



Local Development Plan 2030

# Preferred Options Paper

November 2016



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

# Consultation:

A copy of the Preferred Options Paper and all supporting documentation including the Sustainability Appraisal / SEA Interim Report is available on disc from the Council Offices or on the Mid Ulster District Council Website: [www.midulstercouncil.org/developmentplan](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/developmentplan)

The Preferred Options Paper is also available in hard copy or to view during office hours, 9am – 5pm at the following council offices:

Cookstown Office  
Burn Road, Cookstown  
BT80 8DT

Dungannon Office  
Circular Road, Dungannon  
BT71 6DT

Magherafelt Office  
50 Ballyronan Road  
BT45 6EN

Representation may be made during the consultation period via e-mail to [developmentplan@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:developmentplan@midulstercouncil.org) or in writing to Mid Ulster Council Planning Department, Magherafelt Office, 50 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6EN.

## The Consultation Period begins on Monday 7th November and closes at 5pm on Friday 27th January 2017.

There will be a series of public meetings and exhibitions with drop in sessions where we can hear your views. These will be held at the following locations:

### Burnavon Cookstown

#### Drop in sessions / exhibitions

8th November	10am-12noon 2pm – 4pm
9th November	10am-12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm – 8.30pm
10th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm

#### Public Meeting

8th November	7pm-9pm
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### The Corn Mill Centre, Coalisland

#### Drop in sessions / exhibitions

8th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
9th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm – 8.30pm
10th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm

#### Public Meeting

10th November	7pm-9pm
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### St Colms High School YC, Draperstown (beside library)

#### Drop in sessions / exhibitions

14th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
15th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm-8.30pm

#### Public meeting

14th November	7pm - 9pm
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### Walsh's Hotel Maghera

#### Drop in sessions / exhibitions

15th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
16th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
17th November	10am – 12noon 7pm - 8.30pm

#### Public meeting

16th November	7pm - 9pm
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### Bridewell Centre Magherafelt

#### Drop in sessions / exhibitions

16th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm-8.30pm
17th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
18th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm

#### Public meeting

17th November	7pm - 9pm
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### Clogher Mart, Clogher

#### Drop in sessions / exhibitions

21st November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm - 8.30pm
22nd November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm

#### Public meeting

22nd November	7pm - 9pm
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### **Ardboe Parish Centre**

#### **Drop in sessions / exhibitions**

23rd November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
24th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm-8.30pm

#### **Public meeting**

23rd November	7pm - 9pm
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### **Ranfurly, Dungannon**

#### **Drop in sessions / exhibitions**

29th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
30th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm-8.30pm
1st December	10am - