strengthening Society	Together: Building a United Community 2016/17 Update Report	2016	NI	EO	The Strategy outlines how we in Government, in communities and as individuals will work together to build a united community and facilitate change in the key priorities of: Our children and young people; Our shared community; Our safe community; and Our cultural expression.	By creating and shaping places spaces that are accessible and welcoming to all the plan will support this strategy. In some areas there will be specific requirements to address Interface Barriers.
Strengthening Society	Together: Building a United Community	2013	NI	EO	The strategy outlines how government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities: our children and young people; our shared community; our safe community; and our cultural expression. Its vision is 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance'. Includes a commitment to Create a 10-year Programme to reduce, and remove by 2023, all interface barriers including an Interface Barrier Support Package	By creating and shaping places spaces that are accessible and welcoming to all the plan will support this strategy. In some areas there will be specific requirements to address Interface Barriers.
Strengthening Society	Delivering Social Change framework	2012	NI	EO	The DSC framework was established to deliver a sustained reduction in poverty and associated issues across all ages and to improve children and young people's health, well-being and life opportunities. A Delivering Social Change Fund was established to support The Social Investment Fund; The Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes; Childcare. The six initial Signature Programmes included support for Family Support Hubs; Nurture Units, Social Enterprise Hubs. Three new Signature Programmes announced in 2014 include support for people with dementia and their families and carers; early intervention services for young families and expansion of shared education, supporting schools to share resources and people. The Social Investment Fund is under a separate entry in this register.	The programme has resulted in some new and proposed community facilities that should be considered in plan preparation. It may identify needs for new facilities. The Social Investment Fund is under a separate entry in this register. Also relevant to the Education & Skills and Economy & Employment Objectives.
Strengthening Society	Social Investment Fund	2011	NI	EO	The Social Investment Fund (SIF) was set up to deliver social change. It aims to make life better for people living in targeted areas by reducing poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration. The fund will run until March 2020 and all funding has been committed to projects prioritised by local Steering Groups. Some funding will capital support to enhance or create community and employment facilities.	Will however inform existing and proposed facilities that should be considered in plan preparation.
Strengthening Society	Lifetime Opportunities – Government's Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland	2006	NI	EO	As part of the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to tackling poverty and social exclusion this document outlined what would be done by the Northern Ireland departments and the Northern Ireland Office in working towards its overall objectives of: working towards the elimination of poverty and social exclusion in Northern Ireland by 2020; and halving child poverty by 2010 on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020. The strategy is structured into four key life stages – Early Years (0 – 4), Children and Young People (5 – 16), Working Age Adults and Older Citizens. Each of the life stages is expressed in terms of an overarching goal	Identifies the conditions for bringing people out of poverty including fuel, employment, older people and those in the rural community and for promotion inclusion for all. LDPs proposals and policies consider these needs and support delivery against them.

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					followed by a series of long-term targets that will work towards achieving the goal. This strategy overlaps with some more recent strategies but continues to be reported on.	
Strengthening Society	NIHE Good Relations Plan	2007	NI	NIHE	The Housing Executive commits to Respond quickly and effectively to the needs of people in danger as a result of community conflict; Work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society; Respect the rights of people who choose to live where they wish; Facilitate and encourage mixed housing as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe.	The LDP can help to promote and encourage mixed housing and shared spaces, to help bring people from different communities together.
Strengthening Society	NIHE - Race Relations Policy	2006	NI	NIHE	The five Race Relations Policy themes can be summarised as follows; Mainstreaming black and minority ethnic issues in policy development; Racial harassment and intimidation; Promoting black and minority ethnic social inclusion; Community participation and development; and Migrant worker issues.	The LDP can help to promote and encourage social inclusion.
Housing	Facing the Future: Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland Action Plan Update September 2015	2015	NI	DfC	This is a midterm update on the progress in delivering the 'Facing the Future' Housing Strategy. The strategy is centred on a vision that everyone should have the opportunity to access good quality housing at a reasonable cost. This update shows that, despite a challenging economic environment, the majority of the actions are on track for delivery by 2017.	The LDP can help to support many of the actions identified in the action plan, such as: introducing developer contributions, developing work on energy efficiency, increasing the availability of smaller social housing units and other initiatives for encouraging town and city centre regeneration such as living over shops.
Housing	Northern Ireland Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan 2013 – 2018	2013	NI	DfC	The Empty Homes Strategy is to ensure that the number of empty properties is kept to a minimum and to identify new opportunities to encourage owners to bring them back into use.	The LDP can help to support these objectives.
Housing	Facing the Future: Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012 -2017	2012	NI	DfC	This Housing Strategy identifies four roles for government and five themes to help meet housing needs while supporting the most vulnerable. The themes are: 1. Ensuring access to decent, affordable, sustainable homes across all tenures; 2. Meeting housing needs and supporting the most vulnerable; 3. Housing and Welfare Reform; 4. Driving regeneration & sustaining communities through housing; and 5. Getting the structures right. This strategy sets out how the government intends to fulfil the objectives over the next five years. The strategy also envisages housing playing a role in driving regeneration within communities, particularly those suffering from blight and population decline.	These themes align with a number of aspects of the LDP and sustainability appraisal, namely sustainable development, economic development, quality residential environments, etc. The strategy may complement a number of aspects of the proposed LDP, such as the provision of new homes which meets the needs of various groups, such as families, the elderly, and disabled. The strategy may put pressure on the environmental aspects of the LDP such as natural heritage, archaeology, flood risk, etc. A balance will need to be found through considered planning decisions.
Housing	Facing the Future: Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland Action Plan	2012	NI	DfC	The action plan for the 'Facing the Future' Housing Strategy follows on from the consultation on the draft strategy in 2012. It identifies a new, fifth role for government and sets out the 33 actions that will work towards achievement of each theme. The plan aims help the department to work towards five high-level outcomes: 1. Better housing management, with a more efficient and targeted use of resources; 2. Better regulation, with an increased focus on the interests of tenants and citizens, and reduced red tape; 3. Greater flexibility and responsiveness, as circumstances and market conditions change; 4. Continued fairness for citizens, regardless of tenure and consistent with the need to support those who are most vulnerable; and 5. Implementing new structures that can support the above outcomes.	The LDP can help to support many of the actions identified in the action plan, such as: introducing developer contributions, developing work on energy efficiency, increasing the availability of smaller social housing units and other initiatives for encouraging town and city centre regeneration such as living over shops.
Housing	Planning Policy Statement 7 (Addendum): Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas	2010	NI	DfI	This document is a second addendum to PPS 7 'Quality Residential Environments' and must be read in conjunction with the policies contained within this PPS and within the previous addendum – 'Residential Extensions and Alterations' (published in March 2008). The addendum provides additional planning policies on the protection of local character, environmental quality and residential amenity within established residential areas, villages and smaller settlements. It	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.

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					also sets out regional policy on the conversion of existing buildings to flats or apartments. In addition, the addendum contains policy to promote greater use of permeable paving within new residential developments to reduce the risk of flooding from surface water run-off.	
Housing	Planning Policy Statement 7 (Addendum): Residential Extensions and Alterations	2008	NI	Dfi	This document is a further Addendum to PPS 7 'Quality Residential Environments' and must be read in conjunction with the policies contained within that PPS. The Addendum provides an additional planning policy for the extension and/or alteration of a dwellinghouse or flat, including those in multiple occupancy. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and the Quality Initiative. However, it should be noted that unlike the other policies of PPS 7, the policy contained in this Addendum will apply to all dwellinghouses or flats throughout the Region, including single dwellings in the countryside.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Housing	Planning Policy Statement 12 Housing in Settlements	2005	NI	Dfi	PPS 12: Housing in Settlements Planning Policy Statement 12 'Housing in Settlements' has been prepared to assist in the implementation of the Regional Development Strategy to guide the future pattern on housing by managing future housing growth and distribution, support urban renaissance and achieve balanced communities. Development management policy for affordable housing is still contained within Planning Policy Statement 12 'Housing in Settlements' (PPS 12), published in July 2005. Under transitional arrangements, until a Plan Strategy is adopted, PPS 12 is still a material consideration for deciding planning applications. PPS 12 contains a development management policy, Policy HS 2, which "will be applied where a need for social housing is established through a local housing needs assessment and the development plan for the area has not provided for it."	The LDP will take into consideration the policy provisions of those documents retained under the transitional arrangements. PPS policies that have not been consolidated into the SPPS will cease to be a material consideration in assessing planning applications for LGDs once each Council adopts their new LDP Plan Strategy. It is therefore necessary that any existing PPS policies the Council wish to continue to apply once the Plan Strategy is in place will need to be replaced through the inclusion of relevant, locally tailored policies within the new Plan Strategy.
Housing	PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments	2001	NI	Dfi	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for achieving quality in new residential development and advises on the treatment of this issue in development plans with a requirement for a Concept Master Plan for large developments.	This requires that all residential development is of good quality and sustainable and does result in unacceptable damage to the local character, environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas. The process of sustainability appraisal will help ensure this.
Housing	Creating Places: Achieving Quality in Residential Developments incorporating guidance on layout and access	2000	NI	Dfi	Aims to promote: More sustainable patterns of living, working and travelling, more effective integration between land-use planning and transport, the creation of attractive places in which people are happy to live, work and take their leisure.	Supplementary planning guidance - the creation of attractive residential environments with a genuine sense of place is a prerequisite to achieving sustainability.
Housing	Delivering Sustainable Healthy Homes in Northern Ireland, NIHE, TPCA, Belfast Healthy Cities (March 2016)	2016	NI	NIHE	Guidance and good practice on how planning, health, housing and energy professionals can use new planning powers and responsibilities for community planning to support integrated local approaches to sustainable homes and communities, for energy and health and wellbeing.	This guidance will be taken into account in the preparation of the LDP.
Housing	Social Housing Development Programme, Unmet Social Housing Need Prospectus	2016	NI	NIHE	The prospectus provides information for housing associations and developers in respect of locations where there is unmet social housing need or shortages of development sites contained in the published SHDP. These are locations where the Housing Executive would consider suitable proposals/schemes.	This assessment informs potential requirements for social housing which can in turn inform the LDP.
Housing	NIHE Social housing Development Programme (SHDP) - 2015/16 – 2017/18	2015	NI	NIHE	5. Getting the structures right. This strategy sets out how the government intends to fulfil the objectives over the next five years. The strategy also envisages housing playing a fourth role in driving regeneration within communities, particularly those suffering from blight and population decline.	The LDP will take account of ongoing annual reporting and the prospectus will inform social housing zonings within the plan area.

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Housing	Housing Executive Environmental Policy	2015	NI	NIHE	Includes commitments to prevent pollution of air, land and water; support initiatives to develop sustainable local communities; and enhance and protect biodiversity cross all Housing Executive landholdings.	The LDP can help to support these commitments.
Housing	Housing Executive Corporate Plan - Regional Services	2015	NI	NIHE	Objective 1 Identification of housing requirements across Northern Ireland; Objective 2 Investing in homes and neighbourhoods; Objective 3 Improving People's Homes; Objective 4 Transforming people's lives; Objective 5 Enabling sustainable neighbourhoods.	The LDP can help to support these objectives.
Housing	Housing Executive Community Involvement Strategy	2015	NI	NIHE	This strategy includes the vision "to give residents a real say in making their neighbourhoods better places in which to live".	The LDP can support this strategy by providing an opportunity to cooperate in place shaping.
Housing	Housing Executive Corporate Plan - Landlord Services	2015	NI	NIHE	Objective 1 Delivering quality services; Objective 2 Delivering better homes; Objective 3 Fostering vibrant communities	The LDP can help to support these objectives.
Housing	Homelessness Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012 - 2017	2012	NI	NIHE	In response to the statutory duty (the Housing (NI) Order 1988 as amended) to produce a homelessness strategy, our strategic approach remains focused on addressing the issues that lead to homelessness as well as meeting the temporary and permanent accommodation needs of those who present as homeless.	In enabling housing need to be addressed, the LDP will contribute to delivery of the objectives of this strategy.
Housing	The Belfast Metropolitan Housing Market Area: a local housing system analysis	2011	Regional	NIHE	This report commissioned by NIHE presents the findings of a study into the structure of the Belfast Metropolitan HMA. A housing market area is defined as a geographical area where most people both live and work and where most people moving home (without changing job) seek a house. HMAs can overlap, and often do not marry well with local authority boundaries. Moreover, they are dynamic and HMA boundaries can change over time.	Movement patterns to work inform housing need. Over time the Belfast HMA has been extending its influence northwards and southwards into adjacent TTWAs. It now includes all of Larne local government district (LGD), and all but 1 ward of Antrim LGD
Housing	Housing Investment Plan 2015-2019	2015	Council	NIHE	NIHE has prepared four year Housing Investment Plans for each Council to provide a long term, holistic, cross tenure look at local housing markets. The Housing Investment Plans set out ten outcomes under five themes, which performance can be measured against. The themes are Identify and meet housing need and demand; Improving People's homes; Transforming people's lives; Enabling sustainable neighbourhoods; Delivering quality services.	The HIP is an important evidence base for the LDP and will help facilitate discussion on housing issues within each district. In addition, a purpose of the HIP is to inform Councils on the various programmes and initiatives the Housing Executive and Housing Associations are developing to meet local housing needs.
Housing	Northern Ireland Housing Market Areas	2010	Council	NIHE	This report commissioned by NIHE presents the findings of a study into the structure of housing market areas (HMA) across Northern Ireland. A housing market area is defined as a geographical area where most people both live and work and where most people moving home (without changing job) seek a house. HMA can overlap, and often do not marry well with local authority boundaries. Moreover, they are dynamic and HMA boundaries can change over time. 11 major HMAs were identified as operating across Northern Ireland: Belfast, Craigavon, Newry, Ballymena, Coleraine, Derry, Strabane, Omagh, Mid-Ulster, Dungannon and Enniskillen.	Movement patterns to work can help to inform housing need. Reports for each HMA were prepared in 2011-2013 and are available on the home page.
Education & Skills	Department of Education Annual Business Plan 2016/2017	2016	NI	DE	This Plan contains a number of goals including 'Improving the Well-Being of Children and Young People' – includes rights, play and participation, 'Raising Standards for All – includes early years and childcare, 'Closing the Performance Gap, Increasing Access and Equality' – includes Special Education Needs; youth work and sustainable schools, and 'Improving the learning environment'. The plan aims to make sure that strategic investment supports the delivery of the area plans; that the premises in which young people grow and learn are safe, fit for purpose and conducive to learning; and that the environment provides opportunities for sharing and for building a more cohesive society. The Plan supports a number of indicators in the draft PfG for education.	This is a short term plan that is relevant to the facilities required for e.g. childcare, early years, primary and secondary school, special educational needs and youth. There is no current Corporate Plan for the Department. Regional education policies, programmes, strategies and action plans may be influenced and supported by spatial planning. Also relevant to the Strengthening Society Objective.

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Education & Skills	Every school a good school - a policy for school improvement	2009	NI	DE	Mainly focused on delivery of quality education meeting needs of pupils. Recognises that school premises are a resource that could be better used by local communities and that providing for increased community use of school premises can be an effective way of building links between schools and their local communities. Legislation already provides for schools to make their premises available to outside groups and the Department wants to encourage more community use of school premises. Commits to identifying and disseminating good practice with a particular focus on community use of schools to help schools in building stronger links with their parents and local communities.	Creates the conditions for increased use of schools for community benefit which should be considered in planning for communities.
Education & Skills	Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools	2009	NI	DE	The policy has as its vision an estate of educationally sustainable schools planned on an area basis, with focus on sharing and collaboration. It provides a framework for early consideration of emerging problems and possible remedial action to address questions of viability. The primary objective of the policy is to ensure that all children get a first class education in fit for purpose facilities, regardless of background or where they live. The policy sets out six criteria to be considered in assessing a school's educational viability, as follows: quality educational experience; stable enrolment trends; sound financial position; strong leadership and management; accessibility; strong links with the community.	The LDP should enable development/expansion of school facilities where required to meet the needs of the policy.
Education & Skills	Development Control Advice Note 13: Crèches, Day Nurseries and Pre-School Play Groups	1993	NI	DfI	The purpose of this Advice Note is to give general guidance to intending developers, their professional advisors and agents. It is designed to provide advice on the Planning criteria to be applied when an application for this form of development is being considered. It is not a specific statement of Departmental policy but rather one of advice and guidance.	If this is the most up to date advice on the topic it should be considered in LDP preparation however noting that there may be changes in the sector that also need to be taken into account.
Education & Skills	Education Authority Interim Strategic Plan 2017-2027	2018	NI	EA	The interim Strategic Plan 2017-2027 outlines what EA will do over the next decade to achieve key goals, deliver consistently high-quality services to the community across Northern Ireland and produce positive outcomes for all children and young people. It will be supported by a three-year Corporate Plan and annual business plans which will enable EA to incorporate new priorities and respond to new challenges as they arise. The Strategic Plan has five main objectives 1) Meeting the learning needs of our children and young people 2) Providing excellent education support services 3) Developing all our people to carry out their jobs successfully 4) Managing our resources effectively and efficiently 5) Nurturing leadership across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment.	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies. The LDP should enable development /expansion of education facilities where required.
Education & Skills	Providing Pathways - Strategic Area Plan for Schools 2017-2020	2017	NI	Education Authority	The plan identifies the challenges for the education system throughout each Local Government District (LGD) area. The challenges include reducing or increasing the number of available places in schools, matching provision to population trends, addressing school provision which is not sustainable and improving the quality of provision. In some areas of Northern Ireland there are too many school places for the size of the population, while in other areas, there are not enough places. Area planning aims to establish a network of viable schools that are of the right type, the right size, located in the right place, and have a focus on raising standards. Therefore, the aim of area planning is to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum in sustainable, fit-for-purpose schools.	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.
Education & Skills	Education Authority Annual Action Plan 2017-2018	2017	NI	Education Authority	The Education Authority Action Plans will provide details of the proposed actions to be taken to address key strategic issues in local areas and at local schools, all of which will be subject to detailed consultation. This Annual Action Plan covers the period April 2017 to March 2018 and identifies those schools for which developments are proposed. The Annual Action Plan includes	The Action Plans can help inform the LDP on the areas where sustainability of schools is an issue and areas where there are insufficient places available to accommodate the local population.

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					schools where sustainability is now an issue but, also, includes some schools that are sustainable, as it is these schools who may form part of the solution to sustainability issues in other schools or areas.	
Economy & Employment	Blue Growth	2012	Europe	EC	Blue Growth is the long term strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole. Seas and oceans are drivers for the European economy and have great potential for innovation and growth. It is the maritime contribution to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The 'blue' economy represents roughly 5.4 million jobs and generates a gross added value of almost €500 billion a year. However, further growth is possible in a number of areas which are highlighted within the strategy. The EC considers that by, for example, supporting innovative SMEs, and encouraging innovative products and solutions, Europe can unlock the untapped potential for growth in its blue economy while safeguarding biodiversity and protecting the environment through traditional sectors such as maritime transport and maritime and coastal tourism as well as growing and emerging sectors, such as ocean renewable energy and blue biotechnology.	This may inform LDP policies relating to economy and energy but has the potential to conflict with sustainable use of natural resources. Also relevant to Natural Resources Objective.
Economy & Employment	Europe 2020 Economic Strategy	2010	Europe	EC	Europe 2020 is the European Union's ten-year jobs and growth strategy. It was launched in 2010 to create the conditions for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Five headline targets have been agreed for the EU to achieve by the end of 2020. These cover employment; research and development; climate/energy; education; social inclusion and poverty reduction and targets are set for each for example on energy efficiency.	LDP objectives and supporting policies are likely to support delivery of this strategy.
Economy & Employment	Going for Growth - A Strategic Action Plan	2014	NI	DAERA	In May 2012, DARD and DETI appointed the industry led Agri-Food Strategy Board (AFSB) to make recommendations in respect of the growth targets, strategic priorities and actions to be included in that Plan. The report, Going for Growth, includes more than 100 recommendations aimed at accelerating the growth of farming, fishing and food and drink processing in Northern Ireland to 2020 and beyond. In response the NI Executive has agreed an action plan, outlining actions to be progressed across relevant Departments and Agencies.	This action plan committed to centralised and more streamlined processing for poultry house planning applications while DOE was the planning authority. The 'Commitment to supporting Sustainable Use of Poultry Litter' loan scheme may address some of the environmental effects of pig and poultry production and also lead to new development.
Economy & Employment	Economy 2030: an Industrial Strategy for Northern Ireland [DRAFT]	2017	NI	DfE	This strategy sets out a plan to turn Northern Ireland into one of the world's most innovative and competitive small advanced economies. "Our ambition to build a globally competitive economy will be based around the following five priority pillars for growth: Accelerating Innovation and Research; Enhancing Education, Skills and Employability; Driving Inclusive, Sustainable Growth; Succeeding in Global Markets; Building the Best Economic Infrastructure.	The LDP can help support opportunities that are most likely to lead to strong and sustained economic growth
Economy & Employment	DETI (2010) Draft Northern Ireland Tourism Strategy	2010	NI	DfE	The original 2010 draft is not available. The vision was to: create the new NI experience; get it on everyone's destination wish list; and double the income earned from tourism by 2020. The draft strategy, had the aim of providing the strategic direction for the development of NI's tourism experience to the year 2020 and a targeted Action Plan to deliver it. At the core of the strategy was the intention to grow income from visitor numbers with tourist revenue increased from £536 million in 2010 to £1 billion by 2020. An updated draft strategy, is currently being developed by The Department for the Economy and was due for consultation by the end of 2016, however the absence of Ministers has delayed public consultation on, and therefore finalisation of, the draft Strategy within the original timescale.	By encouraging sustainable development, the LDP may also indirectly support development that enables tourism e.g. visitor centres, attractions, services, transport etc. As with any development, environmental considerations will need to be considered.
Economy &	A Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020	2010	NI	DfE	Aims to provide strategic direction and targets for the development of NI's tourism experience to the year 2020 and a targeted Action Plan to deliver it. At the core of the strategy was the	The Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020 identified nine key tourism destinations. The LDP can indirectly support development that enables tourism.

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					intention to grow income from visitor numbers with tourist revenue increased from £536 million in 2010 to £1 billion by 2020.	
Economy	Planning Policy Statement 16 Tourism	2013	NI	Dfi	Policies in relation to tourism and safeguarding tourism assets.	Retention of some or all of these policies will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Economy & Employment	Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning and Economic Development (DOE 2010)	2010	NI	Dfi	Policies for sustainable economic development and stipulates how these can be brought forward in development plans.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Economy & Employment	Northern Ireland Economic Strategy: Priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity. Building a better Future	2012	NI	NI Executive	Sets out how the Executive plans to grow a prosperous local economy over the short, medium and longer term to 2030. The economic vision for 2030 is: 'An economy characterised by a sustainable and growing private sector, where a greater number of firms compete in global markets and there is growing employment and prosperity for all'. There is an emphasis on redressing a dependency on the public sector through the following: stimulate innovation, R&D and creativity so that we widen and deepen our export base; improve the skills and employability of the entire workforce so that people can progress up the skills ladder, thereby delivering higher productivity and increased social inclusion; compete effectively within the global economy and be internationally regarded as a good place to live and do business; encourage business growth and increase the potential of our local companies, including within the social and rural economies; and develop a modern and sustainable economic infrastructure that supports economic growth.	The LDP can support this strategy by enabling economic growth and shaping an environment with sustainable infrastructure that attracts investment and supports innovation.
Economy & Employment	Economic Strategy Priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity - Building a better Future	2012	NI	NI Executive	The overarching goal of this Strategy is to improve the economic competitiveness of the Northern Ireland economy. In order to achieve this, we are committed to strengthening our competitiveness through a focus on export led economic growth. This means we are prioritising the need to deepen and diversify our export base in order to increase employment and wealth across Northern Ireland. The key drivers of this will be innovation, R&D and the skills of our workforce.	The LDP can support this strategy by enabling economic growth and shaping an environment with sustainable infrastructure that attracts investment and supports innovation. Also relevant to the Education & Skills Objective.
Economy & Employment	The Destination Strangford Lough Management Plan 2013 – 2018	2013	Regional	Ards and North Down Borough Council	Strangford Lough is one of the 9 designated destinations within Northern Ireland. Each destination determines its own priorities and projects, in line with the (draft) 2020 Tourism Strategy and Northern Ireland Tourist Board's Tourism Priorities for Growth. Thus Ards Borough Council and Down District Council, working with the tourism trade, can decide what the best offers to visitors are, maximising revenue and opportunity locally, while also contributing to the 2020 targets for NI.	This is a non-statutory plan however the aims of this plan should be taken into account in LDP preparation. The LDP can help to support the aims of the plan. Also relevant to the Natural Resources Objective.
Material Assets	Renewable energy Directive 2009 EC2009/28/EC2	2009	Europe	EC	The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU to limit greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and promote cleaner transport. It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets. All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020.	The LDP will take account of the Directive.
Material Assets	Directive 2008/98/EC on waste	2008	Europe	EC	Establishes the five tier hierarchy of waste. This waste hierarchy aims to encourage the management of waste materials in order to reduce the amount of waste materials produced, and to recover maximum value from the wastes that are produced. It encourages the prevention of waste, followed by the reuse and refurbishment of goods, then value recovery through recycling and composting. Waste disposal should only be used when no option further	The LDP will reflect the Waste Hierarchy approach to Waste management. The LDP will provide for appropriate waste management facilities. The LDP will bring forward policies in regards of renewable energy including biomass. The LDP should make

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					up the hierarchy is possible. Prevention or reduction of waste production and its harmfulness. The recovery of waste by means of recycling, re-use or reclamation. Recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without using processes that could harm the environment.	appropriate actions reflecting the need to manage wastes according to this directive.
Material Assets	Directive 99/31/EC on the landfill of waste	1999	Europe	EC	Prevent or reduce negative effects on the environment from the landfilling of waste by introducing stringent technical requirements for waste and landfills. The objective of the Directive is to prevent or reduce as far as possible negative effects on the environment, in particular on surface water, groundwater, soil, air, and on human health from the landfilling of waste by introducing stringent technical requirements for waste and landfills. The Landfill Directive defines the different categories of waste (municipal waste, hazardous waste, non-hazardous waste and inert waste) and applies to all landfills, defined as waste disposal sites for the deposit of waste onto or into land. Landfills are divided into three classes: landfills for hazardous waste; landfills for non-hazardous waste; landfills for inert waste.	The LDP will take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies contained in the SPPS.
Material Assets	Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste	1994	Europe	EC	Harmonise the packaging waste system of Member States. Reduce the environmental impact of packaging waste.	The LDP will take account of the Directive.
Material Assets	National Renewable Energy Action Plan for the United Kingdom	2010	UK	BEIS	Aims to provide a framework which enables the land based and rural sectors to realise the potential opportunities in the development of renewable energy. Focus is on assisting meeting targets for renewable energy production at a regional, national and EU level in a balanced and sustainable way. Other key objectives of the development include energy security, emissions reductions and wider economic advantages.	Policies relating to renewable energy are proposed, helping to meet the objectives of this plan. Design and sustainable development policies should also encourage renewable energy as part of these developments. Planning decisions will have to balance need for renewables with environmental concerns and it may be that the need for renewable developments is outweighed by environmental protection.
Material Assets	The UK Renewable Energy Strategy	2009	UK	BEIS	This UK Roadmap shows where we are now; analysis of how deployment may evolve by 2020, together with separate estimates of the market's view of the potential; and the actions required to set us on the path to achieve the deployment levels anticipated in our analysis. While renewable deployment across all technologies will be important, the Roadmap focuses in particular on the technologies that have either the greatest potential to help the UK meet the 2020 target in a cost effective and sustainable way, or offer great potential for the decades that follow. These are Onshore wind, Offshore wind, Marine energy, Biomass electricity, Biomass heat, Ground source and air source heat pumps and Renewable transport.	The LDP should take into account evidence that informs future energy needs and renewable provision.
Material Assets	The Revised Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy "Delivering Resource Efficiency"	2013	NI	DAERA	The revised Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy sets the policy framework for the management of waste in Northern Ireland, and contains actions and targets to meet EU Directive requirements and the Department's Programme for Government commitments. It builds on and retains the core principles of the 2006 Strategy, and places a renewed emphasis on the Waste Hierarchy. The new Strategy moves the emphasis of waste management in Northern Ireland from resource management, with landfill diversion as the key driver, to resource efficiency i.e. using resources in the most effective way while minimising the impact of their use on the environment.	The SPPS supports this strategy, namely with development making sustainable use of available resources and having a sustainable approach to waste designed in. Waste management is one of the Subject Policies. The economic considerations of the SPPS will support 'green jobs' and ensure that the economy will benefit from planning decisions. Improved waste management will be good for the environment. The LDP is therefore likely to support this strategy, namely with development making sustainable use of available resources and having a sustainable approach to waste designed in. The economic considerations of the LDP will support employment

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						and ensure that the economy will benefit from planning decisions. Improved waste management will be good for the environment.
Material Assets	Renewable Energy in the Land Based Sector A way forward. Interim Renewable Energy Action Plan 2013/14	2013	NI	DAERA	Follow up to the Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010. Strategic aim to Promote sustainable farming and forestry practices to deliver greater resource efficiency and reduced environmental impact, by supporting the sector to make a contribution to and benefit from renewable energy opportunities. Focus on enabling the land based and rural sectors to realise the potential opportunities in the development of renewable energy through capacity building, research and promotion of opportunities.	LDP preparation will have to balance need for renewables with environmental concerns and it may be that the need for renewable developments is outweighed by environmental protection.
Material Assets	Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPA) for Ireland	2010	RoI	DCCA	The OREDPA identifies the opportunity for the sustainable development of Ireland's offshore renewable energy resources and sets out key principles, policy actions and enablers for delivery of Ireland's significant potential in this area. Three high level goals have been identified for the OREDPA: Ireland harnesses the market opportunities presented by offshore renewable energy to achieve economic development, growth and jobs; Increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing offshore renewable energy; Offshore renewable energy developments do not adversely impact our rich marine environment and its living and non-living resources.	This plan will not affect or be affected by the LDP directly. However, developments arising under the LDP could have an impact on the capacity available in Ireland. Developments in Ireland could also affect NI resources, particularly marine or coastal environments.
Material Assets	Envisioning the Future: Considering Energy in Northern Ireland to 2050	2015	NI	DfE	A vision of what might happen by 2050: the outcomes are neither a prediction nor a plan and the study does not, therefore, propose a strategy. Instead, the vision is intended to guide thinking on what can be achieved in 2050 and what early decisions and activities may be needed to support development towards 2050.	Evidence that informs future energy needs and provision.
Material Assets	Draft Onshore Renewable Electricity Action Plan	2013	NI	DfE	The aim of the Action Plan is to maximise the amount of renewable electricity generated from onshore renewable sources in order to enhance diversity and security of supply, reduce carbon emissions, contribute to the 40% renewable electricity target by 2020 and beyond and develop business and employment opportunities for Northern Ireland companies.	Provision in the LDP to support delivery of this will need to align with the renewable energy subject policy of the SPPS, though it could conflict with the natural heritage and other environmental policies.
Material Assets	Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2012-2020	2012	NI	DfE	The overall aim of the ORESAP is; to optimise the amount of renewable electricity sustainably generated from offshore wind and marine renewable resources in Northern Ireland's waters in order to enhance diversity and security of supply, reduce carbon emissions, contribute to the 40% renewable electricity target by 2020 and beyond and develop business and employment opportunities for NI companies. The associated development opportunity is for up to 900 MW of offshore wind and 300 MW from tidal resources in Northern Ireland waters by 2020.	Provision in the LDP to support delivery of this will need to align with the renewable energy subject policy of the SPPS, though it could conflict with the natural heritage and other environmental policies.
Material Assets	DETI (2012) Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2012-2015	2012	NI	DfE	The Action Plan aims to assist with the implementation of the Strategic Energy Framework (2010-2020). DETI set out numerous "main actions for the future" regarding renewables and other aspects of sustainable energy. Of particular relevance are the commitments to: Contribute to the growth of the NI sustainable energy sector (through Invest NI) to 8.9% of NI GVA by 2015; Work with DOE, developers, planners and those responsible for environmental consents to ensure that the need for renewable energy to address the environmental impacts of climate change is recognised, that good quality applications are made and that clear, consistent and proportionate procedures are in place for the consenting of renewable installations; Undertake "capacity studies" (including landscape capacity study, ecological study and bird migration study, with DOE and others) in order to determine with more accuracy how much development could be accommodated in different locations across Northern Ireland before significant cumulative effects start to emerge; Develop a continuous monitoring	A number of socio-economic objectives are included in the Action Plan requiring the development of facilities and service infrastructure, as well as proposing funding for additional development such as renewables or farm diversification.

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					framework (with DOE and others) where the key potential cumulative effects identified from the assessment are reviewed on a regular basis in response to growth of the onshore wind industry. There are also a number of socio-economic commitments, such as supporting construction of electricity network or refurbishing schools with renewable technologies for example.	
Material Assets	DETI (2010) Energy: A Strategic Framework for Northern Ireland	2010	NI	DfE	Contains goals and targets, but does not include the detail of how targets could be achieved. It does aim to ensure future access to secure, competitively priced and sustainable energy supplies for all of NI. Also it provides a direction for NI energy policy over the next ten years concentrating on key areas of electricity, natural gas and renewable energy sources. Under review in 2016.	Renewable and sustainable development policies will indirectly accord with this framework, by providing for renewable development. There may be a conflict between this framework and environmental policies (natural heritage, cultural heritage, flood risk etc.) when it comes to developing gas facilities and electrical networks.
Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 18 Renewable Energy (2009) Supplementary Planning Guidance Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes.	2010	NI	DfI	The SPG 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.	Informs the relative capacity for wind energy in respect of landscape.
Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 18 Renewable Energy (2009) Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance Anaerobic Digestion	2010	NI	DfI	The SPG 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. AD proposals raise a number of planning issues including visual and landscape impacts arising from industrial scale plant/buildings; potential odour impacts, air emissions, noise impacts, and traffic impacts.	LDP policies in respect of development in the countryside, waste and landscape may influence the future development of these facilities.
Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 18 Renewable Energy (2009)	2009	NI	DfI	Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 sets out the planning policy for development that generates energy from renewable resources. The PPS aims to facilitate the siting of renewable energy generating facilities in appropriate locations within the built and natural environments.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 10 Telecommunications	2002	NI	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for telecommunications development. It embodies the Government's commitment to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The PPS also addresses health issues associated with telecommunications development.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 11 Planning and Waste Management (DOE 2002)	2002	NI	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for the development of waste management facilities. It seeks to promote the highest environmental standards in development proposals for waste management facilities and includes guidance on the issues likely to be considered in the determination of planning applications. In addition, it explains the relationship between the planning system and authorities responsible for the regulation and management of waste.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Material Assets	The Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997	1997	NI	NI Executive	Implements the European Commission (EC) Framework on Waste in NI. The Order makes a number of provisions such as: transfer of responsibility for waste regulation from the district councils to the Department of Environment (DOE), focused within the NIEA introduction of measures designed to increase control over the processing and handling of waste including Waste Management Licensing, Duty of Care, Registration of Carriers, Special Waste and	The Contaminated Land regime which is set out in Part 3 of the Waste Management and Contaminated Land Order (Northern Ireland) 1997, has been enacted but is not yet in force. Also relevant to the Physical Resources objective.

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					Producer Responsibility introduction of measures relating to the identification of contaminated land, designation of special sites, duties of enforcing authorities to require remediation, determination of appropriate persons to bear responsibility for remediation, liability of contaminating substances which escape to other land and contaminated land registers.	
Material Assets	arc21 Waste Management Plan	2014	Regional	arc21	This Waste Management Plan has been prepared by the arc21 Region in fulfilment of its councils' obligations under Article 23 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. Under Article 23, District Councils have a duty to prepare Waste Management Plans for the forward planning of waste management requirements for collecting, recovering, treating and disposing of controlled waste within the Region. The Plan 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.	There is a need to accommodate investment in waste management.
Physical Resources	The Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection	2006	Europe	Council of Europe	In September 2006 the Commission adopted a Soil Thematic Strategy including a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive. This originated from the need to ensure a sustainable use of soils and protect their function in a comprehensive manner in a context of increasing pressure and degradation of soils across the EU.	The commitment to sustainable soil use is in line with the Seventh Environment Action Programme, (7th EAP) which provides that by 2020 "land is managed sustainably in the Union, soil is adequately protected and the remediation of contaminated sites is well underway" and commits the EU and its Member States to "increasing efforts to reduce soil erosion and increase organic matter, to remediate contaminated sites and to enhance the integration of land use aspects into coordinated decision-making involving all relevant levels of government, supported by the adoption of targets on soil and on land as a resource, and land planning objectives".
Physical Resources	UK Geodiversity Action Plan	2011	UK	Natural England	The UKGAP sets out a framework for geodiversity action across the UK. It encompasses six themes: 1. Furthering our understanding of geodiversity, 2. Influencing planning policy, legislation and development design, 3. Gathering and maintaining information on our geodiversity, 4. Conserving and managing our geodiversity, 5. Inspiring people to value and care for our geodiversity, 6. Sustaining resources for our geodiversity.	Geodiversity can play a role in planning for and mitigating the effects of climate change, coastal erosion and flooding. It can also help support Ecosystem Services such as soil formation, flood management, pollution control, mineral resources and the enjoyment of our environment. The LDP should recognise that geodiversity is cross-cutting across several themes including transport, housing, mineral extraction and waste. It should also recognise the sustainable socio-economic benefits that geodiversity brings for people and the cultural services it provides across a range of sectors and social agenda (for example, contributing to sense of place and a healthy lifestyle). Geodiversity information can help to support the delivery of wider environmental and landscape initiatives (including landscape characterisation and delivery of the European Landscape Convention).
Physical Resources	Delivering our Future, Valuing our Soils: A Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy for Northern Ireland	2016	NI	independent Expert Working Group on Sustainable Land	Improving the health of Northern Ireland's agricultural soils is the central focus of this strategy. Healthier soils will deliver better yields of crops and grass which are higher in quality. This will provide the raw material necessary for the increased productivity and profitability envisaged by 'Going for Growth' and will also deliver environmental improvement simultaneously.	This strategy document is mainly targeted at agricultural practitioners adopting more sustainable land use practices. It contains some information on best practice for sustainable land management which may be translatable to the use of public lands, e.g. blue/green infrastructure and enhancement of biodiversity.

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				Management		
Physical Resources	Northern Ireland's Geodiversity Charter Action Plan	2017-2020	NI	Joint initiative	The Northern Ireland Geodiversity Charter recognises that geodiversity is an integral and vital part of our environment, economy, heritage and future sustainable development. It is necessary that our geodiversity is safeguarded and managed appropriately for current and future generations	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies. Also relevant to the Natural Resources and Landscape Objectives.
Transport	Strategic Park & Ride Delivery Programme 2016-2020 (Draft)	2016	NI	Dfi	Department is currently developing a Strategic Park & Ride Delivery Programme for the next four years which will deliver additional Park & Ride and Park & Share spaces	May inform policies relating to provision of park and ride facilities and connectivity between transport modes.
Transport	Northern Ireland Changing Gear: A Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland	2015	NI	Dfi	The Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland is the first step in achieving the Minister's vision for cycling. It aims to set out progressively how we can transform Northern Ireland into a place where travelling by bicycle is a healthy, every day activity. It will be supported by a Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan which will outline specific time bound actions to realise this vision. It takes a 3 pillar approach: 'Build' [a comprehensive network for the bicycle], 'Support' [People who choose to travel by bicycle] and 'Promote' [The bicycle as a mode of transport for everyday journeys].	This strategy is closely linked with 'Exercise Explore Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways'. The LDP can help to support the objectives of the strategy by supporting the establishment of new or improved cycle routes and cycling infrastructure.
Transport	Railway Investment Prioritisation Strategy May 2014	2015	NI	Dfi	The Strategy sets out the strategic direction for future railway investment over the next 20 years and the high level initiatives that need to be delivered to support the Strategy. Objectives include: maintain and improve passenger capacity, remove bottlenecks and assist development along TEN-T (Trans European) core network corridor; enhance or extend TEN-T comprehensive network. The Strategy will also look at new halts and opportunities to develop out-of-town rail-based park and ride at new halts.	The LDP can support aspects of the Strategy, such as the aim to build additional park and ride facilities and station upgrades/ refurbishment which include enhancing accessibility and safety features.
Transport	Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future - A New Approach to Regional Transportation.	2011	NI	Dfi	How the Department will develop regional transportation beyond 2015, when the current transport plans reach their conclusion. The new approach to regional transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy and aims to achieve the transportation vision: "to have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone's quality of life." The new approach starts with the assumption that the decision to travel has been made. It seeks to provide the infrastructure and services that will ensure that travel and transport are as sustainable as possible.	The SPPS includes seven Subject Policies specific to transport and others that address the 'High Level Transport Aims' and 'Strategic Objectives of Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future', so in meeting the requirements of the SPPS the requirements of this strategy will also be met. Planning to enable people to live and work near the services and facilities they require and policies that allow more people to work from home will support this strategy and the LDP will also need to consider any requirement for new or improved transport infrastructure. The LDP will support this Plan. The need for new or improved infrastructure will need to be assessed against environmental policies, though following good design and sustainable development should achieve the best possible solutions to the need.
Transport	Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP)	2007	NI	Dfi	While this implementation plan has expired, some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. The Sub-Regional Transport Plan deals with the transport needs of the whole of Northern Ireland with the exception of the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the rail and trunk road networks which are covered in earlier transport plans. The purpose of the SRTP is to study the needs of the designated areas in detail and to confirm a package of transport schemes, consistent with the general principles and indicative levels of spend in the RTS. This package of schemes and initiatives must aim to service the	Although expired, the STRP may inform unmet transport and infrastructure requirements.

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					future transport demands taking account of financial allocation, planned developments and any changes in Government policy.	
Transport	Planning Policy Statement 3 – Access, Movement and Parking (2005) & PPS3 clarification (DOE 2006)	2005	NI	Dfi	Policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, transport assessments, the protection of transport routes and parking. Provides for a sustainable transport system which promotes road safety.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Transport	Planning Policy Statement 13 Transportation and Land Use	2005	NI	Dfi	Assists in bringing forward the integration of transportation and land use as per the RDS.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Transport	Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015	2004	NI	Dfi	While this implementation plan has expired, some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. The RSTN of Northern Ireland comprises the complete rail network, five Key Transport Corridors (KTCs), four Link Corridors, the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Corridors and the remainder of the trunk road network. The Plan consists of proposals for the maintenance, management and development of this transport network up to the end of 2015.	Although expired, the RTSN may inform unmet transport and infrastructure requirements.
Transport	Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) for Northern Ireland 2002-2012	2002	NI	Dfi	The Regional Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012 for identifies strategic transportation investment priorities and considers potential funding sources and affordability of planned initiatives over the strategy period.	Although expired, and replaced by 'Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future', the RTS may inform unmet transport and infrastructure requirements.
Transport	Translink Strategy 'Get on Board' 2016-2021	2016	NI	Translink	Translink's plan to transform public transport and support the growth and prosperity of Northern Ireland. 'Get on Board' has been developed in the context of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 and The New Approach to Regional Transportation. It aims to deliver a transformation in public transport, providing integrated services which connect people, enhance the economy and improve the environment, enabling a thriving Northern Ireland" Incorporates a number of key goals including: Making services inclusive and accessible to all; Working with all stakeholders to support social inclusion in local communities; Support modal shift toward sustainable transport; and Forging partnerships to deliver cost effective and integrated travel solutions to rural communities.	The LDP will support this strategy and will consider measures to make public transport services and sustainable transport more accessible and more integrated with other transport modes.
Transport	Network Utilisation Strategy, Translink NI Railways, (Published October 2015)	2015	NI	Translink	The Network Utilisation Strategy (NUS) seeks to find a balance between supply and demand. It sets out a long Term vision for rail in Northern Ireland for the next 30 years. It provides the evidence base to support targeted investment in infrastructure, rolling stock and services such that the network is fit for the purpose of supporting the growth of the Northern Ireland economy.	Indicates potential future investment in railway infrastructure.
Transport	Belfast Rapid Transit Programme		Regional	Dfi	The first phase of the BRT network, which is currently being implemented, will link East Belfast, West Belfast and Titanic Quarter via the city centre	implications uncertain, programme document not available online and has been received for review
Transport	Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP)	2004	Regional		While this implementation plan has expired some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. A local transport plan for the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA). The Plan takes forward the strategic initiatives of the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) for Northern Ireland 2002-2012. The Plan is divided into four themes: provision for walking and cycling, public transport measures, highway measures and management measures. The overall objective is to deliver an integrated transport network.	The BMTP is integrated with the 2015 Development Plan for the BMA (BMAP), with the plans being developed in parallel. The LDP will supersede BMAP for the part of our plan area to which it applied. Although expired, the BMTP may inform unmet infrastructure requirements in the former BMA Plan area.
Air Quality	Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions	2010	Europe	EC	The IED aims to achieve a high level of protection of human health and the environment taken as a whole by reducing harmful industrial emissions across the EU, in particular through better	Location of land for industrial use should be considered in relation to people and sensitive environmental receptors.

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	(integrated pollution prevention and control)				application of Best Available Techniques (BAT). Installations undertaking the industrial activities listed in Annex I of the IED are required to operate in accordance with a permit (granted by the authorities in the Member States). The integrated approach means that the permits must take into account the whole environmental performance of the plant, covering e.g. emissions to air, water and land, generation of waste, use of raw materials, energy efficiency, noise, prevention of accidents, and restoration of the site upon closure. For certain activities, i.e. large combustion plants, waste incineration and co-incineration plants, solvent using activities and titanium dioxide production, the IED also sets EU wide emission limit values for selected pollutants.	
Air Quality	Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe	2008	Europe	EC	This Directive merged most of existing legislation into a single directive with no change to existing air quality objectives and added new air quality objectives for PM <sub>2.5</sub> (fine particles). Establishes the need to reduce pollution to levels which minimise harmful effects on human health, paying particular attention to sensitive populations, and the environment as a whole, to improve the monitoring and assessment of air quality including the deposition of pollutants and to provide information to the public. Emissions of harmful air pollutants should be avoided, prevented or reduced.	The LDP should consider the implications of new development on air pollution and take account of the Directive as well as more detailed policies contained in the SPPS.
Air Quality	Defra, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and DOE (2007) The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	2007	UK	Four Nations (DAERA)	This updated strategy sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues; sets out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved; introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. It includes the requirement, under the local air quality management, for every local authority to regularly review and assess air quality in their area which is a statutory requirement under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002. If national objectives are not met, or at risk of not being met, the local authority concerned must declare an air quality management area and prepare an air quality action plan. This identifies measures that will be introduced in pursuit of the objectives and can have implications for planning.	Local Plans can affect air quality in a number of ways, including through what development is proposed and where, and the encouragement given to sustainable transport. Therefore in plan making, it is important to take into account air quality management areas and other areas where there could be specific requirements or limitations on new development because of air quality. Drawing on the review of air quality carried out for the local air quality management regime, the LDP needs to consider the potential cumulative impact of a number of smaller developments on air quality as well as the effect of more substantial developments; the impact of point sources of air pollution (pollution that originates from one place); and ways in which new development would be appropriate in locations where air quality is or likely to be a concern and not give rise to unacceptable risks from pollution.
Climate Change	The Paris Agreement	2015	International	UN	The Paris agreement which entered into force in November 2016 provides an international framework to hold the increase in global temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to keep the more stringent target of below 1.5 degrees in sight. The agreement provides a broad framework for countries to work together, share information and build experience to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience. It aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework will be put in place, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives. The Paris Agreement requires all Parties to put forward their best efforts through "nationally determined contributions" (NDCs) and to strengthen these efforts in	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.

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					the years ahead. This includes requirements that all Parties report regularly on their emissions and on their implementation efforts.	
Climate Change	The Kyoto Protocol Adopted 1997, came into force in 2005.	2005	International	UN	The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which commits its Parties by setting internationally binding emission reduction targets. Recognizing that developed countries are principally responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere as a result of more than 150 years of industrial activity, the Protocol places a heavier burden on developed nations under the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities." The protocol looks at limiting the emission of harmful greenhouse gases. Parties committed to reduce GHG emissions by at least 18 percent below 1990 levels in the eight-year period from 2013 to 2020. It was updated by the Doha Amendment in 2012.	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.
Climate Change	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	1994	International	UN	The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994 and has near-universal membership. The UNFCCC is a "Rio Convention", one of three adopted at the "Rio Earth Summit" in 1992. Its sister Rio Conventions are the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification. It now also incorporates the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Preventing "dangerous" human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC.	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.
Climate Change	2030 Framework for climate and energy	2014	Europe	EC	EU-wide targets aim to help the EU achieve a more competitive, secure and sustainable energy system and to meet its long-term 2050 greenhouse gas reductions target. The strategy sends a strong signal to the market, encouraging private investment in new pipelines, electricity networks, and low-carbon technology. Targets for 2030 are a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels; at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption; at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario.	Local Plans can affect air quality in a number of ways, including through what development is proposed and where, incorporation of energy efficiency, enabling renewable energy and encouraging sustainable transport. Also relevant to Material Assets and Air Quality Objectives.
Climate Change	The EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change	2013	Europe	EC	The EU Adaptation Strategy encourages all Member States to adopt comprehensive adaptation strategies. It 'Climate-proofs' action at EU level by promoting adaptation actions which include mainstreaming of climate change (mitigation and adaptation) into EU sector policies and funds, including marine and inland water issues, forestry, agriculture, biodiversity, infrastructure and buildings, but also migration and social issues. It supports better informed decision-making through Climate-ADAPT a platform which provides several useful resources to support adaptation policy and decision making, such as a toolset for adaptation planning and promotion of green infrastructure and ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation. Comprises a series of documents on adaptation in different situations such as coastal and marine, infrastructure and rural development.	This Strategy aligns with the climate change focus of the SPPS. Adaptation to climate change should be considered for LDP proposals.
Climate Change	Directive 2012 on the energy efficiency 2012/27/EU	2012	Europe	EC	Under the Energy Efficiency Directive EU countries make energy efficient renovations to at least 3% of buildings owned and occupied by central government; EU governments should only purchase buildings which are highly energy efficient; EU countries must draw-up long-term national building renovation strategies which can be included in their National Energy Efficiency Action Plans.	The need for energy efficiency will influence the design of new and renovated buildings.
Climate Change	Directive 2010 on the energy performance of buildings 2010/31/EU	2010	Europe	EC	Under the existing Energy Performance of Buildings Directive energy performance certificates are to be included in all advertisements for the sale or rental of buildings; EU countries must establish inspection schemes for heating and air conditioning systems or put in place measures with equivalent effect; all new buildings must be nearly zero energy buildings by 31 December	The need for energy efficiency will influence the design of new and renovated buildings.

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					2020 (public buildings by 31 December 2018); EU countries must set minimum energy performance requirements for new buildings, for the major renovation of buildings and for the replacement or retrofit of building elements (heating and cooling systems, roofs, walls, etc.); EU countries have to draw up lists of national financial measures to improve the energy efficiency of buildings. In 2016 the Commission proposed an update to the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive to help promote the use of smart technology in buildings and to streamline the existing rules.	
Climate Change	Industrial Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Roadmaps	2015	UK	BEIS	Reports that set out potential pathways for the eight most heat-intensive industrial sectors to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency. The cross-sectoral report suggests clustering as a long term strategy to deliver energy savings and more efficient use of waste and by-products.	Zoning and enabling infrastructure investments (in roads, ports, pipelines, etc.) would strengthen existing clusters and enable new ones to develop.
Climate Change	The State of the UK Climate 2017	2017	UK	RMET	The report provides a 10-year “snapshot” of the most recent experience of the UK’s climate and how that compares to historical records. This means differences between 2008–2017 and the baseline reference averages may reflect shorter-term decadal variations as well as long-term trends. These data are presented to show what has happened in recent years, not necessarily what is expected to happen in a changing climate.	Informative because of National Significance
Climate Change	Climate Change Act 2008	2008	UK	UK Gov.	Covering England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland established a legislative framework to enable the reduction of UK GHG emissions by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050 and by 34% by 2020. It also introduced legally binding five-year carbon budgets, which set a ceiling on the levels of GHGs the UK can emit on course to the longer-term target. The Climate Change Act 2008 covers all of the UK with targets set at the UK level. Climate Change Risk Assessment is a statutory requirement of the Act.	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.
Climate Change	UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Evidence Report, Summary for Northern Ireland	2017	NI	CCC	The objective of the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) is to inform adaptation policy by assessing the current and future risks and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate for NI to the year 2100. The main finding is that extreme weather is still predominant among potential risks related to climate change but that other risks, such as water scarcity are becoming increasingly important. Highlights need for more strategic planning for increased water scarcity in vulnerable locations, including re-evaluation of land use options and if necessary investment in storage infrastructure to maximise use of surplus winter rainfall. Notes that land use planning is mainly based upon protecting prime agricultural land from development, on the assumption that prime land will remain in current locations into the future which may not be the case. Advises that more action is needed to manage current risks to people from cold temperatures through addressing fuel poverty. Highlights that there have been requests for new sea defence structures around the coast. There will need to be a system in place to decide which areas must be protected and where realignment is more appropriate however no shoreline management plans or other policies that assess and plan for changes to coastal communities have been developed for Northern Ireland.	The SPPS states that no development should take place in areas known to be at risk from coastal erosion. The SPPS promotes and encourages developers to use SuDS and also indicates that Councils should continue to promote the use of SuDS through their Local Development Plans. The SPPS recognises the importance of peatlands to Northern Ireland for biodiversity, water and carbon storage. The LDP will need to consider areas at risk from coastal erosion and vulnerable to flooding and to promote use of SuDS and protect peatlands. Measures that help to reduce fuel poverty can help address some social impacts of cold temperatures. Some infrastructure such as clean and waste water treatment may be vulnerable to flooding and therefore may need to be modified or relocated.
Climate Change	The appropriateness of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act – December 2015 Update	2015	NI	CCC	In October 2015 the Northern Ireland Executive Minister asked the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) to provide an update on a CCC report produced in 2011 on ‘The appropriateness of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act’ to inform the case for bringing forward Northern Ireland climate change legislation in the next Assembly term. The Committee concluded that the range of circumstances that are unique to Northern Ireland suggest local legislation is	None at present but a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act (Bill) could influence future plans.

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					appropriate. However, the benefits of specific legislation only outweigh the costs if it is possible to pass local legislation without adding undue additional costs on to the Northern Ireland Executive, ministries or the wider economy.	
Climate Change	Planning in the Coastal Area: A developer's guide to planning considerations and environmental responsibilities	2017	NI	DAERA	This guidance document aims to explain how some onshore development may impact on the marine environment. It also describes the legislative and regulatory framework within which we manage our marine area. This document aims to outline how development along our coast can be managed in an integrated manner and how potential impacts of onshore development on the marine environment can be avoided or mitigated through early engagement and collaborative working.	This document has been produced to assist planning authorities, applicants and agents in their understanding of land and sea interactions. In addition, as planning legislation extends to the mean low water mark, there is an area of overlapping responsibilities in the intertidal area. The LDP should aim to align with legislation on the marine environment to achieve an integrated approach to the management of the intertidal area along the coastline.
Climate Change	Discussion Paper – Proposals for Taking Forward NI Climate Change Legislation - DOE on 1 December 2015	2015	NI	DAERA	The aim of a NI Climate Change Bill which is still in development is to establish a long-term framework for future action on climate change to drive greater efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and so help ensure that Northern Ireland is better prepared to adapt to the impacts of unavoidable climate change. Proposals include: setting a long term target of 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 (compared to 1990 baseline levels); setting interim targets that are consistent with achieving the 2050 targets; placing a duty to set limits in 5-year carbon budgets on the total amounts of GHG emissions that can be emitted in NI.	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.
Climate Change	Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP). 2014-2019	2014	NI	DAERA	Contains the Northern Ireland Executive's response to the risks and opportunities identified in the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) for Northern Ireland, which was published in January 2012, as part of the overall UK CCRA. The Adaptation Programme provides the strategic objectives in relation to adaptation to climate change, the proposals and policies by which each department will meet these objectives, and the timescales associated with the proposals and policies identified in the period up to 2019. The priority areas are flooding, natural environment, water and agriculture and forestry.	The LDP will need to consider areas at risk from coastal erosion and vulnerable to flooding. It may consider indirect measures to reduce flood risk such as the use of SuDS and protecting peatlands. Some infrastructure such as clean and waste water treatment will be more vulnerable to flooding therefore may need to be modified or relocated.
Climate Change	Efficient Farming Cuts Greenhouse Gases Implementation Plan 2016-2020	2013	NI	DAERA	The plan is focused on encouraging the implementation of a series of on-farm efficiency measures which can improve farm performance and reduce the carbon intensity of local food production and signposts the support available to facilitate this.	Aspects of relevant to planning are promotion of renewable energy, nutrient management including anaerobic digestion, energy efficiency and ventilation in livestock building.
Climate Change	Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Action Plan (revised 2016/17 Mitigation Plan)	2012	NI	DAERA	This document sets out a Cross-Departmental Action Plan to tackle the established strategies together, including how Northern Ireland is and will continue to reduce its carbon footprint. Specifically how the Programme for Government target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2025 will be delivered. Status is not clear as not available on any departmental website. Plan has been updated with a Mitigation Action Plan in 2016/17	Encouraging sustainable development, good standards of design, renewable energy and overall sustainability will contribute to this action plan. Though a push on economic development could inhibit a reduction in greenhouse gases, the application of sustainability principles in development will lead to more efficient infrastructure. Scope for protection of or increase of carbon sinks in soil and trees.
Climate Change	National Adaptation Framework: Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland	2012	RoI	DCCAE	Ireland's first statutory National Adaptation Framework sets out a pathway to achieving a more resilient economy and society which is capable of dealing with the enormous challenges climate change is likely to present. This Framework, and its constituent Sectoral Adaptation Plans, will inform the significant capital investment in flood adaptation measures to be made over the lifetime of the Ten-Year Capital Plan.	Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate climate change adaptation in response to NI plans will support this. This will result in due course to the development of sectoral and local government Adaptation Strategies in Ireland which will also need to be taken into account to ensure that development in Northern Ireland does not conflict. A National Climate Change Adaptation Framework to build on and supersede this framework is being

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						developed for publication by December 2017 and this will also need to be considered.
Climate Change	The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015	2015	Rol	Irish Parliament	Ireland's national policy in response to climate change is determined, in part, by legislation. In particular, Ireland's first-ever dedicated climate change law, the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, provides for the making of: five-yearly National Mitigation Plans to specify the policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and a National Adaptation Framework to specify the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change.	While the legislation is for Ireland measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate climate change adaptation in response to NI policy and strategies will also support the objectives of this legislation.
Climate Change	Climate Action and Low-Carbon Development - National Policy Position Ireland	2014	Rol	Irish Parliament	The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050. Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.	Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate climate change adaptation in response to NI plans will also support this.
Water Resources	Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources	2012	Europe	EC	The "Blueprint" outlines actions that concentrate on better implementation of current water legislation, integration of water policy objectives into other policies, and filling the gaps in particular as regards water quantity and efficiency. The objective is to ensure that a sufficient quantity of good quality water is available for people's needs, the economy and the environment throughout the EU.	The Blueprint is expected to drive EU water policy over the long term. It is reflected in Sustainable Water.
Water Resources	Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks	2007	Europe	EC	Directive aims is to reduce and manage risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity and applies to inland waters as well as all coastal waters across the whole territory of the EU. It required identifying the relevant river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding, drawing up flood maps and establishing flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness between 2011 and 2015. This has been coordinated with Water Framework Directive River Basin Planning.	Allocate sites and develop policies that take account of the Directive. Integrating flood risk management into development planning will contribute to compliance with this directive.
Water Resources	Bathing Water Directive 2006/7/EC	2006	Europe	EC	The directive requires each country to identify its most popular bathing waters for regular testing. In Northern Ireland 23 sites are formally identified. It requires Members States to monitor and assess the bathing water for at least two parameters and to inform the public about bathing water quality and beach management, through bathing water profiles.	Designated bathing waters will be taken into account in plan preparation. These sites represent assets for health and well-being and tourism.
Water Resources	The Water Framework Directive - EU Directive 2000/60/EC (the Water Framework Directive)	2000	Europe	EC	Introduces 'good status', a more rigorous water quality standard. The Directive requires 'River Basin Management Plans' which should influence Development Plans and be influenced by them.	Contribute, wherever possible and appropriate, to achievement of water targets. Plan policies on the design, location of development & sustainable water management to ensure that the LDP does not create adverse pressures on the aquatic environment.
Water Resources	Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption	1998	Europe	EC	Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.	This is reflected in 'Sustainable Water' (see below).
Water Resources	Directive 91/676/EEC on nitrates from agricultural sources.	1991	Europe	EC	The Directive seeks to reduce the level of water pollution caused by the run off of nitrates into waterways/ground water from agricultural sources. In particular, it is about promoting better management of animal manures, chemical nitrogen fertilisers and other nitrogen-containing materials spread onto the land.	The LDP will take account of the Directive. The SEA will consider the likely significant effect of the plan on the aquatic environment.

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Water Resource	Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban waste water treatment	1991	Europe	EC	Protect the environment from the adverse effects of urban waste water collection, treatment and discharge, and discharge from certain industrial sectors.	This is reflected in 'Sustainable Water' (see below).
Water Resources	Sustainable Water - A Long-Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040)	2016	NI	Dfi	The Strategy presents a 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. the following four high level aims have been developed by government to cover the key water needs within a catchment and they form the chapters of the Long-Term Water Strategy: provide high quality sustainable supplies of drinking water to households, industry and agriculture; manage flood risk and drainage in a sustainable manner; achieve the environmental requirements of the Water Framework Directive in a sustainable manner; provide sustainable reliable water and sewerage services that meet customers' needs. A strategy implementation action plan will now be prepared containing actions aimed at delivering the high level proposed measures in the Strategy.	The strategy will inform the provision of infrastructure for water supply and treatment and approaches to flood risk management and environmental protection which will all inform the spatial capacity for development. The plan will need to enable development of infrastructure for example by accommodating investment in power, water and sewerage infrastructure in the interests of public health and to support measures relating to flood risk management and environmental protection.
Water Resource	Planning Policy Statement 15 (Revised) – Planning and Flood Risk	2014	NI	Dfi	Planning policies to minimise and manage flood risk to people, property and the environment.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Water Resources	Social and environmental guidance for Water and Sewerage Services (2015-2021)	2014	NI	Dfi	The purpose of this document is to provide the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation with guidance on the key environmental and social policies the Minister for Regional Development expects it to contribute to in carrying out its role in regulating the water industry during the 2015-21 period. Sets out how NI Water should deliver to meet International, National and Local legislative and strategic commitments.	The LDP may need to accommodate infrastructure development and capacity for development may be constrained by lack of capacity for water supply and waste water treatment.
Water Resources	Flood Maps (NI)	2011	NI	Dfi - Rivers Agency	Flood Maps highlights the areas throughout Northern Ireland that are prone to flooding and its potential adverse impacts. The map is designed to: help Rivers Agency and others to plan and manage our work to reduce flood risk; encourage people living and working in areas prone to flooding to find out more and take appropriate action; inform anyone applying for planning permission if flooding is likely to be an important consideration.	Provides information on vulnerability to flooding throughout Northern Ireland which informs constraints on development,
Water Resources	Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for NI	2011	NI	Dfi - Rivers Agency	A key objective of the PFRA was to identify areas of potentially significant flood risk for which detailed flood maps would be produced. On the basis of the PFRA, it was determined that detailed flood maps should be produced for 20 Significant Flood Risk Areas and 49 Areas for Further Study and this work was completed as required by the EU Directive in December 2013.	Identifies areas of potentially significant flood risk which informs constraints on development.
Water Resources	Northern Ireland Message on Water	2011	NI	Dfi, DAERA	In 2011 the UKCIP (formerly UK Climate Impacts Programme) decided to create a number of messages which could be used to engage with policy makers across the UK. NI Water, NIEA and Rivers Agency worked together to help prepare a headline message for Northern Ireland focused on Water and climate impacts. This describes the potential impacts of climate change on flood risk and stormwater capacity and identifies the need for investment to provide capacity to store and transfer surface water. This includes measures to deal with surface water runoff such as sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). It also considers potential effects on water quality and supply which may require the construction of more impounding reservoirs and raw water transfer pipelines.	Highlights potential long term problems and relating to water supply and flow including flooding investment needs to mitigate these.
Water Resource	Water and Sewerage Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	2016	NI	NI Executive	The Water and Sewerage Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 confers a power on NI Water to require the construction of sustainable drainage systems as a condition of agreeing to adopt a drain or sewer.	The overall aim of the Act is to make sustainable drainage the preferred option for dealing with surface water in all new

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					The Act also introduces new restrictions to the right to connect surface water sewers to the public sewer network. NI Water is able to take account of upstream sustainable drainage systems and is also able to refuse connection to the public sewer network if other suitable alternative means of dealing with surface water exist or could reasonably be provided. Suitable alternative means of dealing with surface water can include natural features or other arrangements known as soft sustainable drainage systems.	developments, where possible. This aim should be reflected in all Local Development Plans.
Water Resources	Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015	2015	NI	NI Executive	The Reservoirs Act aims to ensure that reservoirs are managed and operated to minimise any risk of flooding due to an uncontrolled release of water resulting from dam failure and therefore protecting people, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. The legislation will apply to reservoirs that are capable of holding 10,000 cubic metres or more of water above the natural level of the surrounding land. These reservoirs will be known as 'controlled reservoirs'.	Reservoirs falling under this Act may require to be identified in the LDP.
Water Resources	PC 15 NIW's Draft Expenditure Plan 2015-2021	2015	NI	NIW	This sets out NI waters long term strategy for providing water and wastewater services customers throughout Northern Ireland. Over the 6-year PC15 period investment will include 9 water treatment works schemes and upgrades to 19 large wastewater treatment works and 45 small works.	The LDP may need to accommodate infrastructure development and capacity for development may be constrained by lack of capacity for water supply and waste water treatment.
Water Resources	Our Strategy for NI Water	2014	NI	NIW	Sets out NI Water's long term strategy for providing water and wastewater services to customers in Northern Ireland. Its goal is 'to provide a range of essential services and associated contact channels which meet the rising expectations of our customers.' The strategy outlines the key challenges and opportunities facing the Northern Ireland water industry in the years to come. It outlines aspirations for customers in 2040 and priorities to 2020/21. Some of the priorities invest available funding to minimise constraints in development caused by lack of capacity at wastewater treatment works and in sewerage networks. Prioritise investment to address issues in the sewerage system which lead to flooding from sewers. Increase the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Invest in key water and wastewater treatment works and other critical sites to improve flood resilience. Expand use of sustainable wastewater treatment solutions which protect the environment, improve carbon efficiency and reduce operating costs. Undertake a focused programme of repair and renewal in relation to gravity sewers, CSO structures, pumping stations and syphons. Invest to improve our ability to transfer water from one area to another, remove bottlenecks and increase storage capacity.	The LDP may need to accommodate infrastructure development and capacity for development may be constrained by lack of capacity for water supply and waste water treatment.
Water Resources	NI Water Water Resources Management Plan 2012	2012	NI	NIW	The Water Resources Management Plan explains how NIW intends to meet the drinking water needs of the population of Northern Ireland over the period 2010 to 2035. The WRMP takes into account expected demands from forecast changes in population, housing and water usage and incorporates any predicted changes to our climate. The WRMP will be complemented by the company's Drought Plan (not published) that will set out the short-term operational steps that the company will take if a drought develops which increases the risk to security of supplies and whether capital investment is needed to mitigate such events. It provides a strategic plan for managing water resources by setting the framework at the Water Resource Zone level within which investment decisions should be taken. Investment at smaller spatial scales will still need to be justified through other more local studies, such as trunk main studies, detailed zonal	The LDP may need to accommodate water supply infrastructure development and capacity for development may be constrained by lack of capacity for water supply.

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					studies and targeted leakage initiatives. Preparation of a Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan is currently under way.	
Water Resources	North Eastern River Basin Management Plan 2015 - 2021	2015	Regional	DAERA	River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD), taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile. This plan aims to: Provide at least good status for all water bodies; Prevent deterioration in status; Promote sustainable development; Achieve specific standards for protected areas. The north eastern river basin district (NE RBD) covers an area of around 4000 km <sup>2</sup> , including 1000km <sup>2</sup> of marine waters. It takes in large parts of Counties Antrim and Down and a smaller portion of Londonderry. The principal river systems are the Lagan, Bush and Quoile as well as the smaller systems draining from the glens of Antrim, and the County Down Coastline. The NE RBD has an extensive coastline including Larne, Belfast and Strangford Loughs, with Lough Mourne, Clea Lakes and Silent Valley the main lakes.	The objectives of this plan will be taken into account in plan preparation so that development does not adversely affect its delivery. The siting and extent of development and measures to prevent pollution can help support delivery of the River Basin Management Plan objectives. Good water quality and aquatic habitats contribute to health and well-being and the economy.
Water	Pollution Reduction Programme - Belfast Lough	2015	Regional	DAERA	Programme established in order to reduce pollution in designated shellfish waters.	Consider any designated shellfish waters and actions required for the pollution reduction programme.
Water Resources	Pollution Reduction Programme - Strangford Lough	2015	Regional	DAERA	Pollution Reduction Programmes were established under the Shellfish Waters in order to reduce pollution in designated shellfish waters. As the Shellfish Waters Directive has been repealed and subsumed into the Water Framework Directive, the Programme will be reviewed in 2018, in line with the midterm of the second River Basin Cycle under Water Framework Directive (WFD). All Shellfish Water Protected Areas must be managed to ensure that they meet their objectives under WFD and meet at least Class B status under the EU Hygiene Regulations, whilst making progress towards the WFD guideline standard.	Consider any designated shellfish waters and actions required for the pollution reduction programme.
Water Resource	Eel management plan: North Eastern River Basin District	2010	Regional	DAERA	Measures to be carried out for the recovery of the stock of European eel including mitigation of hydropower and other barriers to passage.	May inform policies relating to hydropower and in river works. Also relevant to the Natural Resources Objective.
Water Resources	North Eastern River Basin Flood Risk Management Plan 2015 DARD	2015	Regional	DfI - Rivers Agency	The Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) is aimed at reducing the potential adverse consequences of significant floods on human health, economic activity, cultural heritage and the environment. There are three FRMPs which together highlight the flood hazards and risks in the 20 most significant flood risk areas in Northern Ireland from flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water and reservoirs. The plans identify the measures that will be undertaken over the next 6 years and they set out how the relevant authorities will work together and with communities to reduce the flood risks.	One of the aims of the FRMP is to inform the development planning process to ensure, as far as possible, that new zonings within local development plans are located outside flood risk areas. Northern Ireland's planning policies, informed by PPS15 and the SPPS adopt a precautionary approach to development that aims to prevent future development that may be at risk of flooding or which may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. This will be reflected in the LDP.
Natural Resources	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) Commission Precautionary Approach Agreement	1982	International	NASCO	NASCO and its Contracting Parties agree to adopt and apply a Precautionary Approach to the conservation, management and exploitation of salmon in order to protect the resource and preserve the environments in which it lives. Accordingly, NASCO and its Contracting Parties should be more cautious when information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures.	The LDP will take account of this. Increased fisheries resource will result in increased angling opportunities in the council area with the economic and social benefits this will bring.
Natural Resource	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) Commission	1982	International	NASCO	Aims to promote the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks in the North Atlantic Ocean through international co-operation.	The LDP will take account of this. DAERA is the lead authority in NI to take this forward and reports annually to the commission as to status of populations and actions taken to maintain and enhance them.

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	Convention For The Conservation Of Salmon In The North Atlantic Ocean					Increased fisheries resource will result in increased angling opportunities in the council area with the economic and social benefits this will bring.
Natural Resources	The Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan for 2016-2024	2016	International	Ramsar Convention	The Fourth Ramsar Strategic plan lays out a new vision under the Convention mission, with four overall goals and 19 specific targets which are designed to support the efforts of Parties, partners and other stakeholders in preventing, stopping and reversing the global decline of wetlands. The strategic goals are Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss And Degradation; Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network; Wisely Using All Wetlands; Enhancing Implementation.	These objectives are reflected in NI strategies and plans.
Natural Resources	The Ramsar Convention. The convention of Wetland of International Importance (1971 and amendments)	1971	International	Ramsar Convention	Seeks to protect and conserve wetlands, particularly those established as a habitat for waterfowl. The Convention uses a broad definition of wetlands which includes all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, estuaries, tidal flats, and all human-made sites such as artificial coastal lagoons.	The LDP must reflect the Ramsar designations, and the need to protect and conserve them. Many Ramsar designated sites are also SACs or SPAs.
Natural Resources	Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic Area	2013	Europe	EC	The strategy for the Atlantic covers coastal, territorial and jurisdictional waters of five EU Member States and focuses on: Managing human activities that must deliver a healthy and productive ecosystem, through developing fisheries and aquaculture but also forecasting future change in oceanic circulation and climate; Reducing Europe's carbon footprint through climate change mitigation, for example expansion of offshore wind farms and tidal technology in the Atlantic, but also changes in maritime transport will contribute to carbon reduction; Developing the sustainable exploitation of the Atlantic's seafloor natural resources; and Prepare for threats and emergencies in the Atlantic whether caused by accidents, natural disasters or criminal activity such as oil spills. It promotes the implementation of climate change mitigation and seeks economic and social progress in conjunction with a healthy environment.	There is potential for the LDP to support the objectives of this plan through its own coastal, marine, industrial or natural heritage policies. However, due to the interconnectivity of marine habitats, it is possible for developments or proposals arising under the LDP to have negative impacts on the wider European marine resource, its species and dependent businesses or individuals.
Natural Resources	EU Biodiversity Strategy	2011	Europe	EC	The EU Biodiversity Strategy aims to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and help stop global biodiversity loss by 2020. It reflects the commitments taken by the EU in 2010, within the international Convention on Biological Diversity. The six targets to address the main drivers of biodiversity loss, and reduce the main pressures on nature and ecosystem services include protect species and habitats, maintain and restore ecosystems and combat invasive alien species. The strategy promotes the increased use of green infrastructure. A 2015 European Parliament Resolution on the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 'notes that the 2020 targets will not be achieved without additional, substantial and continuous efforts' and among many statements 'Stresses that habitat destruction is the most important factor driving biodiversity loss and is a particular priority when it comes to addressing this loss' and 'Deplores the fact that, in Europe, around a quarter of wild species are at risk of extinction and many ecosystems are degraded, giving rise to severe social and economic damage for the EU.'	Natural heritage policies which will afford some protection from inappropriate development are included in the SPSPS which informs the context for the LDP.
Natural Resources	Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (Codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended)	2009	Europe	EC	The Directive provides a framework for the conservation and management of, and human interactions with, wild birds in Europe. It sets broad objectives for a wide range of activities, although the precise legal mechanisms for their achievement are at the discretion of each Member State. In Northern Ireland, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented	Any development project or plan likely to have a significant effect (either directly or indirectly) on a Natura 2000 site must be subject to assessment. This will be taken into account through consideration of all SPAs and by Habitats Regulations Assessment of the LDP.

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					through the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, and The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & etc.) Regulations 1995.	
Natural Resource	European Eel Regulation 2007 (EC) No 1100/2007	2007	Europe	EC	Aims to establish measures for the recovery of the stock of European Eel and requires member states to prepare and implement eel management plans. As a result, eel fisheries are now managed under long-term plans drawn up by the EU countries at river-basin level.	The LDP will take account of any plan arising from the Regulations
Natural Resources	Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora	1992	Europe	EC	The main aim of the Habitats Directive is to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring Member States to take measures to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species listed on the Annexes to the Directive at a favourable conservation status, introducing robust protection for those habitats and species of European importance. The Directive creates a network of sites in Europe for the conservation of biodiversity. In applying these measures Member States are required to take account of economic, social and cultural requirements, as well as regional and local characteristics. These sites are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (collectively known as 'Natura 2000' sites).	Any development project or plan likely to have a significant effect (either directly or indirectly) on a Natura 2000 site must be subject to assessment. This will be taken into account through consideration of all SACs and by Habitats Regulations Assessment of the LDP.
Natural Resources	UK Marine Policy Statement	2011	UK	Four Nations (DAERA)	The MPS will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high level marine objectives and thereby: Promote sustainable economic development; Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and our heritage assets; and Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues	Any development arising from the LDP will need to be in conformity with the MPS and NI Marine Plan (once the latter is adopted) in order to protect the marine environment, inclusive of the historic environment and heritage assets. Also relevant to the Historic Environment Objective.
Natural Resources	(draft) Marine Plan for Northern Ireland	2018	NI	DAERA	The Marine Plan for Northern Ireland will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of our marine area through a strategic framework with spatial elements. It will consist of a series of policy statements covering cross-cutting marine planning issues that apply to all decision making in the marine area and to relevant sectors. It will not bring forward new policies governed by other departments but will align with and contribute to the policy objectives for key marine activities as set out in the UK Marine Policy Statement and will support and complement existing plans and policies. The draft Marine Plan was published for consultation in May 2018.	Public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions, which affect or might affect the marine area, must do so in line with marine policy documents, such as Marine Plans and the Marine Policy Statement (MPS), unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. A public authority must explain any decision not made in line with an adopted marine plan or the MPS.
Natural Resources	Valuing Nature - A Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020	2015	NI	DAERA	A strategy for Northern Ireland to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy. Contains 57 actions to impact positively on the loss of biodiversity up to 2020.	Actions include: Restoring ancient woodland and encouraging peatland and wetland habitat restoration with emphasis on an ecosystems approach. LDP proposals and policies should support delivery of actions where appropriate.
Natural Resources	Strategy for Marine Protected Areas in the Northern Ireland Inshore Region	2014	NI	DAERA	Aims to help protect and improve ecosystems in the Northern Ireland inshore region (i.e. within 12 nautical miles) and fulfil international and national legal obligations through a network of Marine Protected Areas (SACs, SPAs, ASSIs, Ramsar sites and Marine Conservation Zones). The Department will develop, in consultation with stakeholders, recommendations for management actions and measures necessary to deliver the conservation objectives for MCZ features.	Public authorities have a duty, when carrying out their functions and when permitting others to carry out regulated activities in relation to MCZs, to ensure that such activities are undertaken in a way that furthers the conservation objectives of a site, or where this is not possible least hinders the achievement of these objectives. This will be taken into account in preparing LDP proposals.

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Natural Resources	DOE (2013) Northern Ireland Invasive Species Strategy	2013	NI	DAERA	In response to the threats posed by invasive alien species the Department of Environment published 'An Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Northern Ireland'. The aim of the Strategy is to minimise the risk posed, and reduce the negative impacts caused, by invasive alien species in Northern Ireland.	Invasive species may be a constraint for some sites and consideration will need to be given to measures to minimise the risks caused by invasive species.
Natural Resources	Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000	2013	NI	DAERA	The Prioritised Action Framework sets out the prioritised actions for managing the Natura 2000 network to be taken to address unfavourable conservation status of habitats in Annex I and species in Annex II of the Habitats Directive and Annex 1 of the Birds Directive. These are intended to help achieve the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2000. Priorities include measures such as agri-environmental schemes and an ecosystems approach. It states that the Department will publish guidance ...to advise developers and other key stakeholders ..., especially those who regulate development, to encourage them to minimise adverse impacts on habitats and species and to provide for biodiversity where possible.	This will be taken into account through Habitats Regulations Assessment of the LDP and planning proposals carried out under it which may have a significant effect on site selection features of European sites. Any advice from the Department will be taken into account.
Natural Resources	Draft Northern Ireland Marine Position Paper	2012	NI	DAERA	The Position Paper set out the Executive's objectives and lead departments for the sustainable development of the marine area including energy production and infrastructure development; tourism and recreation; port development; sewerage services; flood risk management and drainage; integrated coastal zone management; climate change; coastal change; and protection of the historic environment. It was intended to identify the policy context within which a Northern Ireland Marine Plan will be developed. The status of this document is not clear.	LDP proposals and policies may directly support natural and cultural heritage aspects of Marine Position Paper, or have an indirect relationship, for example regarding outdoor recreation, access, transportation and sustainable development. Also relevant to the Historic Environment Objective.
Natural Resources	An Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006 – 2026	2006	NI	DAERA	Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) aims to establish sustainable levels of economic and social activity in coastal areas while protecting the coastal environment. ICZM seeks to reconcile the different policies that have an effect on the coast and to establish a framework that facilitates the integration of the interests and responsibilities of those involved in the development, management and use of the coast.	LDP proposals and policies may directly support natural and cultural heritage aspects of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy, or have an indirect relationship, for example regarding outdoor recreation, access, transportation and sustainable development.
Natural Resources	Ireland's Marine Strategy Framework Directive Article 19 Report Initial Assessment, GES and Targets and Indicators	2013	Rol	DECLG, MI	The first step in the implementation of the MSFD in Ireland was an Initial Assessment of Ireland's marine waters and establishment of a comprehensive set of environmental targets and associated indicators for the marine waters so as to guide progress towards achieving Good Environmental Status. Each state is required to ensure they take appropriate action by 2020 to maintain or achieve Good Environmental Status.	Should an LDP have specific proposals for its coastline, including facilitating developments that utilise the marine environment, these could be either supportive or in conflict with the objectives of the Directive.
Natural Resources	Northern Ireland's Geodiversity Charter: safeguarding our rocks and landscape	2017	NI	DfE	Guidance document that sets out a clear ambition to recognise geodiversity as a vital and integral part of the economy, environment heritage and future sustainable development. This is necessary to safeguard and manage geodiversity for both current and future generations.	May inform decision making and support policy at strategic level for the conservation management of geodiversity.
Natural Resources	Planning Policy Statement 2 – Planning and Nature Conservation	2013	NI	DfI	Policies for the conservation of natural heritage.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Natural Resources	Forest Service - Down Plan 2015	2015	Regional	DAERA	Forest Management plans set out the management objectives for the forests and woodlands Forest Service looks after. Plans are currently prepared for Down, Armagh, Sperrin, West Tyrone, East Fermanagh and East Tyrone.	Relevant plans may inform land use, landscape and recreational use of forests in the plan area.
Natural Resources	Strangford Lough Marine Protected Area	2017	Regional	Strangford Lough and	The Strategy promotes a strong and diversified economy for rural areas through its Strategic Policy Guidelines, and it is strongly supportive of sustainable, environmentally sensitive tourism as an economic resource. It also recognises the importance of conserving high quality	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.

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	Management Scheme (March 2017)			Lecale Partnership	environments such as Strangford Lough. The forthcoming Area Plan will be required to accommodate and to regulate changes in urban and rural environments closely associated with Strangford Lough without adversely affecting the conservation status of the Lough.	
Natural Resources	Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2017	2013	Council	Ards and North Down Borough Council	Not Available	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.
Landscape	European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000)	2000	Europe	COE	The European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. It covers all landscapes, including natural, managed, urban and peri-urban areas, and special, everyday and also degraded landscape. Articles 5 and 6 commit signatory states to a number of actions which include the need to recognise landscapes in law, to establish policies aimed at landscape planning, protection and management and the integration of landscape into other policy areas.	The LDP should support the aims of the convention, seeking to protect, manage and enhance the landscape.
Landscape	Protection of Wrecks Act 1973	1973	UK	DCMS/DfC	The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 (c.33) is an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom which provides protection for designated shipwrecks. Section 1 of the act provides for wrecks to be designated because of historical, archaeological or artistic value. Section 2 provides for designation of dangerous sites. Wreck sites must have a known location in order to be designated.	Wrecks and wreckage assessed to be of historical, archaeological or artistic importance can be protected by way of site specific designation. It is an offence to carry out certain activities within a defined area surrounding a designated wreck, unless a licence for those activities has been obtained through DfC HED. Spatial scale: UK. Current lead: DCMS/DfC. The Local Plan should take into account any current or future designated historic shipwrecks.
Landscape	Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment	2016	NI	DAERA	The purpose of the Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) is to provide an evidence base which can be used equally by planners, developers and the public. It describes forces for change through climate change, land use, agriculture, energy and invasive species and outlines the types of ecosystem services provided in each region. The assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique. This evidence base can be used to enable informed decisions to be made about the future protection, management and sustainable development of Northern Ireland's landscapes and can be complemented by more detailed local studies.	The RLCA is not policy, but it provides analysis of all of Northern Ireland Landscapes at a regional level which provides further evidence to inform the LDP. It helps to indicate the linkages between the landscape and other assets, such as the historic environment and natural resources. Also relevant to the Natural Resources and Historic Environment Objectives.
Landscape	Northern Ireland Seascape Character Assessment	2014	NI	DAERA	Twenty-four different regional seascape character areas have been identified round the coast of Northern Ireland. The Seascape Character Assessment describes these areas, their key characteristics and the different influences that mould each as a unique part of the coastline.	This can inform planning of development in the coastal zone. The description and mapping of regional seascape character can provide evidence to assist in responding to the increasing demands being placed upon the related marine and terrestrial environments. This can also help to inform the planning, design and management of a range of projects taking place on and around the coastline.
Landscape	Northern Ireland's Landscape Charter	2014	NI	DAERA	Invites organisations and individuals to sign the charter and commit to delivering its vision by approaches including the following: adopt and promote best practice to ensure all development works with and enhances sense of place; ensure sense of place is central to all decision making about landscape and empower people locally to be involved.	This requires consideration of all landscapes to enhance them, respect sense of place and promote sympathetic design.

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Landscape	Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment	2000	NI	DAERA	The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment subdivided the countryside into 130 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), 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. While the original assessment was published in 2000 many landscape character areas have been updated more recently.	This is not policy but it provides a comprehensive analysis of all of Northern Ireland Landscapes, including their vulnerability and sensitivity to change which informs the state of the landscape, capacity for development and areas meriting protection. Also relevant to the Natural Resources and Historic Environment Objectives.
Landscape	Building on Tradition: A Sustainable Design Guide for the NI Countryside	2012	NI	Dfi	Building on Tradition: A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside' provides assistance to all those involved with sustainable development in the Northern Ireland countryside to understand the requirements of PPS21. The guide promotes quality and sustainable building design in Northern Ireland's countryside.	This can be used to inform siting and design standards for development in the countryside to achieve better landscape integration.
Landscape	Draft Strangford And Lecale AONB Action Plan 2017 - 2022	2017	Regional	Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership	This Action Plan is part of a suite of documents relating to the Strangford and Lecale AONB including the Strangford and Lecale AONB Management Plan. It identifies which agencies will be responsible for / lead with carrying out actions (grouped under various outcome categories) and timescales for completion. Most of the Actions in this Plan are subject to external funding from a range of sources, and as such their implementation is uncertain.	This is a non-statutory plan however the aims of this plan should be taken into account in LDP preparation. The LDP can help to support the aims of the plan. Also relevant to the Natural Resources Objective.
Historic Environment	Xi'an Declaration On The Conservation Of The Setting Of Heritage Structures, Sites And Areas	2005	International	ICMOS	To contribute through legislation, policies, planning processes and management to better protect and conserve the world's heritage structures, sites and areas in their settings.	LDP can assist with implementing the measures outlined in the agreement: Acknowledging the contribution of setting to the significance of heritage monuments, sites and areas; Understanding, documenting and interpreting the settings in diverse contexts; Developing planning tools and practices to conserve and manage settings; Monitoring and managing change affecting setting; Working with local, interdisciplinary and international communities for co-operation and awareness in conserving and managing setting.
Historic Environment	UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)	2001	International	UNESCO	The Convention sets out basic principles for the protection of underwater cultural heritage. Amongst its main principles are an obligation to preserve underwater cultural heritage, with in situ preservation as first option, and a ban on its inappropriate commercial exploitation. While the UK has not ratified the Convention, it publicly supports the majority of its articles and has publicly recognised the Annex or 'Rules' of the Convention as being 'best practice' for archaeology	The Local Plan will recognise the Annex or 'Rules' of the Convention as being 'best practice' for underwater archaeology.
Historic Environment	Rules annexed to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)	2001	International	UNESCO	The Annex to the 2001 Convention contains detailed practical guidelines entitled "Rules concerning activities directed at underwater cultural heritage. They are highly useful and widely recognised and applied by underwater archaeologists. The Rules contain regulations as to: how a project is to be designed; the competence and the qualifications required for persons undertaking interventions; planning the funding of excavation projects; documentation of archaeological excavations under water; and methodologies on conservation and site management.	The Local Plan will recognise the Annex or 'Rules' of the Convention as being 'best practice' for underwater archaeology.
Historic Environment	The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)	1972	International	UNESCO	The most significant feature of the 1972 World Heritage Convention is that it links together in a single document the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties. The Convention recognises the way in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two. The programme catalogues, names, and conserves sites of outstanding cultural or natural importance to the common culture and heritage of humanity. To be selected, a World Heritage Site must be an already	This convention is the mechanism for the identification and establishment of World Heritage Sites (WHS). There is currently one WHS in NI. The LDP may recognise sites which are of sufficient national or global importance to merit their inclusion on the Tentative List for World Heritage Sites. The LDP may help support the actions required for sites to receive nomination to the Tentative

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					classified landmark, unique in some respect as a geographically and historically identifiable place having special cultural or physical significance (such as an ancient ruin or historical structure, building, city, complex, desert, forest, island, lake, monument, mountain, or wilderness area). It may signify a remarkable accomplishment of humanity, and serve as evidence of our intellectual history on the planet.	List by preserving or enhancing their cultural heritage or natural heritage value.
Historic Environment	European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992)	1992	Europe	COE	The new text (revision of the 1985 Granada Convention) makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. It is concerned in particular with arrangements to be made for co-operation among archaeologists and town and regional planners in order to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. Protection of the archaeological heritage, including any physical evidence of the human past that can be investigated archaeologically both on land and underwater. Creation of archaeological reserves and conservation of excavated sites.	Consideration should be given to conservation of archaeological resources including potential archaeological reserves. Article 5 seeks the integrated conservation of archaeological heritage through its consideration in the preparation of local development plans and the creation of planning policies designed to ensure well balanced strategies for the protection, conservation and enhancement of sites of archaeological interest; and highlights the need of devising plans to avoid adverse impact.
Historic Environment	The European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention)	1987	Europe	COE	The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.	Consideration should be given to conservation of architectural resources. Article 10 states the protection of architectural heritage as an essential town and country planning objective and ensure that this requirement is taken into account at all stages, both in the drawing up of development plans and in the procedures for authorising work.
Historic Environment	Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005)	2005	Europe	Council of Europe	The Faro Convention emphasizes the important aspects of heritage as they relate to human rights and democracy. It promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society. The Convention encourages us to recognise that objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent.	Member States agree to emphasise the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society. Examples of specific implications with regard to LDP include Article 5b "enhance the value of the cultural heritage through its identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation"; Article 5e "Promote cultural heritage protection as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity"; Article 8d "Promote the objective of quality in contemporary additions to the environment without endangering its cultural values"; and Article 9a "Promote respect for the integrity of the cultural heritage by ensuring that decisions about change include an understanding of the cultural values involved".
Historic Environment	Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	1986	UK	UK Gov.	Under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 all aircraft that have crashed whilst in military service are automatically protected. Maritime vessels (e.g. ships and boats) lost during military service are not automatically protected. The MoD can, however, designate wrecks lost within the last 200 years, whose position is known, as 'controlled sites', and can designate named vessels lost on or after 4th August 1914 (Britain's entry into World War I), whose location is unknown, as 'protected places'. It is not necessary to demonstrate the presence of	This may apply to military shipwrecks and aircraft discovered in the nearshore area and the larger freshwater lakes of NI.

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					human remains for wrecks to be designated as either 'controlled sites' or 'protected places'. It also covers vessels of a foreign state e.g., German U-Boats	
Historic Environment	Historic Buildings of Local Importance: A guide to their Identification and Protection	2017	NI	DfC	This good practice guide aims to assist councils achieve a consistent approach when identifying and protecting Historic Buildings of Local Importance.	One way to protect unlisted historic buildings of local importance is to include a policy in the Local Development Plan.
Historic Environment	Regeneration: The Value of our Built Heritage. Position Paper 2017	2017	NI	DfC	This paper sets out the potential value of effective architectural regeneration throughout our villages, towns and cities. It highlights Northern Ireland's unique architectural heritage as well as the social and economic value of older building stock, and the added qualities it can bring to our communities.	Paper recommends that heritage buildings are incorporated and made a priority in new council community planning. The protection and promotion of Heritage should be integrated into community plans and new planning policy. Policy needs to be integrated and support building users.
Historic Environment	Protocol for the Care of the Government Historic Estate Northern Ireland Guidance February 2012	2012	NI	DfC	A document set out by the Executive explaining how departments and agencies will put their commitment into practice for caring and protecting historic estates. Includes protecting heritage assets through regular condition surveys, maintenance and renovation using appropriately experienced practitioners and working to keep buildings in active use.	This document is recommended as good practice for councils to adopt.
Historic Environment	Study of the economic value of Northern Ireland's historic environment	2012	NI	DfC	The purpose of this study is to help make the case for investment in the Northern Ireland historic environment. The four objectives of the study are to: (1.) Determine the current value of economic activity generated by Northern Ireland's historic environment and its distribution; (2.) Gauge the level of historic environment-related employment in Northern Ireland, including indirect employment, the distribution of this employment, and its relative importance compared with other sectors; (3.) Conduct a credible analysis of the wider community benefits that Northern Ireland's historical environment provides to the economy using a series of case studies, and (4.) Make an assessment of the potential for the use of Northern Ireland's historic environment to aid sustainable growth of the economy and make recommendations as to how this could be realised.	This document can help to inform the LDP and identify areas where links can be made between the Historic Environment and other themes, e.g. community, economic development, tourism, etc.
Historic Environment	Planning Policy Statement 23 – Enabling Development	2014	NI	DfI	PPS23 sets out planning policy for assessing proposals for Enabling Development in support of the re-use, restoration or refurbishment of heritage assets such as historic buildings, scheduled monuments, industrial heritage and historic parks, gardens and demesnes. It provides a policy to maintain and enhance the standard of a wide range of community facilities in Northern Ireland including cultural, educational, social, health, built heritage and leisure facilities and the restoration and creation of wildlife habitat.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
Historic Environment	Living Places - An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for NI	2014	NI	DfI	Aims to establish the key principles behind good place making to inform 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 the guide is urban areas, by which is meant all of our cities, towns, villages and neighbourhoods. It recognises the wider economic, cultural and community benefits of achieving excellence in the stewardship and design of these important places, be they existing or newly proposed.	Principles inform spatial, design and policy measures that can be incorporated in the LDP to maximise contribution to strengthening society, protecting cultural heritage, promoting well-being, enhancing access and creating economic growth.
Historic Environment	Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning, Archaeology and Built Heritage (and Addendum ATC)	1999	NI	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for the protection and conservation of archaeological remains and features of the built heritage.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.

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Historic Environment	Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995	1995	NI	NI Executive	Article 3 of this Order provides for the scheduling of monuments for protection. Monuments are selected for scheduling on the basis of published criteria, which are found in Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6): Planning, Archaeology and Built Heritage (1999).	There is a requirement for Scheduled Monument Consent for works within Scheduled Monument designated areas. This would be a consideration in zoning ground including or immediate to scheduled areas.
Historic Environment	Strangford Lough and Lecale Heritage Management Strategy 2013 -2018	2013	Regional	Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership	The landscape, built heritage and natural environment of Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are fundamental to the well-being and vibrancy of local communities. Our heritage attracts and interests visitors, and generates wealth. For these reasons, as well as for their intrinsic value, we must work together to protect and enhance our heritage, while fostering appropriate human activities and developments.	This is a non-statutory plan however the aims of this plan should be taken into account in LDP preparation. The LDP can help to support the aims of the plan.
Neighbouring LDPs	Belfast City Council Local Development Plan Draft Plan Strategy	2030	Council	Belfast City Council	The draft Plan Strategy sets out the overall aspirations for the future development of Belfast and policies to be used in assessing planning applications.	A council may have regard to other plans and topic based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross boundary implications for its neighbouring council. A council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the DPDs of neighbouring councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher level regional planning aims and objectives. The LDP should have regard for and should not conflict with the Development Plan Documents of neighbouring councils.
Neighbouring LDPs	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Local Development Plan Preferred Options Paper	2030	Council	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	Consultation paper designed to stimulate debate and encourage feedback on key issues of strategic significance which are likely to influence the direction of the Council's new Local Development Plan. In so doing, it will help to inform the first stage of the Local Development Plan, the Plan Strategy.	A council may have regard to other plans and topic based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross boundary implications for its neighbouring council. A council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the DPDs of neighbouring councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher level regional planning aims and objectives. The LDP should have regard for and should not conflict with the Development Plan Documents of neighbouring councils.
Neighbouring LDPs	Newry Mourne and Down District Council Local Development Plan Preferred Options Paper	2030	Council	Newry Mourne and Down District Council	Consultation paper designed to stimulate debate and encourage feedback on key issues of strategic significance which are likely to influence the direction of the Council's new Local Development Plan. In so doing, it will help to inform the first stage of the Local Development Plan, the Plan Strategy.	A council may have regard to other plans and topic based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross boundary implications for its neighbouring council. A council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the DPDs of neighbouring councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher level regional

	TITLE	YEAR	SPATIAL SCALE	LEAD ORGANISATION	OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR LDP
						<p>planning aims and objectives. The LDP should have regard for and should not conflict with the Development Plan Documents of neighbouring councils.</p>

## APPENDIX 5: SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL GUIDE FOR ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL PREFERRED OPTIONS PAPER

### Key Issues and Appraisal Prompts

#### 1. The objective for sustainable development is **to improve health and well-being.**

##### Rationale

Public policy seeks to increase healthy life expectancy, reduce preventable deaths, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities. Evidence shows that there is a need to address obesity, increase physical activity and reduce inequalities in health. It is also necessary to provide for the needs of an aging population and minimize the detrimental impacts of noise. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is clean and attractive; encourages healthy lifestyles; protects tranquil and quiet areas and enables access to health care facilities for all.

##### Key issues

- By 2039 the population of the district is projected to have increased from its 2016 level by 2.3% or 3,654 which is significantly lower than the population increase projected for NI with a gradual decline from 2030.
- Population trends indicate an ageing population with potentially a higher number of older people, e.g. the proportion of those aged 65 and over is expected to grow from 20% in 2016 to over 28% by 2032.
- An increase in the proportion of older people in the population will increase the requirement for care. There is a need to meet the future needs for care and support for older people at home or in communal homes and to improve access to health services, and other facilities and services.
- The Borough has the joint highest proportion of people (21%) reporting that they never spent time outdoors in 2016 although more people (69%) than the NI average spent time outdoors at least once a week.
- Participation rates in physical activity are higher than the NI average however they are significantly lower than recommended minimum levels.
- There is a need to promote and incentivise regular participation in physical activity through provision of and ensuring good accessibility to sports facilities, open space, play areas, green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes.
- Ards and North Down has an accessible natural environment, particularly to the coast and sea, with numerous open spaces, walking and cycling trails. Baseline information, recorded for BMAP, however points to a deficit of open space, sport and outdoor recreation provision.
- Less than half of children in NI walk or cycle to school.
- There is a particular need for children to have accessible play in places where they feel safe.
- There will be an increasing need to create accessible means for older people to engage in physical activity to prolong their healthy lives.
- Development should be sited and designed to connect with public open space, walking and cycling routes and other recreational facilities where possible.
- Levels of adult obesity in NI and the UK are high by global standards, reflecting poor diet and a relatively sedentary lifestyle.
- Obesity in children in the 20% most deprived SOAs in Ards and North down is higher than the NI average, adult obesity is declining and at just under 10%.
- Mental health indicators on average are better than the NI average but there is evidence of poorer mental health in the most deprived part of the council.
- Noise and environmental quality are not identified as being significant adverse effects at present however they can impact on health and therefore environmental quality should be improved, or sustained where it is good, to minimise adverse health impacts.
- Conor Park/Stricklands, Glen Bangor West is a designated quiet area which should be taken into account in planning development.
- Road safety for all users should be a key consideration of planning and design.
- The location of and access to emergency services can impact on response times. Rural areas require accessibility to general practice and non-emergency healthcare services.

- Generally measures of health are better for the council compared to the Northern Ireland overall population across most of the indicators used for measuring population health. There are however inequalities in health and well-being with most measures of health and life expectancy being significantly worse in the most deprived areas.
- Good spatial planning can reduce health inequalities by providing a high standard of design and place making, open space, capacity for any additional services required and accessibility.
- Need to plan the relative location of industry and housing, open space and public facilities to minimise use conflicts.
- There are small parts of the Borough such as the southern Ards Peninsula where there is a moderate probability of the incidence of Radon at actionable levels.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Improve access to health care</li> <li>b) Reduce response times for the emergency services</li> <li>c) Provide opportunities for and encourage healthy lifestyles and physical activity for all ages</li> <li>d) Create open space with public access</li> <li>e) Increase social contact and intergenerational contact (including family cohesion and care)</li> <li>f) Provide suitable accommodation for those with long term health problems or disability</li> <li>g) Maintain good air quality</li> <li>h) Avoid or reduce noise impacts that may affect health</li> <li>i) Improve ability to reach schools and workplaces by active travel</li> <li>j) Reduce the risk of traffic accidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>k) Reduce access to health care</li> <li>l) Increase response times for the emergency services</li> <li>m) Discourage healthy lifestyles and physical activity</li> <li>n) Reduce open space with public access</li> <li>o) Decrease social contact and intergenerational contact</li> <li>p) Shortage of suitable accommodation for those with long term health problems or disability</li> <li>q) Decrease in air quality</li> <li>r) Increase noise impacts that may affect health</li> <li>s) Make it harder to reach schools and workplaces via active travel</li> <li>t) Increase the risk of traffic accidents</li> </ul>

2. The objective for sustainable development is **to strengthen society**

**Rationale**

Regional policy is directed towards improving community relations and creating a safe society which is more united. Success will be represented by places which are inclusive, respect culture and identity, promote social integration and create a sense of pride. They will also be designed to feel safe and to reduce opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.

**Key issues**

- 80% of our residents live in the northern 25% of the Borough and the remaining population is quite dispersed with a quarter of the population in rural areas. This can result in some individuals and communities experiencing rural isolation.
- There will be an increased need to accommodate those with disability.
- Protestant and other Christian is the predominant community across the Borough.
- The community is less ethnically diverse than NI as a whole however the needs of minority groups should be taken into account.
- There is a commitment to promote social inclusion through quality shared and neutral space throughout the whole of the Borough where everyone feels welcome.
- Figures for recorded crime have been on the increase since 2012/13 and levels of anti-social behaviour are high. 29% of people in 2013 said fear of crime had an impact on the quality of their life. Harbour 1 and Central Ards were the most affected areas for crime and disorder.

**Appraisal Prompts**

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Promote inclusion of all groups b) Retain, create, or enhance shared space c) Increase accessibility to shared space d) Promote positive social interaction e) Give rural communities appropriate access to facilities and services f) Reduce the factors causing inequalities g) Meet identified needs that will reduce inequalities experienced by the most deprived communities	h) Inhibit inclusion of all groups i) Shared space reduced or deteriorates j) Decrease accessibility to shared space k) Decrease positive social interaction l) Rural communities less access to facilities and services m) Exacerbate the factors causing inequalities n) Maintains or increases inequalities experienced by the most deprived communities

3. The objective for sustainable development is to provide good quality, sustainable housing.

Rationale

The population is growing and therefore there is ongoing need for new housing in locations that meet regional policy, are accessible and balance the needs of society and the environment. The make-up of households is changing therefore design needs to meet long term requirements with good quality build to be sustainable. This objective should reduce homelessness and ensure decent, affordable homes with a mix of types.

Key issues

- The growing aging population combined with the decreasing household size will increase demand for smaller households.
- Increasing demand for smaller accommodation could lead to lack of supply and make smaller accommodation less affordable.
- The declining rural population and increased pressure for housing in urban areas could increase the rural isolation felt by some communities.
- Affordable housing need is highest in Bangor Urban although there is also need for additional housing across all tenures in this location.
- Lack of land availability in areas of high demand could lead to unaffordability in some areas.
- 20% of households within Ards and North Down experience fuel poverty.
- Areas of deprivation in terms of living environment were identified in MDMNI 2017.
- In recent years, affordable housing need in Ards and North Down has been delivered by housing associations on Housing Executive land. Increasingly, areas of housing need are emerging in locations where the Housing Executive does not own land.
- Demand for affordable housing that is not available could lead to increased demand in the private rented sector which could lead to affordability issues.
- Some sites zoned for housing within the Borough have had zero development, identifying why land has gone undeveloped may be necessary when considering future land zoning.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Enable/encourage a variety of household types and size</li> <li>b) Enable/encourage affordable housing</li> <li>c) Help to reduce homelessness</li> <li>d) Meet the needs of specific groups e.g. single people, couples, retired people, disabled</li> <li>e) Provide housing which meets locally identified needs</li> <li>f) Reduce the number of unfit homes</li> <li>g) Help to fill any vacant dwellings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>h) Inhibits a variety of housing types</li> <li>i) Does not promote affordable housing</li> <li>j) May increase homelessness</li> <li>k) Does not meet the needs of specific groups e.g. single people, couples, retired people, disabled</li> <li>l) Housing provision does not meet local needs</li> <li>m) Doesn't help to reduce number of unfit homes or use vacant dwellings</li> </ul>

4. The objective for sustainable development is to enable access to high quality education

Rationale

Good education improves opportunities for employment and also contributes to avoidance of poverty and healthier lifestyles. The provision of suitable accommodation for educational establishments in appropriate, accessible locations should play a part in making schools more sustainable and reducing inequalities in education.

Key issues

- A number of post-primary schools are facing sustainability challenges.
- The current Strategic Area Plan has identified potential for Irish Medium and Integrated school development.
- The current Strategic Area Plan has also identified potential for shared education solutions which provide sustainable schools.
- Although the council area has a high level of educational achievement in comparison to the NI average, this is not consistent across the Borough.
- Sharing facilities has been recognised as a way to promote a more cohesive and tolerant society and make better use of the resources available to education.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Improve education level and employability of the population</li> <li>b) Promote access to education</li> <li>c) Promote access to skills training</li> <li>d) Help rural communities access education and skills training</li> <li>e) Improve opportunities for multiple use of facilities</li> <li>f) Help educational establishments to provide modern sustainable accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) Does not help improve education level and employability of the population</li> <li>h) Decrease access to education and skills training</li> <li>i) Makes rural communities access education and skills training harder</li> <li>j) Under use of public facilities</li> <li>k) Inhibit provision of suitable educational facilities</li> </ul>

5. The objective for sustainable development is to enable sustainable economic growth.

Rationale

Regional policy seeks to develop a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy. It is necessary to provide suitable locations for employment, with flexibility where necessary, to reflect current and future distribution of jobs across sectors, encourage new business startups, facilitate innovation, regenerate areas, attract investment and make employment as accessible as possible for all. This will reduce unemployment and poverty by helping more people to earn a living and increase their income.

Key issues

- Identifying and zoning appropriate land for development is a vital part of creating the right conditions to create and sustain economic activity that meets local employment needs whilst considering opportunities for regeneration.
- In selecting land for development, it is important to provide sites with quality environments that are readily accessible to the key transport corridors.
- Proposed new employment locations should be readily accessible by active travel and/or public transport.
- NI has seen a decrease in primary sector and manufacturing jobs in recent decades. However there are a number of successful strong manufacturing and agri-food businesses in the Council area which should be supported and growth in these areas encouraged.
- National and regional trends indicate an ongoing shift towards tertiary sector jobs. The Council and relevant statutory bodies should work with local providers of education and training to identify and address any local skills shortfalls and develop tailored learning to ensure its population has the skills and training to meet future demand.
- There is a need to ensure that the Borough is attractive to investors, and higher skilled people, by supporting the vitality and vibrancy of town centres and the wider area.
- Commercial fishing landings at Portavogie harbour are an important contributor to the local economy, however significant commercial fish landings also occur at Bangor and Portaferry.
- Bangor Marina is the largest marina in NI and is renowned for its excellent facilities. Maritime tourism can provide strong economic benefits and other marinas in the Borough may have scope for attracting more visitors.
- The diversity, vibrancy and vitality of town centres can be supported and enhanced through the new LDP.
- Major opportunity exists for the expansion of the tourism industry across the Council area to attract investment, jobs and visitors. Tourism priorities may be interlinked with regeneration and development.
- The benefits of tourist attractions to the night-time economy should be recognised both in social and economic terms.
- The Borough is a source of high quality agricultural produce and seafood. Food Destination tourism has been identified in the Tourism Strategy as a key opportunity.
- The Borough has a unique coastline. A joined up approach with neighbouring Council areas in establishing and promoting linked trails and experiences could bring added benefits.
- Ards and North Down has a number of natural assets which are particularly suited to activity tourism (golf, angling, sailing and watersports, beaches and other water-based activity). It also has a strong built and cultural heritage foundation for cultural tourism.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Support innovation and competitiveness within the local economy b) Ensure sufficient land supply in appropriate locations for economic growth c) Support creation of a range of job types that are accessible, especially to areas of deprivation. d) Support enhancement of the skills base.	k) Does not promote innovation and competitiveness within the local economy l) Does not support land in appropriate locations for economic growth m) Does not support creation of a range of job types that are accessible, especially to areas of deprivation. n) Does not support enhancement of the skills base.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Help make the Council area a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest</li> <li>f) Make the best use of location</li> <li>g) Ensure the vitality and vibrancy of town centres can be improved</li> <li>h) Increase the number of people coming to the Borough to work</li> <li>i) Maximise economic benefits of sustainable tourism</li> <li>j) Effects are spread throughout the year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o) Does not help make the Council area a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest</li> <li>p) Does not make the best use of location along major transport corridors.</li> <li>q) Vitality and vibrancy of town centres may deteriorate.</li> <li>r) Does not increase the number of people coming to the Borough to work</li> <li>s) Does not enable use of tourism assets.</li> <li>t) Effects are seasonal /restricted to certain months</li> </ul>
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6. The objective for sustainable development is to manage material assets sustainably.

Rationale

Material assets such as infrastructure and sources of energy production are essential for society and the economy but need careful planning to ensure that they are designed for efficiency and to minimize adverse impacts. The concept of the circular economy treats waste as a resource which should be managed sustainably to reduce production and increase recovery, recycling and composting rates; new or adapted facilities may be required.

Key issues

- Improving infrastructure across rural areas for the needs of rural communities, rural services and rural businesses is vital to support rural enterprise and economic activity.
- Grid reinforcement is required to facilitate the growth of renewable energy generation.
- It is important to support wind energy whilst also safeguarding areas of particular scenic/environmental value.
- The coast could also support wave/tidal energy projects.
- The capacity and availability of infrastructure in respect of water, waste and sewage is key in identifying the location of future housing and employment land.
- The impact of existing or proposed waste management facilities should be considered when zoning land for development.
- Derelict/contaminated land sites may be available for appropriate reuse.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Sufficient telecommunications can be provided or are feasible</li> <li>b) Electrical infrastructure is fit for purpose</li> <li>c) Enables renewable energy production/connections</li> <li>d) Supports development of renewables</li> <li>e) Increases reusing/recycling/composting rates</li> <li>f) Makes reusing/recycling/composting easier</li> <li>g) Reduces waste production per household</li> <li>h) Uses/encourages the proximity principle for location of material assets</li> <li>i) Reduces the amount of derelict/contaminated land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>j) Existing telecommunications poor or unlikely to become available</li> <li>k) Adequate electrical infrastructure unavailable or unfeasible</li> <li>l) Infrastructure not fit for purpose</li> <li>m) Halts development of renewables</li> <li>n) Unlikely to improve recycling rates or make recycling easier</li> <li>o) Does not adopt the proximity principle for location of material assets</li> <li>p) Doesn't take advantage of derelict/contaminated land</li> </ul>

7. The objective for sustainable development is to protect physical resources and use sustainably.

Rationale

Minerals, geothermal energy, land and soil are resources which require protection from degradation and safeguarding for future use. Sustainable agriculture, tourism and sustainable use of minerals and geothermal energy can help to support the economy.

Key issues

- In comparison with other LGDs, Ards and North Down has low quantities of mineral extraction. However, materials that are extracted are in high demand for road construction.
- There are limited supplies of sand and gravel within the council area and imports from other district council areas in Northern Ireland will be required to meet local demand for housing and other planned development.
- While areas of Constraint on Minerals Development protect valuable and vulnerable landscapes and environments, they can also restrict economic development.
- Available, workable mineral resources which are of economic or conservation value should be safeguarded and not be allowed to become constrained by other forms of development.
- The Borough has two areas of former mining activity. One of these has been recognised as having potential for development as a destination.
- Land within the vicinity of former mine workings may be at risk of instability and subsidence.
- Land surrounding former mine workings may have contaminated land issues.
- The Review of Old Mineral Permissions Sites may provide an opportunity to improve operating and environmental standards within the quarrying industry.
- Ten sites have been identified within Strangford and Lecale AONB which have the level of geological significance to be a primary site for a UNESCO Global Geopark. There are a further thirteen of geological significance outside the AONB.
- High quality agricultural land is a valuable and finite resource. Within the Plan area, there are areas of agricultural land comprising some of the best and most versatile in NI.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Avoids/minimises loss of greenfield sites</li> <li>b) Maintains or enhances soil quality/avoids soil erosion</li> <li>c) Earth science features can be protected</li> <li>d) Enables the minerals industry to operate sustainably</li> <li>e) Enables materials to be locally sourced</li> <li>f) Considers minerals across Council boundaries</li> <li>g) Enable future use/benefit of quarries</li> <li>h) Enables potential future use of geothermal energy</li> <li>i) Potential for sub-surface planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>j) Increases loss of greenfield sites</li> <li>k) Does not maintain/enhance soil quality/soil erosion likely</li> <li>l) Earth science features unlikely to be protected</li> <li>m) Reduces the ability for minerals industry to operate sustainably</li> <li>n) Considers minerals only within the Council area</li> <li>o) Does not protect potential future use/benefit of quarries</li> <li>p) Inhibits the future use of geothermal energy</li> <li>q) Sub-surface planning unlikely due to geology</li> </ul>

8. The objective for sustainable development is **to encourage active and sustainable travel.**

**Rationale**

There is a common goal to reduce traffic emissions and congestion which means reducing car use and increasing other forms of transport. Better access to public transport and opportunities for active travel may make travel more affordable with added health benefits and also reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Measures that help reduce car use and improve accessibility to encourage a shift to travel by public transport, walking and cycling will contribute to this goal.

**Key issues**

- There is a need to reduce pollutant emissions from the transport sector and this could be partly achieved through the planning of transport routes that enable shorter journeys and the integration of public transport and active travel options.
- Reliance on the car is high with households able to access 1, 2 or 3 vehicles above the NI average.
- Reliance on the car is high but a significant amount of households do not have access to a private vehicle and are reliant upon public transport, taxis or walking and cycling.
- Although there are bus and rail services in the Borough, the number of people using public transport or active travel to get to work or school is below the NI average.
- There is an opportunity to apply spatial planning to help enable people to live more sustainable lifestyles through a choice of transport options.
- Measures are needed to help encourage use of more sustainable forms of transport than petrol/diesel vehicles – electric vehicles, public transport, active travel – and to reduce reliance on the car.
- Measures are needed to help futureproof the Borough’s transport routes toward a more sustainable future – integration of active travel routes and park and ride/share facilities.
- Measures may be needed that focus on the issues faced by people living in the rural areas and more remote parts of the Borough.
- The Portaferry to Strangford ferry service cuts down an alternative road journey by 46-miles.
- There is potential for new greenway routes to be developed and existing routes to be extended with multiple benefits for health and well-being, the local environment and the local economy.
- Additional financial support for community and public transport is likely to be a future consideration.
- There is potential to connect existing walking and cycling routes together, as well as across Council boundaries, whilst enhancing accessibility with new local level routes.
- Planning to connect active travel routes across Council boundaries presents an opportunity to help support local level economic initiatives.
- Pedestrian access in town centres has improved but the road networks still take priority which may have potential negative impacts in the long term may decrease air quality.
- There is potential to improve local level active travel routes in the Ards Peninsula to improve people’s access to facilities, services and the outdoors in partnership with the Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership.

**Appraisal Prompts**

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Will help reduce traffic congestion b) Encourage modal shift to active travel and/or public transport c) Improve access to and efficiency of public transport d) Will benefit those without access to a vehicle e) Retain, create, or enhance walking or cycling routes	f) Unlikely to reduce traffic congestion g) Does not promote modal shift to active travel and/or public transport h) Unlikely to improve access to and efficiency of public transport i) Unlikely to benefit those without access to a vehicle j) Does not retain, create, or enhance walking or cycling routes

9. The objective for sustainable development is to improve air quality.

Rationale

Air pollution has serious impacts on human health as well as degrading the natural environment. This objective can be achieved through reducing sources of air pollution. Where air pollution cannot be totally excluded careful siting of development should avoid impacts on sensitive receptors.

Key issues

- There are no air quality management areas (AQMA) in the Borough and air quality is generally good.
- There are smoke control areas in some parts of the Borough where authorised fuels must be used.
- Air pollutants from road transport can be linked to respiratory illnesses in NI but the Borough has below the NI average for deaths related to respiratory illnesses.
- Maintaining local air quality should be a consideration when zoning land for potential use or development so that inappropriate adjacent land uses are avoided.
- The A2 is an area of concern for air quality because of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) emissions from road transport.
- Measures will be needed to increase the number of electric charging points across the Borough and particularly in the Ards Peninsula.
- Measures to encourage people to use more sustainable transport options will be needed to help reduce reliance on cars and transport emissions.
- Measures to help reduce ammonia emissions from the agriculture sector could help to improve air quality in some rural areas.
- Support for appropriate renewables will help further reduce reliance on traditional energy sources that cause air pollution.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Will help achieve AQMA objectives b) Likely to improve air quality c) Able to reduce traffic congestion d) Will encourage other modes of transport to the car e) Promotes/supports/enables projects/behaviour that will improve air quality f) Able to avoid/reduce air pollution g) Will avoid increase of ammonia emissions (near to sensitive receptors)	h) Unlikely to help meet AQMA objectives i) Unlikely to improve air quality j) Unlikely to reduce traffic congestion k) Maintains/increases car use l) Inhibits/stops projects/behaviour that will improve air quality m) Likely to increase air pollution n) Likely to increase ammonia emissions (near to sensitive receptors)

10. The objective for sustainable development is to reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.

Rationale

International commitments require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to lessen their effects on climate. Measures that help reduce energy consumption and enable renewable energy helps mitigate greenhouse gas emissions however adaptation is also required to plan for the impacts of climate change.

Key issues

- There is an opportunity to mitigate for climate change by spatially influencing new and existing development so that journey times are reduced, connectivity improved and appropriate sources of renewable energy are available.
- There is an opportunity to adapt for climate change by incorporating measures such as green/blue infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems and building energy efficiency measures that increase resilience.
- Measures are needed to help people, organisations and nature to cope with the predicted impacts of climate change – flooding, coastal erosion, habitat loss, water pollution (urban and rural) - from run off, higher temperatures and extreme weather events.
- It is likely that sea level rise, coastal erosion and storm surges will become significant problems for the Borough to manage.
- Measures to encourage/ enable electric vehicles, active travel and car sharing are needed to help reduce reliance on the car and to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector.
- The agricultural sector is one of the top contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and where feasible within the Plan measures to reduce these should be applied.
- Oil is the most common fuel used in the Borough although a significant proportion of the population also uses gas.
- There is a higher than average reusing/recycling/composting rate for the Borough relative to other Councils and measures may be needed to ensure this trend will continue.
- It is important to protect habitats, coastal areas, floodplains and peatlands, which act as natural adaptation measures for climate change, as well as providing habitat for local biodiversity.
- Ensuring buffer zones exist around designated sites and priority habitats should help enable movement of species due to a changing climate.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Will reduce greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>b) Likely to reduce energy consumption</li> <li>c) Likely to reduce the need to travel by vehicle</li> <li>d) Increases/supports/promotes/enables renewable energy</li> <li>e) Enables/promotes public transport, walking/cycling.</li> <li>f) Helps reduce consumption/waste production and increases recycling</li> <li>g) Protects floodplains</li> <li>h) Protects peatlands and other natural assets that act as attenuation features.</li> <li>i) Incorporates measures to adapt to climate change</li> <li>j) Reduces the risk of damage to property from storm events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>k) Likely to increase greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>l) Unlikely to reduce energy consumption</li> <li>m) Unlikely to reduce vehicle use</li> <li>n) Restricts/inhibits/detracts from renewable energy</li> <li>o) Maintains reliance on vehicles and discourages public transport, walking/cycling.</li> <li>p) Encourages consumption and increases waste levels</li> <li>q) Removes/damages/reduces the extent or holding capacity of floodplains</li> <li>r) Removes/damages/reduces peatlands and other natural assets that act as attenuation features.</li> <li>s) Does not consider adaptation for climate change</li> <li>t) Does not reduce the risk of damage to property from storm events</li> </ul>

11. The objective for sustainable development is to protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.

Rationale

This objective encompasses reducing levels of water pollution, sustainable use of water resources, improving the physical state of the water environment and reducing the risk of flooding now and in the future. It meets the requirements of Northern Ireland legislation, strategies and plans in support of the Water Framework Directive and other Directives that relate to water and it takes account of the future impacts of climate change.

Key issues

- River water quality is significantly lower than the NI average in Ards and North Down. None of the surface water catchments or groundwater bodies has achieved 'good' status.
- Marine water quality in Belfast Lough and Strangford Lough is not meeting 'good' standard.
- The shellfish production areas in Belfast Lough have failed to meet Water Framework Directive microbiological targets for all years 2013-2017.
- Bathing water quality is good / excellent at four out of six of the Council's bathing beaches. Ballyholme received a rating of 'poor' bathing water quality in 2016/7.
- Development may lead to contaminated runoff which may increase pollution of waterbodies.
- Developments without access to mains sewers can incorporate sewage treatment on site. However, it is important that there is capacity for safe disposal of treated discharges and for maintenance of the treatment system to ensure that it remains effective in the long term.
- Other wastes may also cause water pollution at the point where they are used or disposed of, e.g. wastes from livestock production, food processing or primary treatment such as sewage or anaerobic digesters.
- Bangor and Newtownards are identified as Significant Flood Risk Areas and there are three other settlements at moderate risk of flooding.
- It is predicted that the risk and extent of flooding, particularly coastal flooding, will be increased by climate change.
- Development should be planned to avoid areas at significant risk from flooding, now or in the future, or where development may increase the flood risk elsewhere.
- Development may lead to changes in the rate of surface water runoff, or the capacity of a receiving watercourse may be altered which in turn has the potential to increase flood risk.
- Constructed flood alleviation and defence measures are expensive and should be avoided.
- There are benefits in retaining and restoring natural flood plains and watercourses as a form of flood alleviation - this can also support objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- A safety issue arises because legal requirements relating to impounded water have not been fully implemented in legislation. There are considered to be risks in potential inundation zones below reservoirs.
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) measures could be incorporated and maintained in new development and redevelopment or regeneration schemes.
- Plan proposals should be compatible with the Flood Risk Management Plans published by Rivers Agency in December 2015.
- Development in general requires a water supply. It can therefore increase demand for raw water sources, treatment and distribution infrastructure. Although NI Water has indicated that there is sufficiency of the water supply to AND over the indicated timeframe of the Local Development Plan, increased demands could be offset by measures to make more efficient use of water.
- A number of large wastewater treatment works have insufficient capacity for new connections. This may limit or delay potential for development.

Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Improve the quality of surface and ground water to meet objectives</li> <li>b) Lead to more efficient use of water</li> <li>c) Minimise risks from flooding</li> <li>d) Avoid the need for flood defence</li> <li>e) Protect or enhance floodplains</li> <li>f) Maintain water flows for good ecological quality</li> <li>g) Protect aquatic food resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>h) Reduce quality of surface and ground water</li> <li>i) Fail to meet water quality objectives</li> <li>j) Lead to waste of water</li> <li>k) Increase risks from flooding (now or in future)</li> <li>l) Risk creating a need for flood defence</li> <li>m) Reduce the extent or holding capacity of floodplains</li> <li>n) Water flows/temperature not suitable for good ecological quality.</li> <li>o) Unsustainable impacts on aquatic food resources</li> </ul>

## 12. The objective for sustainable development is to protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.

### Rationale

International obligations which are adopted in Northern Ireland legislation and policies require the protection of biodiversity including flora, fauna and habitats. This is for their intrinsic value and for the wider services that they provide to people, the economy and the environment for example as carbon stores which lessen the effects of climate change. This objective includes protecting and enhancing biodiversity as well as protection of green and blue infrastructure to enhance the services that natural resources provide.

### Key issues

- There are 115 miles of fully protected coastline due to its environmental importance with multiple benefits for the environment, health and well-being and the local economy.
- Most of the Borough's settlements are located along the coastline.
- Strangford Lough is a valuable natural resource protected by several designations to ensure its site integrity is conserved, protected and enhanced.
- The Borough has a variety of designated sites to help protect its natural heritage resource – one Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, three Ramsars, four Special Protection Areas, two Special Areas of Conservation, 16 Areas of Special Scientific Interest, 47 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance, two National Nature Reserves as well as Country Parks.
- Development pressure must be managed near all designated sites but particularly around Strangford Lough and the rest of the coastline as valuable natural resources providing ecosystem services.
- There may be potential for new local level nature conservation sites in the south of the Borough and along the Ards Peninsula.
- Ancient woodland, native/semi natural woodland and woodland cover is of particular importance in the Borough.
- There may be opportunities at a local level to add to the number and/or quality of sites.
- A new Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) that reflects the new Borough Council area and its local biodiversity is needed to help protect, manage and enhance biodiversity conservation (currently in progress).
- There is a need for the Council to define the 'coastal zone' to help enable management of it.
- There are opportunities for green/blue infrastructure across the Council including disused railway lines and opportunities to extend the Comber Greenway.
- Opportunities for ecosystem services projects could help raise awareness of the physical and economic importance of the natural environment.
- The coastline and areas of Ards are already recognised for their ecosystem services value – fisheries, crops, culture, tourism, health, and amenity and so on.
- Unregulated activities that affect Strangford Lough may need to be appropriately addressed under provisions in the Marine Act (NI) 2013.
- The inter-relationship between onshore and offshore activities need to be appropriately considered.
- There is a need to identify stakeholders to engage with on shared coastal and designated site issues including other Councils and landowners – Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Belfast City Council and the National Trust.
- The National Trust has identified coastal change hotspots at Mount Stewart and Kearney.
- More sustainable defence and protection measures than the traditional practice of hard sea defences are likely to need to be considered as alternative approaches to coastal realignment.
- Futureproof the Council by advocating a precautionary approach to coastal development and coastal defence by researching erosion and flooding issues to improve coastal knowledge and lead zoning areas of constraint.

Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Protects and/or enhances designated sites and their buffers	f) Unlikely to protect or enhance designated sites or their buffers
b) Protects and/or enhances local biodiversity	g) Unlikely to protect or enhance local biodiversity
c) Protects/enhances/incorporates green/blue infrastructure (G/BI)	h) Removes/damages/excludes green/blue infrastructure (G/BI)
d) Supports/provides ecosystem services	i) Negatively impacts on ecosystem services
e) Provides positive environmental benefits	j) Enables negative environmental impacts

13. The objective for sustainable development is to maintain and enhance landscape character.

Rationale

International and national policies seek to conserve the natural character and landscape of the coast and countryside and protect them from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development. This objective seeks to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes and to protect and enhance open spaces and the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors.

Key issues

- The Borough has one AONB – the Strangford and Lecale AONB – with a draft Action Plan 2017-2022.
- There are a variety of landscape types across the Borough ranging from farmland, to rocky shores and coastline, to wooded estates and urban centres.
- A variety of measures may be needed to help protect the different landscapes from visual intrusion caused by new development pressure linked to energy, minerals, housing and/or business projects.
- There are 10 Landscape Character Areas in the Borough (defined by 1999 survey) and 9 have been identified as of a high sensitivity to wind energy.
- Some parts of the Borough are well developed and any additional development would be detrimental to rural character and individual landscape settings.
- Some parts of the Borough have been affected by new development that has detracted from the local rural character, which highlights the need for appropriate design.
- Some parts of the Borough have been affected by neglected boundaries, which highlights the need for continuous and active landscape management.
- There are 4 Regional Landscape Character Areas in the Borough (defined by NIRLCA survey).
- There are 115 miles of coastline in the Borough and 7 Seascape Character Areas (SCAs) (defined by NIRSCA) including 2 offshore SCAs.
- Ecosystem services is likely to become more of a consideration in landscape related decisions since its inclusion in the NIRLCA 2015.
- There are 101 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) in the Borough but there may be sites of a similar significance across the wider countryside and particularly in the rural Ards Peninsula that cannot fall under the LLPA designation.
- Landscape management is likely to require new working partnerships as many of the landscape related designations are shared with the new neighbouring Councils of Newry, Mourne and Down, Belfast City, and Lisburn and Castlereagh City.
- Working with landowners and voluntary organisations including community groups, is likely to become even more important to help ensure sustainable landscape management into the future.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Continue to protect areas designated for landscape b) Minimise any visual intrusion c) Protect and/or enhance the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors d) Avoid major impacts on coastal views e) Sensitively integrate new development to protect and enhance local distinctiveness f) Able to appropriately consider any impacts on neighbouring landscape designations including AONBs	g) Negatively impact on areas designated for landscape h) Increase any visual intrusion i) Detract from the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors j) Negatively impact on coastal views k) New development not integrated to enhance local distinctiveness l) Unable to consider relevant landscape related management plans or landscape designations

14. The objective for sustainable development is to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.

Rationale

The historic environment and cultural heritage are resources that inform our history and bring character and sense of place. They also attract visitors and contribute to the economy and bring vibrancy to the places where we live, work and relax. This can be achieved by protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas, townscapes and other sites of historic and cultural value including their setting.

Key issues

- The vitality of historic town centres can be supported and enhanced by heritage-led development;
- The Borough's rich cultural and heritage assets can contribute to a high quality built environment that helps to create attractive places for living, investing in and visiting;
- The Borough contains centres, villages and towns which each have a unique sense of place, and character. Protecting this sense of place aspect has benefits for people and their pride in their community;
- Certain types of permitted development may have effects on the historic environment;
- Heritage assets are at risk from vacancy, neglect, decay, and development pressures;
- 'Buildings at Risk' should continue to be identified and efforts made by the relevant authority to maintain their regular use and/or support their restoration;
- The innovative reuse of existing historic building stock should be promoted;
- The Borough has a rich archaeological heritage. This could be further explored through identifying new Areas of Archaeological Potential;
- The setting and landscape of the ASAs and any potential new ASAs should be preserved. Many archaeological settings are associated with particular landscapes, such as hill tops, ridges and drumlins;
- Undesignated marine Heritage Assets such as Shipwrecks and Submerged Landscape Sites, whilst not statutorily protected, must be given appropriate evaluation and consideration;
- The Borough has a rich industrial heritage through cereals milling and flax production, along with its 18th and 19th Century transport engineering;
- Defence and other heritage that has not been designated through other methods (e.g. listed building, scheduled zone) has no planning protection;
- Regionally important historic buildings, such as Mount Stewart, are set in a natural environment. The natural and built environment can add value to each other;
- Heritage based tourism and promoting awareness involvement and understanding of the historic environment;
- Encouraging and nurturing traditional skills and using the historic environment as an educational resource;
- Appreciating the value of built heritage should also apply to new buildings;
- There is ongoing loss of certain non-designated heritage assets such as historic farmsteads and buildings in the countryside, industrial and defence heritage, and historic shopfronts in some towns and settlements. Non-designated buildings which are of heritage or architectural importance in the context of overall landscape, townscape or heritage value should be recognised for their role in conserving these settings;
- There may be opportunities to maintain or reflect historic routeways and townland boundaries;
- Traffic pollution, poor air quality and noise pollution may adversely affect the historic environment;
- Heritage assets may be at risk from effects of climate change, including coastal erosion.

Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Protect and conserve built and cultural heritage</li> <li>b) Enhance built and cultural heritage</li> <li>c) Allow 'sense of place' to be conserved in townscape and rural settings and protect local distinctiveness</li> <li>d) Allow archaeological features to be assessed, recorded and preserved</li> <li>e) Preserve and enhance the setting of cultural heritage assets</li> <li>f) Support access to, interpretation of and understanding of the historic environment</li> <li>g) Enable assessment of impacts of development on complex and extensive archaeological sites adjacent to settlements</li> <li>h) Provide opportunities for cultural activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Loss of built and cultural heritage</li> <li>j) Lose 'sense of place' in townscape and rural settings and reduce local distinctiveness.</li> <li>k) Archaeological features not assessed, recorded and preserved</li> <li>l) Damage the setting of cultural heritage assets</li> <li>m) Reduce access to, interpretation of and understanding of the historic environment</li> <li>n) Impacts of development on complex and extensive archaeological sites adjacent to settlements not understood</li> <li>o) Decrease opportunities for cultural activities</li> </ul>

### Approaches to mitigate negative effects and promote positive effects

These are potential approaches that could be applied to mitigate negative effects and/or promote the positive effects of the preferred option.

1. Accessibility analysis for services, facilities, employment
2. Accessibility analysis open space including play facilities
3. Developer contributions
4. Housing needs analysis
5. Energy assessment for new build
6. Building design guides
7. Zoning land for stated purpose/s
8. Zoning land relative to another land use (e.g. housing relative to employment)
9. Masterplan for area
10. Partnership working
11. Site design guide
12. Key Site Requirements
13. Policy (specify on what)
14. Economic impact analysis
15. Restrict range of developments
16. Require transport analysis
17. Requirement for public transport provision
18. Requirement for e-car charge points
19. Requirement for car share locations
20. Planning conditions
21. Site selection criteria
22. Identify sites to protect from development
23. Landscape analysis
24. Require landscaping plan
25. Policy to protect sensitive landscape features
26. Require flood risk assessment
27. Require contaminated land assessment
28. Water pollution prevention local policy guidelines
29. Require use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
30. Policy to protect important buildings
31. Policy to limit noise in proximity to sensitive receptors
32. Policy to limit odour/air pollution in proximity to sensitive receptors
33. Site specific conditions
34. Require restoration plan

## APPENDIX 6: CONSULTATION BODY COMMENTS ON THE SCOPING REPORT TEMPLATE

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
<b>General Comments</b>	DAERA: NIEA NED  14/08/2018	<p>NIEA is broadly content with the envisaged layout of the SEA report template.</p> <p>A number of baseline data sources and relevant strategies/reports are detailed in the Local Development Plans, DAERA Environmental Evidence and Information Guidance available at: <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/development-plan-evidence-guide-documents">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/development-plan-evidence-guide-documents</a>.</p> <p>There is likely to be some overlap between the information required for the SEA assessment and the information that is gathered for technical LDP papers such as Countryside Assessments. However, it should be noted that we have not reviewed technical reports as part of this scoping consultation and there may be additional significant environmental issues affected by new development that should be considered in the environmental report such as cumulative loss of habitat or changes to air quality, both urban and rural.</p> <p>The scope and level of detail of information in the SEA should be proportionate to the content and purpose of the plan. Whilst regional or district based trends and indicators may help to assess certain high level and strategic aspects of the plans more detailed and spatially specific information would be required to assess other elements of the plan in particular any aspects of the plan with a spatial dimension or influence.</p> <p>The Development Plan Practice Note for Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA was produced by the former Department of the Environment in 2015. This document is intended to guide users through the key requirements of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and SEA and deals primarily with procedures as well as good practice. Some of its content may be useful when developing the SEA documents associated with the LDP such as Preferred Options papers. <a href="https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practicenotes/dp_practice_note_4_sa.pdf">https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practicenotes/dp_practice_note_4_sa.pdf</a></p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Data referred to in <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/daera-environmental-evidence-guide-may-2017.pdf">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/daera-environmental-evidence-guide-may-2017.pdf</a> has been accessed and, where available, information at Council level has been sourced. The need to access more spatially specific information to inform spatial designations is noted and will be considered at Plan Strategy.</p>
Natural Resources	DAERA: NIEA NED  14/08/2018	<p><u>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</u></p> <p>NIEA is broadly content with the envisaged layout of the SEA report template.</p>	<p>Local biodiversity is referred to and any relevant Action Plan and priority habitats and species are referred to but should be in greater detail at the next PS stage.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>NIEA welcome the inclusion of Nature Conservation Sites, Biodiversity, Green /Blue Infrastructure and Ecosystems Services within the scope of the Natural Resources topic 5.12. NIEA would expect that priority habitats and species would be included. There are significant interactions between Biodiversity and the topics Health &amp; Well-being, Physical Resources, Water, Air, Landscape and Climatic Factors.</p> <p>Under topic 5.13, Landscape, NIEA would expect that, if appropriate, that Areas of High Scenic Value would be considered.</p> <p><u>Baseline Evidence</u></p> <p>Information sources include: NIEA Natural Heritage datasets including protected sites and landscape character assessments: <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets</a></p> <p>NIEA Natural Heritage web-viewer which includes protected sites and priority habitats: <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer</a></p> <p>Northern Ireland State of the Environment Report <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013</a></p> <p>Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2017 <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-environmentalstatistics-report-2018">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-environmentalstatistics-report-2018</a></p> <p>National Ecosystems Assessment, Chapter 18 on Northern Ireland</p> <p><a href="http://uknea.unepwcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=m%2BvhAV3c9uk%3D&amp;ta">http://uknea.unepwcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=m%2BvhAV3c9uk%3D&amp;ta</a></p> <p>Priority species records may be obtained from the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR). These can be accessed by contacting CEDaR, National Museums NI, 153 Bangor Road, Cultra, Holywood, BT18 0EU. Website: <a href="https://www.nmni.com/CEDaR/CEDaR-Centre-for-Environmental-Data-and-Recording.aspx">https://www.nmni.com/CEDaR/CEDaR-Centre-for-Environmental-Data-and-Recording.aspx</a></p>	<p>Please note that we refer to <i>Climate Change</i> as a topic, as opposed to climatic factors.</p> <p>Landscape does refer to one AoHSV as highlighted in the relevant LDP position paper from the Council's Plan team.</p> <p>Appendix 7 provides baseline information about European and Ramsar sites.</p> <p>The need to access more spatially specific information (e.g. priority species and non-designated priority habitat) to inform spatial designations will be considered at Plan Strategy</p> <p>We refer to the most up to date reports and data sources to maintain current baseline information.</p>
<p><b>Natural Resources</b></p>	<p>DAERA: NIEA NED 14/08/2018</p>	<p><u>Marine</u></p> <p>It is advised that marine planning sits alongside and interacts with terrestrial planning systems.</p> <p>When taking any decision which relates to any function capable of affecting (or which might affect) the marine area, which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision, Section 58 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and Section 8 of the Marine Act (Northern</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Details of the strategic context referred to have been included in Section 4.3.5 and Appendix 4 and/or Water or Natural</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>Ireland) 2013, require a public authority to have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents.</p> <p>Appropriate marine policy documents include the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS) and the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland (when adopted).</p> <p>This means that in preparation of the Ards and North Down Local Development Plan and all of its associated documents, including this Scoping Report, you (working on behalf of the Council as the public authority), must ensure that this Scoping Report has regard to the UK Marine Policy Statement (as the current marine policy document).</p> <p>Careful attention must be paid to the UK MPS, as this document has the equivalent standing consistent with that of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).</p> <p>Specific comments are outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is suggested that the objectives for sustainable development (page 1) include the marine aspect.</li> <li>▪ MCG - Marine Coordination Group is listed in the Glossary but this term is not evident within in the document.</li> <li>▪ Given the Council area shares a significant boundary with the marine area it is suggested that the marine area is reflected within the Connected principle under Section 3.2 and within Section 3.3.</li> <li>▪ Given the Council has a legal responsibility to have regard to marine policy documents, it is advised that reference to the UK MPS is included within Section 4.2, 5.2 and 5.3 (and Appendix 4). The UK MPS sets out the framework for taking decisions that affect the marine area. As marine planning policy, it sits alongside and interacts with terrestrial planning policy.</li> <li>▪ Marine issues should not be limited to 'environmental' related SA topic areas. Consequently, you are advised to have regard to the policies contained within the UK MPS for each of the SA topics listed in Table 5.1 to ensure the scope is appropriate.</li> <li>▪ It is suggested that baseline information / evidence base on the marine area can be obtained from the SA Scoping Report for the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland, which is available on the DAERA website at: <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/marine/marine-planning">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/marine/marine-planning</a></li> </ul> <p>We welcome the document's recognition of 'maritime' heritage assets under 14. Historic Environment and Cultural Resources (p. 16). This definition should be inclusive of boat finds and shipwrecks, prehistoric archaeological remains and aircraft losses and further recognise the potential importance of non- designated</p>	<p>Heritage topics where available.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Reference to the NI Marine Plan will be updated once it is published.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Included under Natural Resources.</p> <p>This has been removed.</p> <p>This has been addressed in the Connected principle, now section 2.2.</p> <p>This has been addressed in sections 3.2, 4.3.5 and Appendix 4.</p> <p>Marine is covered under Natural Resources but in the SA all options are appraised against all objectives: social, economic and environmental.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>sites as per the Marine Policy Statement (MPS) and emerging regional Marine Plan for Northern Ireland. Marine planning and its associated obligations need to be appropriately considered within the LDP not just for Natural Resources (see Key Sustainability Issues, p. 33) but also for cultural heritage resources.</p> <p>Information on the location of all archaeological/historic sites held in the Monuments and Building Record (MBR) of Northern Ireland can be obtained by contacting the MBR Team at <a href="mailto:mbr-enquiries@communities-ni.gov.uk">mbr-enquiries@communities-ni.gov.uk</a>. Information available from the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record can also be found online at: <a href="https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/sites-and-monuments-record">https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/sites-and-monuments-record</a>. The SEA should also recognise the potential impact upon sites and features that are otherwise unrecorded and not just designated and recorded sites and features. In other words there needs to be clear recognition of the potential importance of newly discovered sites and features that may arise as a result of activities.</p> <p>The SEA should consider the potential effects of plan activities in relation to current understanding of submerged cultural heritage in the context of international and national protection measures, planning policy and best practice industry guidance. The SEA should recognise the potential for impact on marine archaeology arising from proposed activities in marine and intertidal areas and that site-specific surveys may be necessary before development decisions can be taken to prevent any loss to the marine archaeological resource.</p> <p>Relevant policies for the protection and conservation of archaeological remains and elements of the historic landscape in marine and intertidal areas include: PPS 6 Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage and Addendum; Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS); Marine Policy Statement (MPS) and the emerging Marine Plan for NI. The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) also supports the conservation and protection of cultural heritage, whilst recognising heritage as key tourism and recreational assets. The SEA should also recognise the Annex or 'Rules' of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001) as being 'best practice' policy for underwater archaeology (in line with the rest of the UK).</p> <p>The SEA should include the heading of Bathing Water Directive under section 6.11.2 (page 24) to ensure this topic is addressed when the review of baseline information is carried out.</p> <p>The SEA should highlight that all construction or deposition works below the Mean High Water Spring Tide (MHWST) mark are subject to licensing under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Developments in the intertidal area may require both planning permission and a</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Please note that it may not always be feasible to refer in detail to every piece of relevant legislation within the SA Scoping Report Section 5 but the PPP at Appendix 4 has listed all the relevant plans, policies, programmes and strategies including conventions.</p> <p>This is covered in section 5.11.1.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		marine licence. Further information may be obtained from the Marine Licensing Team, DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division, 1st Floor, Klondyke Building, Gasworks Business Park, Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA, Tel: 028 90569247.	
Air Quality	DAERA: NIEA NED 14/082018	Local Development Plan Page 49: 'Will help achieve AQMA objectives' there are no AQMAs at present in Ards and North Down Borough Council. More appropriate wording would be 'Will help maintain air quality objectives, targets and guidelines' the opposite of this will need to be inserted where it states 'unlikely to help meet AQMA objectives'.	Noted.  Please note that the Air Quality topic refers to AQMAs if they are evident. The SA guide used in the SA refers to AQMAs to help discussion regarding policy options.
Noise	DAERA: NIEA NED 14/12/2018	It is noted that 'Noise' is one of the 'Health and Wellbeing' topics. Considerations should include:  Noise maps for Northern Ireland that the Department has produced which can be found at <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/noise">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/noise</a>  Relevant guidance and standards for noise as well as the Noise Policy statement: <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/noise-policy-statement-ni.PDF">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/noise-policy-statement-ni.PDF</a>  The presence and location of any Quiet Areas.	Addressed.  There is one Quiet Area relevant to the Council.
Water Quality	DAERA: NIEA NED 14/08/2018	NIEA note that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) has been identified within the draft SEA Scoping template. It is key that the Ards and North Down Borough Council Local Development Plan takes the WFD and statutory River Basin Management Plans into consideration and the achievement of the objectives therein. As a public body, the council has a duty to have regard to -  (a) the river basin management plan for that district; and  (b) any supplementary plan published under regulation 16 in exercising their duties.  River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD), taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile.  Revised River Basin Management plans were published in December 2015. The plans relevant to your area will be:  North East River Basin management plan summary (December 2015)  Updated information on the water quality classifications of surface waters and groundwaters in the Ards and North	All comments are noted.  Specific information on water quality within the Council area was obtained from NIEA and incorporated in the Water section.  The RBMPs (and FRMPs) were reviewed and information incorporated into the scoping at a proportionate scale for this stage of the Plan process.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>Down Borough Council area should be obtained from <a href="mailto:nieawaterinfo@daera-ni.gov.uk">nieawaterinfo@daera-ni.gov.uk</a></p> <p>As part of the River Basin Planning process a Programme of Measures has been established to detail the improvements required to meet 'Good' status, the actions required and the delivery mechanisms. The programme of measures aims to address the key pressures by concentrating efforts on those pressures that pose the greatest threat to the water environment. From pressure assessments conducted we have identified two significant sources of pressure preventing water bodies from achieving good status in the North East RBD. These are diffuse pressures from agricultural sources and point source pressures from WWTWs and industrial discharges. Other pressures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ diffuse and point source pollution - pollution arising from a number of other sources including forestry, sediment urban catchments, quarries &amp; mines, waste &amp; contaminated land and chemicals;</li> <li>▪ water quantity and flow - taking too much water from rivers, lakes and groundwater which causes problems for wildlife, reduces the amount of water available for people to use and affects the environmental ecology;</li> <li>▪ the physical condition of the water environment - man made changes to the natural habitat of rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters, for example flood defences and weirs, and changes to the natural river channels for land drainage and navigation. These modifications alter natural flows, may cause excessive build-up of sediment, increase erosion, reduce the quality of habitats and may also present a barrier to fish movement;</li> <li>▪ invasive alien species - the negative effects on the health of the water environment and native plants and animals from those species originating outside Northern Ireland and introduced to the Northern Ireland water environment; and</li> <li>▪ other pressures - factors that affect fish populations and habitat not captured above.</li> </ul> <p>The Programmes of Measures have been brigaded under topics and each of the documents are available from the DAERA web-site, under the following Programme of Measures topic headings: Agriculture; Sewage &amp; Industry; Forestry; Sediment; Urban Catchment; Quarries &amp; Mines including Oil &amp; Gas exploration; Waste &amp; Contaminated land; Chemicals; Abstraction &amp; Flow Regulation; Morphology; Invasive Alien Species; and Fisheries.</p> <p>The SA/SEA should be proportionate in assessing these measures against the likely impact of Local Development Plan documents. A full list of the measures has been included as an Annex to this letter, for ease of future reference.</p>	<p>POMs are noted in 5.12.2 however we have not reproduced these in full in the SA Scoping.</p> <p>Pressures are discussed under the River Basin Management Plans section of 5.12.2</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p><u>Waste Water Treatment Provision</u></p> <p>A technical paper for the LDP (or the SA/SEA) should identify all the waste water treatment works (WWTW's) and sewerage networks in your Council area and assess them against their current capacity, and environmental performance, and their predicated capacity during the lifetime of the Local Development Plan. This information should be aligned with Northern Ireland Waters infrastructure investment strategy set out in their price Control processes and the Long Term Water Strategy.</p> <p>Sustainable Water – A Long Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (to be published 2016)</p> <p>PC15 (NIW's draft expenditure plan 2015-2021).</p> <p>This information should be used proportionately in the different stages of the LDP SA/SEA process.</p> <p>At some stage in the process suitable mitigation measures may be required to ensure the zoning of land and the timing of the release of that land for development is aligned with the availability of suitable waste water treatment infrastructure to service the developments to ensure there is adequate protection for the water environment.</p> <p>We would recommend the water topic should be split to form a topic on water quality and resources, and a separate topic on flood risk.</p> <p><u>Sustainable Drainage Systems</u></p> <p>The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) states that the planning system should help to mitigate and adapt to climate change by, among other actions, working with natural environmental processes, for example through promoting the development of green infrastructure and also the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to reduce flood risk and improve water quality.</p> <p>In managing development, particularly in areas susceptible to surface water flooding, planning authorities should encourage developers to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as the preferred drainage solution. Such systems are widely used in other UK jurisdictions and have been shown to be more effective than traditional piped drainage in reducing surface water flooding as well as providing other environmental, economic and social benefits. Furthermore, using permeable materials for hard</p>	<p>The most recently available information from NIW on WWTW capacity and programmed expenditure / capital works has been included in section 5.11.2.</p> <p>Flooding has been addressed under the Water and Climate Change topics and was fully considered in appraisal. SES will retain the main reference to flooding within the Water chapter, with the agreement of DfI Rivers.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>landscaped surfaces in new developments can reduce soil sealing.</p> <p>NIEA recommends that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are incorporated, and where appropriate, into the drainage design of all new developments for the environmental management of rainfall / surface water drainage.</p> <p>Temporary SuDS can also be used during the construction phase as pollution prevention measures for silt management and to prevent erosion. Where possible these should be retained or adapted as part of the final permanent site drainage solution.</p> <p>Surface water should be dealt with as close as possible to where it falls as rain (source control) and the use of two or more SuDS components can be used for the optimal solution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manage rainfall to mimic natural drainage by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ reducing runoff rates;</li> <li>□ reducing additional runoff volumes and frequencies; and</li> <li>□ encouraging natural groundwater recharge.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Minimise impacts on quantity and quality of runoff by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ reducing pollution and protecting the quality of receiving waters;</li> <li>□ preventing direct discharge of spillage; and</li> <li>□ reducing the volume of surface waste runoff to sewers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Maximise amenity and biodiversity opportunity by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ contributing to the amenity and aesthetic value of the development; and</li> <li>□ providing habitat for wildlife and biodiversity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>This has been discussed under a new SuDS heading in chapter 5.11.2.</p>
Other Comments	DAERA: NIEA NED 14/08/2018	<p>Page (III), 12 ...reduce causes of and adapt to climate change. The value of peat as a carbon store is well known, however, in terms of adaptation to combat the impacts of climate change, the 'protection' of natural resources such as peat could be complimented by the 'restoration of peat that has become inactive. The importance of protection of peat which is currently inactive and the weighting to be given to it therefore is an option to consider.</p> <p>Page7, 2.8 Appraisal of reasonable alternatives for the Preferred Options Paper refers to Table 3.1, however, this is not readily identifiable in the Report.</p> <p>Page 20, The Evidence Base, section 5.3 Housing, will contaminated land be considered in respect of risks to potential future developments?</p>	<p>This level of detail is usually discussed in the appraisals of policy options relating to nature conservation/landscape issues.</p> <p>This has been corrected to Table 2.8.1. Full matrices will be available in the SA Interim Report.</p> <p>All policy options including <i>housing</i>, are appraised against the 14 sustainability objectives in the sustainability appraisal and under Material Assets, derelict and contaminated</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>Page 24, section 5.7, are Soil and Groundwater considered as physical resources?</p> <p>Page 26, section 5.9, should consideration be given to air quality issues associated with construction sites and waste management sites?</p> <p>Page 28, section 5.11 will surface water/over land flow within the Borough be considered?</p> <p>Page 43 Negative effects linked to housing on contaminated land i.e. sites not remediated properly therefore risk to human health?</p> <p>Page 46, Objective 6...manage material assets sustainably considers waste as a resource for the Borough but consideration still needs to be given to waste disposal for the Borough. The circular economy is all well and good to consider but does it fully capture and protect the Borough in relation to the full scope of waste management legislation. What waste disposal capacity does the Borough have?</p> <p>Page 47, Objective 7...protect physical resources and use sustainably perhaps consideration is given to contaminated land within the Borough her?</p>	<p>land is considered. However, it is not referred to as its own sub-heading within the baseline evidence for Housing.</p> <p><i>Soil</i> and <i>groundwater</i> are referred to in the SA Scoping Report under the Physical Resources topic. <i>Groundwater</i> is also referred to under the Water topic.</p> <p>All policy options are appraised against the 14 sustainability objectives including <i>Air Quality</i>, so any potential air quality issues from different stages of development or the function of the proposal should be considered.</p> <p>Yes – this is addressed within the Water topic where we refer to flooding.</p> <p>All policy options are appraised against all 14 sustainability objectives which include <i>Health and well-being</i> as well as <i>Community</i> and so any negative effects should be recognised and appropriately considered at the appraisal stage. Exact zonings for housing should be reappraised at PS stage.</p> <p>Noted. Waste management is covered under the Material Assets topic and within this section information on the waste management baseline for the Borough as per information in the LDP position papers.</p> <p><i>Land use</i> is referred to under Physical Resources but <i>derelict</i> and <i>contaminated land</i> can be referred to under the Material Assets topic. Both</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>There does not appear to be any clear objective appraisal in relation to contaminated land within the Borough. Brief considerations are given to contaminated land but nothing really specific.</p>	<p>topics are cross-referenced in the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p><i>Derelict and contaminated land</i> can be considered under the Material Assets topic. During the sustainability appraisal of all the options, Material Assets is considered and part of this process includes reference to the use of derelict or contaminated land. This information is located in the SA Guide Appraisal Prompts under Objective 6.</p> <p>The exact amount of derelict/contaminated land and its location should become more obvious at the PS stage however, we have added a sub-heading on this for Ards &amp; North Down.</p> <p>SES will discuss how to further integrate this topic moving forward from POP to PS.</p>
Historic Environment	DfC: HED 07/08/2018	<p><u>Historic Environment</u></p> <p>HED note and welcome the inclusion of Historic Environment issues as a heading in your scoping template document and in Strategic Objective 14. We have attached at this link our Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal and strategic Environmental Assessment for the Historic Environment. <a href="https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/heritage-guidance-on-sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-for-the-historic-environment.pdf">https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/heritage-guidance-on-sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-for-the-historic-environment.pdf</a></p> <p>We welcome the use of the term "Historic Environment" which encompasses the wide suite of heritage assets that needs to be considered as part of your evidence bases.</p> <p>The National Monuments and Buildings Record for Northern Ireland contains a primary repository for information on the historic environment and HED encourage local authorities to utilize this resource in LDP preparation. We would highlight the following GIS spatial data evidence bases which are critical for use in your scoping exercise.</p> <p>The attached link <a href="https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/historic-environment-digital-">https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/historic-environment-digital-</a></p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage has been expanded to reflect this input.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. Information from this record is summarised in section 5.14.2. It is not considered proportionate to include very detailed information at this strategic stage of LDP. It will inform spatial considerations at PS/LPP stage.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>datasets makes available spatial evidence on a wide variety of heritage assets, including scheduled monuments, afforded statutory protection under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 and Listed Buildings, afforded protection under Article 80 of The Planning Act (NI) 2011. Further datasets are available on the Sites and Monuments Record, Industrial Heritage, Historic Parks Gardens and Demesnes, Battlesites, Defence Heritage, ASAls and AAPs. Please ensure to recheck our datasets to download up to date versions as they are subject to change as new assets are designated or recognised.</p> <p>GIS spatial datasets on the marine historic environment, can be requested from Rory McNeary, rory.mcneary@daera-ni.gov.uk</p> <p><u>The Gazetteer of Nucleated Historic Settlements.</u> Information on request from HED. This is the result of a programme of work undertaken by HED to identify historic settlement centres and from these in some cases, areas of archaeological potential, identifying new ones and potentially modifying others. While the zones are in draft it will nonetheless be a useful tool going forward in the LDP process. We will in due course supply some text in relation to each zone identified and the history of the settlement. This draft map <a href="https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=1cb71d4c9f284cbab0367d032fb15ef7">https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=1cb71d4c9f284cbab0367d032fb15ef7</a> also allows you to view draft candidate ASAI in your Borough.</p> <p>Historic Ordnance Survey Mapping. HED highlight the many other sites of heritage interest in your district, which are not yet listed in our records. These include historic boundaries such as townland and parish boundaries and some later historic cemeteries, and the boundary patterns and route ways which have defined landscape character. Historic mapping is also a useful evidence base toward understanding the evolution of settlements.</p> <p>HED have consulted the Historic Monuments Council on the identification of an Area of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) in relation to Nendrum monastery. The Statement of Significance for this area will be forwarded to you separately from this response letter.</p> <p>The evidence used in populating your scoping report should cross reference to assessments and LDP documentation which your Council area has already prepared (e.g. countryside assessment). The report should identify key characteristics of the historic environment and also demonstrate consideration, understanding and awareness of international conventions, as well as local legislation and policies which provide protection for the historic environment in Northern Ireland. Publications</p>	<p>Information on marine and submerged archaeology has been sourced from DAERA and included.</p> <p>Information from the gazetteer has been included in section 5.14.2.</p> <p>This has been noted. It is not considered proportionate to include very detailed information at this strategic stage of LDP.</p> <p>The candidate ASAI at Nendrum has been recognised in the scoping.</p> <p>Noted. Any documents not easily available to SES, will be addressed at PS.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>that may be of particular worth in the preparation of your LDP would be the published “Archaeological Survey of County Down” and "Strangford Lough -An archaeological survey of the maritime cultural landscape".</p> <p><u>Plans Policies and Programmes</u></p> <p>It is important to recognize that the legislative and policy provision for the historic environment in Northern Ireland enables us to meet our obligations in relation to international conventions in respect of heritage.</p> <p>International level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention)</li> <li>▪ The X’ian Declaration</li> <li>▪ The European Landscape Convention (this applies to the historic as well as the natural environment)</li> <li>▪ The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992)</li> </ul> <p>Regional/Northern Ireland wide level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995</li> <li>▪ Class Consents Order (NI) 2001 –Supplementary to above</li> <li>▪ The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973</li> <li>▪ The Planning Act (NI) 2011</li> <li>▪ The Planning (Listed Buildings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015</li> <li>▪ Regional Development Strategy 2035</li> <li>▪ Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)</li> <li>▪ Planning Policy Statement 6 Planning Archaeology and The Built Heritage (and addendum and annex documents)</li> <li>▪ Planning Policy Statement 9 The Enforcement of Planning Control</li> <li>▪ Planning Policy Statement 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside (Page 125)</li> <li>▪ Planning Policy Statement 23 Enabling development for the Conservation of Significant Places</li> <li>▪ The Protocol for the Care of the Government Historic Estate</li> <li>▪ Regeneration: The Value of our Built Heritage. Position Paper 2017</li> <li>▪ A Study of the Economic Value of Northern Ireland’s Historic Environment</li> <li>▪ Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (Page 126)</li> <li>▪ Regeneration: The Value of our Built Heritage. Position Paper 2017</li> <li>▪ A Design Guide for Rural Northern Ireland</li> <li>▪ British Standard BS 7913:2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. Appendix 4 contains all relevant plans, policies, programmes and strategies (PPP). This is continuously updated.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p>Local Level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Existing local development plans.</li> <li>▪ Building on Tradition – A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside</li> <li>▪ Creating Places – Achieving quality in residential developments’</li> <li>▪ Any existing Conservation Management Plans for assets in the area (e.g. recent publicity suggests that one is forthcoming for the Market Cross in Newtownards.)</li> <li>▪ Conservation Area Character Appraisals.</li> <li>▪ Design Guides for Areas of Townscape Character</li> </ul> <p>HED advise that the policy protection provided through the policies in SPPS, which is descended in part from the policies in PPS6, has a proven track record of compliance with International Conventions on the protection of the historic environment (to which the UK is a signatory), and that the wording, distinctiveness and hierarchy of policies in respect of the historic environment in SPPS is important. We would welcome retention of these policies, which work well, and supplementary policy which could address policy gaps.</p> <p>HED highlight the importance of recognizing the relationship of the historic environment to other headings and objectives, including, among others, health and wellbeing, education and economic growth (e.g. tourism), and sustainable use of physical resources. environmental benefits.</p> <p>We highlight that there are a very large number of strategic heritage assets in your area, dating from Mesolithic period through to World War 2. Highlights include many State Care Monuments, which include tower houses, churches and abbeys, Scrabo Tower and Ballycopeland windmill, listed buildings and registered gardens such as Mount Stewart, and also a huge corpus of scheduled and undesignated monuments reflecting human interactions through the ages with the landscape. Many assets have developed an iconic role in being identified with place. The area is extremely rich in its maritime heritage and several of the settlement patterns have their origins in the medieval period. In particular HED are working to enhance the heritage offering and community value of Kirkistown Castle, and to reinforce its contribution to the origins and evolution of the settlement. We consider it important that this site enhancing its heritage value and tourism potential.</p> <p>We stress the opportunity that the LDP presents toward realising the potential of the historic environment in your district, for economic, social and health and environmental benefits.</p>	<p>Noted. All topics are cross-referenced in the <i>Baseline Information</i> section of each topic in Section 5 of the Scoping Report.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<p><u>Appraisal Prompts</u></p> <p>HED advises on the importance of appropriate and relevant Appraisal Prompts toward accurately accessing impacts on the historic environment.</p> <p>Relevant sustainability issues to consider for the historic environment in your area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage assets at risk from neglect or decay or development pressure.</li> <li>▪ Areas where there is a risk of significant loss or erosion of landscape or townscape character or quality, or where development might have a significant impact on the historic environment and/or peoples enjoyment of it.</li> <li>▪ Traffic pollution.</li> <li>▪ Conserving and enhancing designated and non-designated assets and their settings.</li> <li>▪ Heritage Crime.</li> <li>▪ Inappropriate development/enhancement/design which does not demonstrate an informed understanding of heritage assets and their settings (e.g. through having conducted adequate assessments or compiling conservation management plans or though having used inappropriate materials).</li> <li>▪ Certain types of permitted development.</li> <li>▪ The effects of coastal erosion on heritage assets</li> <li>▪ Demolition or loss of heritage assets, prior to them being protected</li> </ul> <p>Opportunities include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage led development, and supporting vitality of historic town centres.</li> <li>▪ Developing or maintaining a sense of place by informing design based on historic environment evidence.</li> <li>▪ Promoting innovative use of existing historic listed and non-listed building stock.</li> <li>▪ Heritage based tourism and promoting awareness involvement and understanding of the historic environment.</li> <li>▪ Encouraging and nurturing traditional skills and using the historic environment as an educational resource.</li> <li>▪ Removal of buildings from the Buildings at Risk (BARNI) register.</li> <li>▪ The creation of more Conservation Areas, Areas of Townscape Character and Areas of Village Character.</li> </ul> <p><u>Monitoring</u></p> <p>Effective monitoring strategies will be an important component of a robust SA/SEA. In relation to monitoring effects HED stress the importance of having meaningful indicators in order measure these. Examples of useful</p>	<p>Noted. At this stage of the LDP process, <i>Appraisal Prompts</i> have been written at a generic and strategic level to aid discussion in the appraisals.</p> <p>Noted.</p>



## APPENDIX 7: HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT BASELINE REPORT

### Introduction

The requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment is introduced in Section 1.7.1 of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is an iterative process carried out in parallel with Local Development Plan (LDP) preparation and will be updated in line with knowledge of potential Plan effects and any changes relating to European sites. This report provides a long list of sites for which effects of the Plan will be reviewed. These will be considered in the context of how they are connected with the LDP area and potential effects of the LDP on its own and in combination with other Plans and Projects.

This screening takes a precautionary approach. There will be no conceivable effect on many of the long listed sites, for example on those that are over 10km away and have no ecological or infrastructure connection, therefore a number of these sites will be excluded from further consideration at the next stage of assessment. It must be emphasised that only some of the potential impacts may arise. Measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate for impacts will be incorporated into the Plan where necessary and feasible, or proposals amended to avoid adverse effects on site integrity. These will be taken into account in preparing the Appropriate Assessment stage of the HRA.

The policies and spatial zonings proposed within the Plan will be assessed to determine whether any of the potential impacts could materialise as a result of the Plan. This will consider the source of potential impacts, any pathways to European sites and whether the impact could have a significant effect on site selection features, their conservation objectives and site integrity along with any avoidance and mitigation measures identified in the course of assessment and Plan preparation. The evidence in Table A.7.1 and further evidence available at each stage of assessment will be taken into account.

**Table A.7.1: Evidence to inform baseline data and further Habitats Regulations Assessment**

<b>JNCC Standard Data Forms</b>	JNCC Standard Data Forms <sup>1,2,3</sup> generated from the Natura 2000 Database submitted to the European Commission on 22/12/2015. (Updated for certain sites on 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018 (UK Tranche 57))
<b>NIEA Conservation Objectives</b>	The most recent NIEA Conservation Objectives for each site found on the DAERA website <sup>4</sup> .
<b>Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 Appropriate Assessment Report (2009)</b>	Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (2013)</b>	Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 <sup>6</sup> .
<b>Spatial Data Local Government Districts</b>	Land and Property Services Administrative Boundaries for Local Government Districts, 2012 (published 13/10/2014).
<b>Spatial Data European and Ramsar sites</b>	DAERA Digital Datasets Layers for designated and proposed European sites and Ramsars (published 21/03/2017)

<sup>1</sup> JNCC UK Protected Sites - Northern Ireland Special Protection Areas (found at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1404> ) accessed on 08/01/2019.

<sup>2</sup> JNCC UK Protected Sites - SACs in Northern Ireland (found at [http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/SAC\\_list.asp?Country=NI](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/SAC_list.asp?Country=NI)) accessed on 08/01/2019.

<sup>3</sup> JNCC UK Protected Sites - Designated and Proposed Ramsar sites in Northern Ireland (found at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1393> ) accessed on 08/01/2019.

<sup>4</sup> DAERA Protected Areas Search (found at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/protected-areas>) accessed on 08/01/2019.

<sup>5</sup> Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 - Download the Appropriate Assessment Report and Maps (found at [https://www.planningni.gov.uk/ardsdown\\_2015.htm](https://www.planningni.gov.uk/ardsdown_2015.htm) ) accessed on 08/01/2019.

<sup>6</sup> Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan - Download the Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (Found at [https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/dev\\_plans/devplans\\_az/bmap\\_2015.htm](https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/dev_plans/devplans_az/bmap_2015.htm) ) accessed on 08/01/2019.

## Overview

This is a summary of the long list of sites to be considered, how they are connected to the LDP area and potential issues. The sites listed are those for which there is a potential pathway allowing a connection with the plan area. In total 26 sites are listed: nine Special Conservation Areas (SACs), eight Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and one proposed SPA, seven Ramsar sites and one proposed Ramsar site. All sites within 15km of the LDP area (Figure A.7.1) have been considered. Listed distances listed are linear and to the nearest 0.1km. The sites are listed in Table A.7.2 and locations relative to the plan area are shown in Figures A.7.1 – A.7.4.

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Definitions of each type of connection follow:

### *Within or Adjacent*

This means all or part of the European or Ramsar Site is within or directly adjacent to the plan area. There are 11 designated sites within or directly adjacent to the Council area. Ten out of the eleven are marine or intertidal sites, with three in Belfast Lough, three in Strangford Lough and four on the eastern (Irish Sea) coast. Aghnadarragh Lough is the only terrestrial site within the Plan area. For the most part, the boundaries of the Ramsar sites are coincident with their related European site, except for outer Ards, where a portion of the SPA between Ballymacormick Point and South Briggs extends below the low water mark.

### *Ecological*

This applies where the European or Ramsar Site is ecologically connected to the plan area. Ecological connections include linkages by ecological corridors such as river systems; hydrological links between the LDP area and peatland or wetland sites; known areas of land in the LDP area which are regularly used by birds which also use a SPA; and sites that form part of the freshwater ecosystem to which the LDP area is connected. All the sites that are partly or wholly in the council area are ecologically connected. There may also be non-designated areas which support species from designated sites within or beyond the council area. These are also considered to have an ecological connection. As all of the river catchments within the council area drain into either Belfast Lough or Strangford Lough, there are no distant sites which have a direct hydrological connection with the Council area.

### *Within 15km*

This indicates European or Ramsar sites which are within 15km of the LDP area. This brings eleven sites into consideration. Seven of these sites are intertidal/marine sites which may have indirect hydrological pathways through pollutants entering the marine environment. Feature species of these sites may also may also use or depend on other marine sites that adjoin the LDP area. Four of the sites are terrestrial and have no hydrological connection with the Council area. However some may be affected by aerial emissions and all are therefore considered in this long list of sites.

### *By Infrastructure*

These sites are ones where the European or Ramsar Site is connected by infrastructure with the plan area. Infrastructure connectivity is related to the potential linkage of sites to the LDP area by infrastructure services such as water abstraction or waste water discharges. There are five NIW water supply zones in the Borough which are supplied with water from two sources: Lough Neagh and the Mourne mountains. The Eastern Mournes and Lough Neagh are therefore also linked to the plan area by infrastructure. The connection between water supply and European sites will be examined in the Habitats Regulations Assessment at Plan Strategy.

Waste water treatment works (WwTW) may discharge to or upstream of designated sites and could have impacts if there was insufficient capacity for treatment. At October 2017 there were 24<sup>1</sup> settlements in the Borough served by 'large' WwTWs. Of these, 13 WwTWs have capacity available and new connections permitted. One WwTW has limited capacity and restrictions are in place on new connections. Six WwTWs have no capacity and new connections are refused. Four settlements (Ballyboley, BallyeasBorough, Kirkistown and Six Road Ends) have no public sewerage network. In the absence of any works being undertaken to increase capacity, the number of settlements with 'Reasonable Capacity' will reduce. There are therefore potentially significant constraints on growth and careful consideration also needs to be given to housing not serviced by WwTWs. This will be assessed in the Habitats Regulations Assessment at Plan Strategy.

**Table A.7.2: Potential pathways for effects between Ards and North Down Borough Council and European Sites**

Name	Distance (km)	Potential Pathways ( <i>Summary of features</i> )			
		Within or Adjacent Ecological	Within 15 km	By Infra-structure	
<b>Aughnadarragh Lough SAC</b>	0.0	●	●	●	<p><i>Marsh fritillary butterfly.</i></p> <p>Partially within LDP area. Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects.</p>
<b>Belfast Lough SPA</b>	0.0	●	●	●	<p><i>Intertidal mud flat and lagoons supporting a wide range of wintering waterbirds.</i></p> <p>Activities during construction or use of development causing disturbance to birds. Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Qualifying features may also use or depend on other marine sites that neighbour the LDP area.</p>
<b>Belfast Lough Open Water SPA</b>	0.0	●	●	●	<p><i>Great crested grebe.</i></p> <p>Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Qualifying features may also use or depend on other marine sites that neighbour the LDP area.</p>
<b>Belfast Lough Ramsar Site</b>	0.0	●	●	●	<p><i>Marine and coastal wetlands supporting a wide range of wintering waders and wildfowl.</i></p> <p>Activities during construction or use of development causing disturbance to birds. Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Qualifying features may also use or depend on other marine sites that neighbour the LDP area.</p>
<b>East Coast Marine proposed SPA</b>	0.0	●	●	●	<p><i>Diverse range of seabed habitats supporting seabirds and waterbirds.</i></p> <p>Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Qualifying features may also use or depend on other marine sites that neighbour the LDP area.</p>

<sup>1</sup> In the information supplied by AND from NIW, "North Down" WwTW is counted as one settlement in the figures, however its catchment includes Bangor, Donaghadee, Millisle, Ballyfrenis, Cotton, Groomsport and Orlock.

Name	Distance (km)	Within or Adjacent	Ecological	Within 15 km	By Infra-structure	Potential Pathways ( <i>Summary of features</i> )
North Channel Special Area of Conservation	0.0	●	●	●		<p><i>Harbour porpoise.</i></p> <p>Activities during construction causing disturbance to harbour porpoise. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment.</p>
Outer Ards SPA	0.0	●	●	●		<p><i>Intertidal wetland supporting wintering geese and waders.</i></p> <p>Activities during construction or use of development causing disturbance to birds. Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Qualifying features may also use or depend on other marine sites that neighbour the LDP area.</p>
Outer Ards Ramsar Site	0.0	●	●	●		<p><i>Intertidal habitats and adjoining terrestrial habitat supporting waders and waterbirds.</i></p> <p>Activities during construction or use of development causing disturbance to birds. Potential for direct impacts in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Qualifying features may also use or depend on other marine sites that neighbour the LDP area.</p>
Strangford Lough SAC	0.0	●	●	●		<p><i>Intertidal and subtidal habitats, common seal.</i></p> <p>Partly within LDP area. Potential for direct impacts, in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have potential to impact the marine environment. Common seal may range into waters adjacent to LDP area that are beyond the site boundary. Development of hard structures on the coast may influence coastal processes.</p>
Strangford Lough SPA	0.0	●	●	●		<p><i>Habitat supporting a large assemblage of wintering and breeding waterbirds including light-bellied brent goose, seabirds and waders.</i></p> <p>Partly within LDP area. Potential for direct impacts, in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment.</p>
Strangford Lough Ramsar Site	0.0	●	●	●		<p><i>A variety of wetland features including saltmarsh and freshwater habitats and plants. Waterfowl and seabirds.</i></p> <p>Partly within LDP area. Potential for direct impacts, in addition to hydrological or aerial pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment.</p>
Copeland Islands SPA	1.5		●	●		<p><i>Breeding populations of Manx Shearwater and Artic Tern.</i></p> <p>Nearest point 1.5km from LDP area. Potential for aerial or indirect hydrological pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend.</p>
Lecale Fens SAC	3.1		●			<p><i>Alkaline fens.</i></p> <p>No direct hydrological connection. Potential aerial pathways for effects.</p>

Name	Distance (km)	Within or Adjacent	Ecological	Within 15 km	By Infra-structure	Potential Pathways ( <i>Summary of features</i> )
Turmennan Ramsar Site	7.1			●		<p><i>Representative example of a wetland habitat type found within its biogeographic region. Supports a rich invertebrate community and a number of rare plants.</i></p> <p>No direct hydrological connection. Potential aerial pathways for effects.</p>
Turmennan SAC	7.1			●		<p><i>Transition mires and quaking bogs.</i></p> <p>No direct hydrological connection. Potential aerial pathways for effects.</p>
Killough Bay SPA	10.3		●	●		<p><i>Light bellied brent goose (wintering)</i></p> <p>Nearest point 10.3km from LDP area. Potential for indirect hydrological pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend.</p>
Killough Bay Ramsar Site	10.3		●	●		<p><i>Light bellied brent goose (wintering)</i></p> <p>Nearest point 10.3km from LDP area. Potential for indirect hydrological pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend.</p>
Larne Lough SPA	10.4		●	●		<p><i>Light bellied brent goose (wintering) and breeding seabirds</i></p> <p>Nearest point 10.4km from LDP area. Potential for indirect hydrological pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend.</p>
Larne Lough Ramsar Site	10.4		●	●		<p><i>Wetland supporting important assemblage of vulnerable and endangered bird species, including light bellied brent goose, arctic tern and roseate tern.</i></p> <p>Nearest point 10.4km from LDP area. Potential for indirect hydrological pathways for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend.</p>
Hollymount SAC	12.4			●		<p><i>Native species woodland and wet woodland</i></p> <p>Nearest point 12.4km from LDP area. No hydrological connection.</p>
Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar Site	13.9		●	●		<p><i>Not yet published, assumed to be the same as wetland features of Murlough SAC: intertidal wetlands and salt marsh.</i></p> <p>Nearest point 13.9km from LDP area. No direct hydrological pathway for effects. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment.</p>

Name	Distance (km)	Within or Adjacent	Ecological	Within 15 km	By Infra-structure	Potential Pathways ( <i>Summary of features</i> )
Murlough SAC	13.9		●	●		<p><i>Sand and mudflats, saltmarsh and sand dune habitats, marsh fritillary butterfly and common seal.</i></p> <p>Nearest point 13.9km from LDP area. No direct hydrological pathway for effects. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend; common seal may range into waters adjacent to LDP area that are beyond the site boundary. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment. .</p>
The Maidens SAC	21.0		●			<p><i>Sandbanks, reefs and grey seal.</i></p> <p>Offshore site 21km from LDP area. No direct hydrological pathway for effects. Potential links through disturbance or to habitats elsewhere on which features depend; grey seal may range into waters adjacent to council area. Discharges from wastewater have the potential to impact the marine environment.</p>
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA	25.1				●	<p><i>A wide range of wintering and breeding bird species.</i></p> <p>Source of drinking water for part of the Council area. Potential effects of major increase in demand for water should be considered.</p>
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Ramsar	25.1				●	<p><i>A wide range of wintering and breeding bird species, wetlands, rare invertebrates, plants and pollan (fish).</i></p> <p>Source of drinking water for part of the Council area. Potential effects of major increase in demand for water should be considered.</p>
Eastern Mourne SAC	28.4				●	<p><i>Heaths, active blanket bog</i></p> <p>Nearest point 28.4km. Catchment forms source of drinking water for part of the Council area. Potential effects of major increase in demand for water should be considered.</p>

Figure A.7.1: SACs in or within 15km of Ards and North Down Borough Council

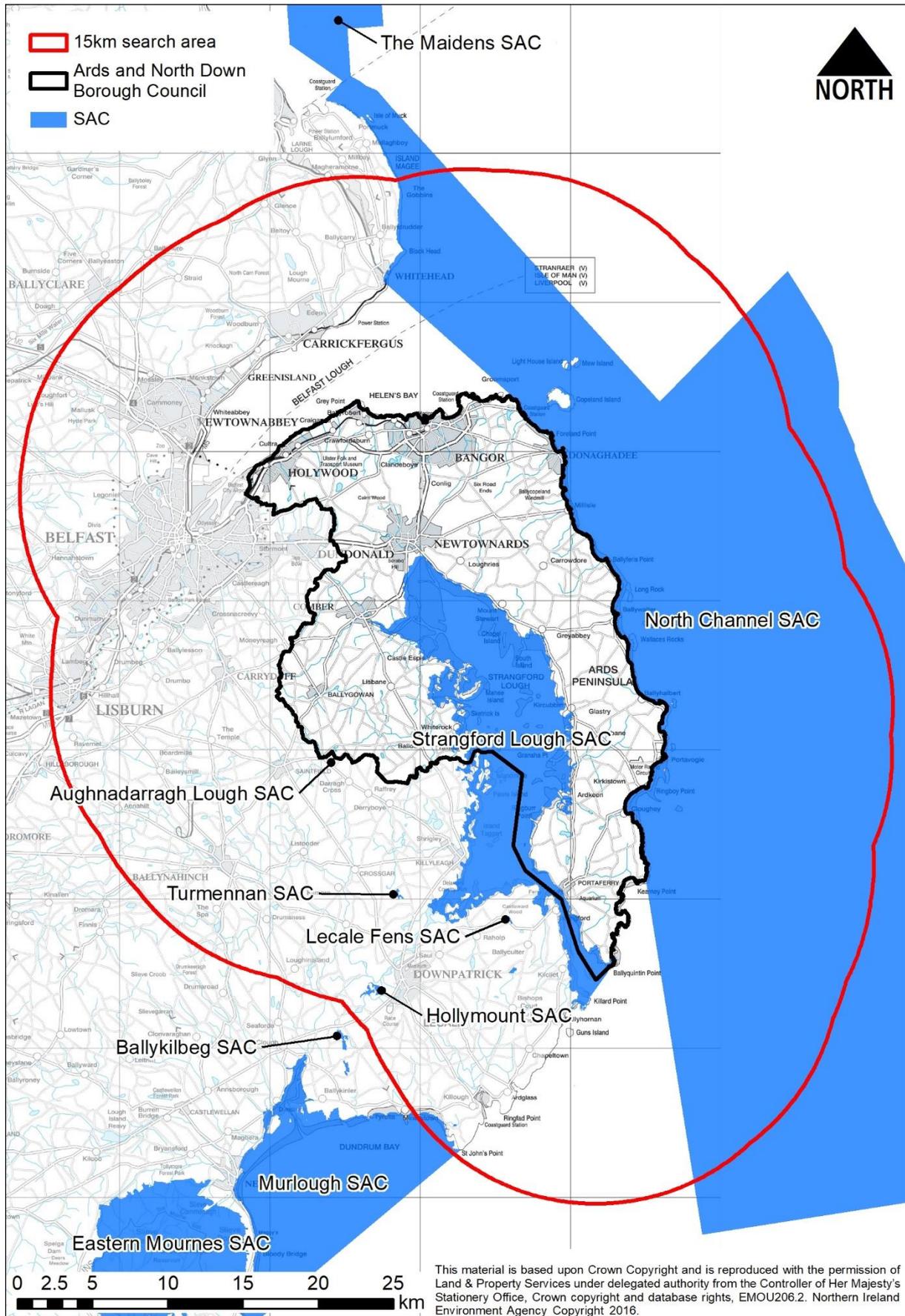


Figure A.7.2: SPAs in or within 15km of Ards and North Down Borough Council

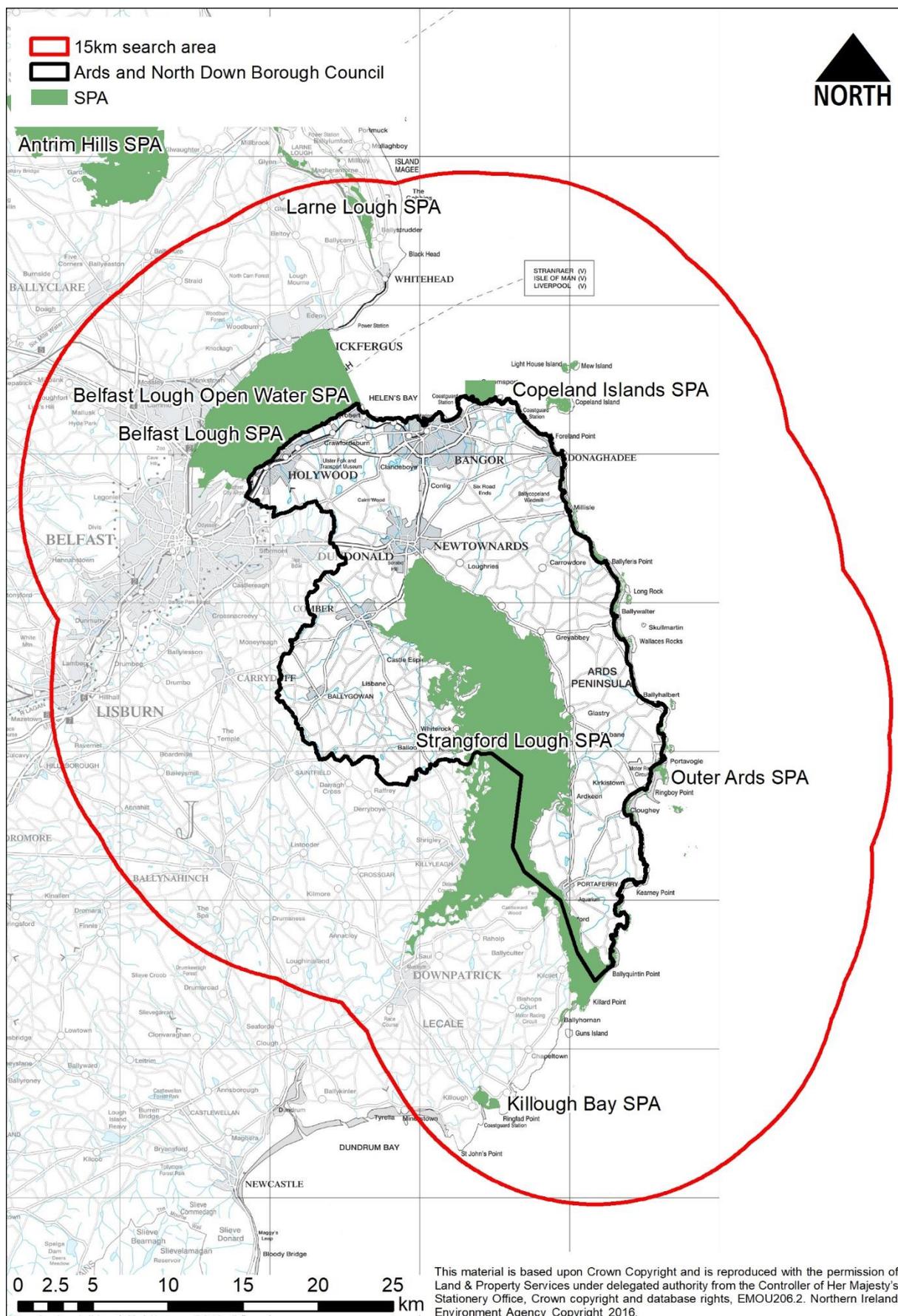


Figure A.7.3: Ramsar sites in or within 15km of Ards and North Down Borough Council

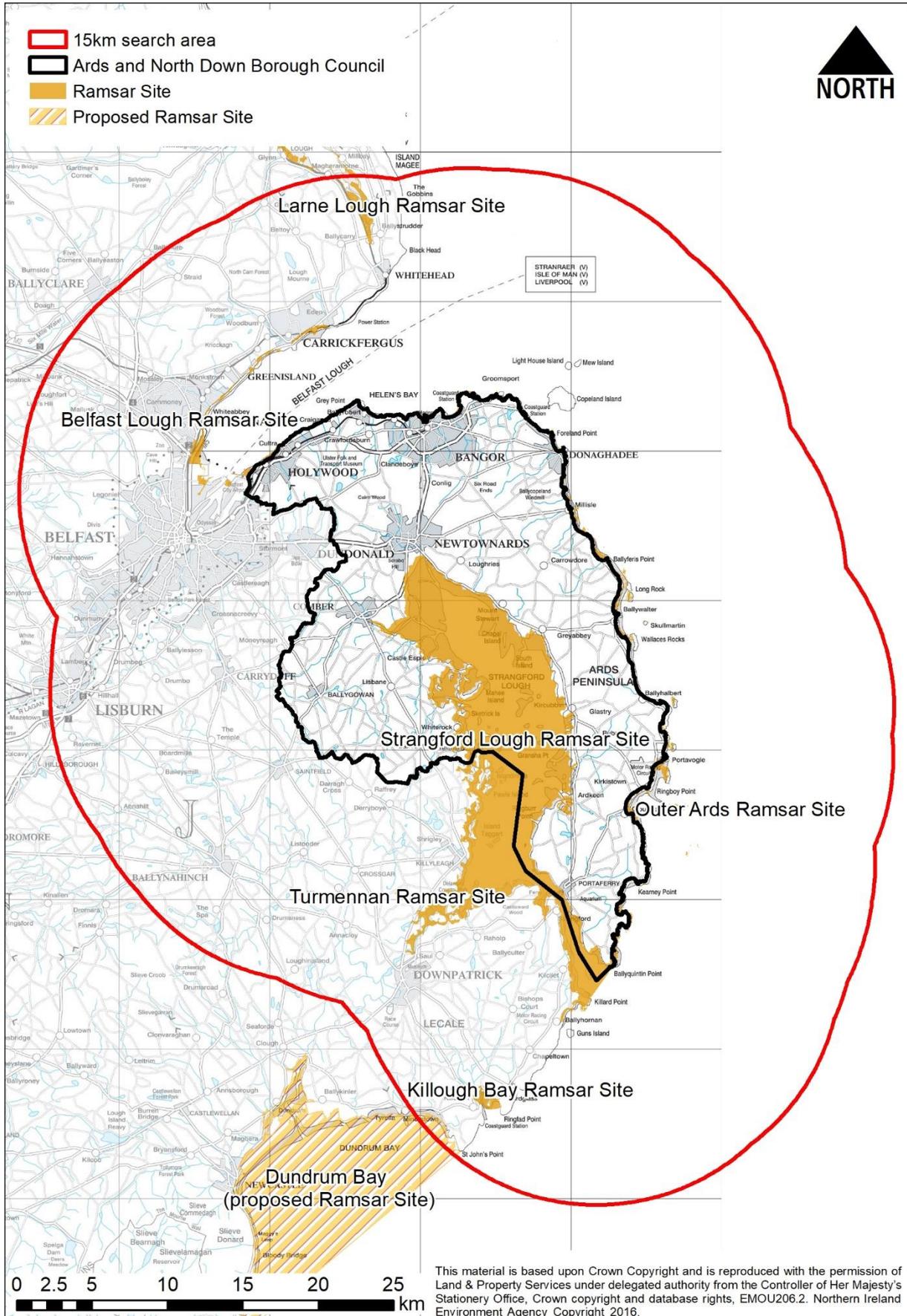
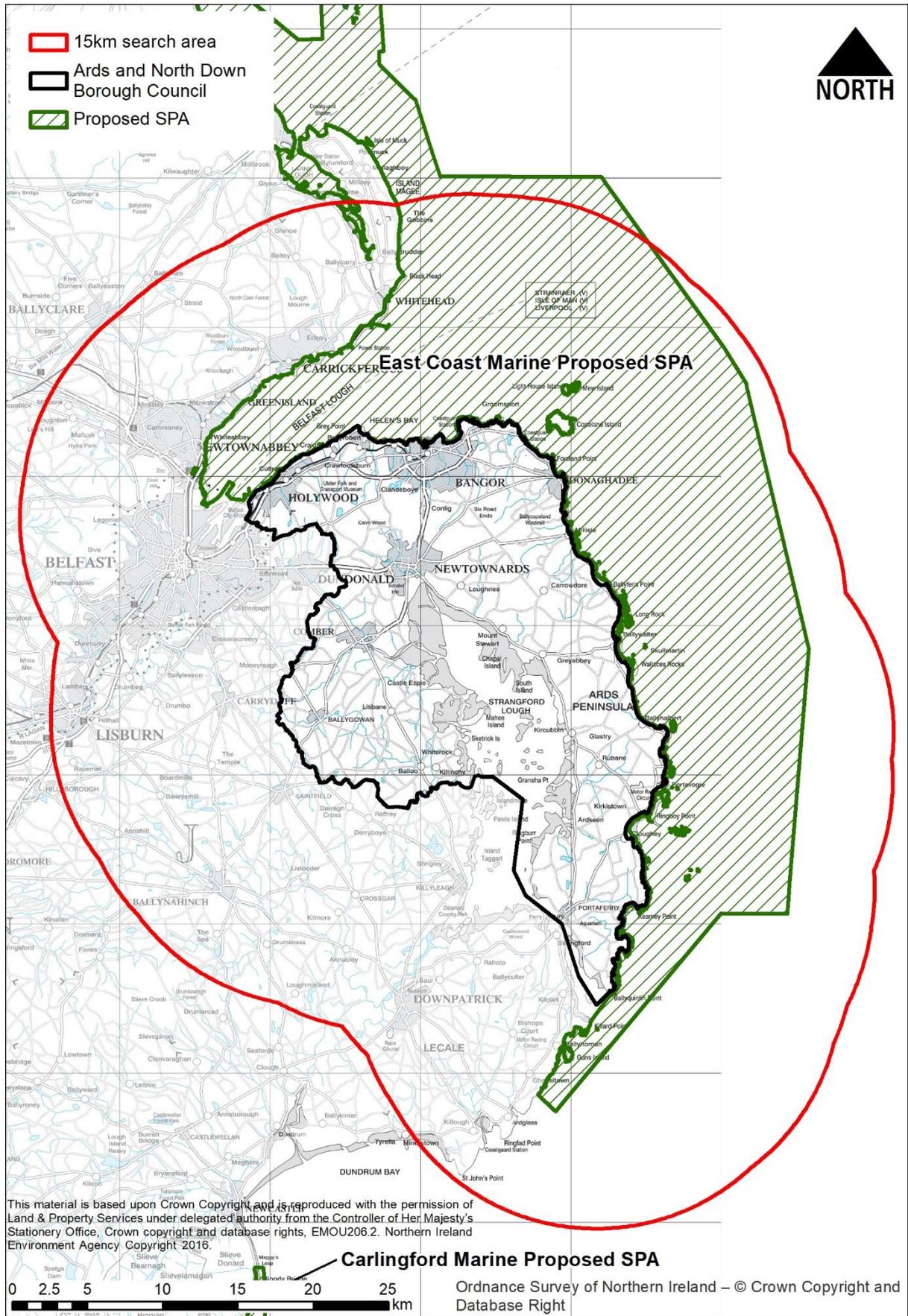


Figure A.7.4: Proposed SPAs



## Overall Potential Impacts

More detailed description follows in Table A.7.3 of potential development impacts that could arise as a result of the LDP. As more details of impacts that may arise through LDP delivery emerge these will be assessed in relation to European sites and their features. Note that this is a full list and some of the effects listed may not apply to the selection features of sites connected with the plan area.

**Table A.7.3: Potential development impacts to be assessed in relation to European sites**

Potential Impacts	Activities arising from the implementation of the LDP
Loss, fragmentation, damage of habitats and / or species:	Construction activities associated with the LDP could lead to the loss, fragmentation (or obstruction of movement) or damage of habitats and / or species through:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct land take and / or land clearance and the use of machinery/materials.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct and indirect impacts resulting from the construction and operation of built development and required infrastructure.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Impacts caused during repair and maintenance activities for built development and required infrastructure.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct impacts associated with mineral development in the plan area.</li> </ul>
Disturbance: physical, noise, lighting	Removal, fragmentation or physical changes to important connectivity features could create barrier effects to species, alter habitat availability or ecological functioning or result in changes in breeding, roosting, commuting and foraging behaviour.
	Noise or activity during construction and operational activities could have adverse impacts on sensitive species (marine mammals and birds in particular).
Biological Disturbance: invasive species, human disturbance	Increased lighting from construction or additional built development could: create barrier effects to species; result in changes in species breeding, roosting, commuting and foraging behaviour; or increase predation.
	Sensitive habitats and species may experience adverse impacts from the introduction of invasive species, non-native, competitive or predatory species through construction activities and associated machinery, movement of soils and waste or from garden escapes.
Contamination of land	Increased human activity (including recreation; increase in pet ownership; increased incidence in fires) close to sensitive habitats and species may cause disturbance that could impact negatively on these features and lead to displacement of sensitive species from certain locations.
	Waste arising from the operation of developments associated with the LDP could cause contamination of land which could have a direct detrimental impact on sensitive habitats or species or indirect impacts if subsequent emissions to water occur.
Emissions by air	The construction and operation of developments associated with the LDP (in particular industrial developments) have the potential to generate chemical and dust emissions and could make a contribution to acid rain or nutrient deposition resulting in significant adverse impacts to animals and sensitive habitats for example they could cause localised smothering of vegetation or potential health issues in animals, e.g. birds.

	<p>Increased traffic generation could lead to increased air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions which could have localized impacts on sensitive habitats or species.</p>
<p>Emissions by water and changes to hydrology</p>	<p>There is potential for an increased transport of chemical contaminants reaching the aquatic environment during the construction and operation of development associated with the LDP. This could range from transportation of fuels to cleaning or waste water treatment materials and associated drainage and discharges into watercourses. Changes to water quality can have harmful effects on fish, invertebrates, and vegetation, e.g. as a result of lowered oxygen levels.</p> <p>Surface run off and sediment release from construction works and operational activities associated with the LDP can increase sediment deposition and turbidity within aquatic systems. This can adversely impact on associated wildlife by causing shading effects that can inhibit plant and algal growth and smother organisms thereby limiting productivity and survival.</p> <p>Water abstraction from streams or lakes required for construction and operation of developments associated with the LDP could have physical impacts on water levels, fish species at intakes, affect populations of fish or alter the configuration or availability of breeding gravels.</p> <p>Construction and operation of development associated with the LDP could alter the hydrology of sensitive habitats and species by either increasing or decreasing runoff or water percolation into aquifers.</p> <p>Increased demands on waste water treatment works or for septic tanks could lead to increased nutrient enrichment of waterbodies which could change water quality and increase eutrophication. This in turn could have a harmful effect on the ecological functioning of these systems.</p>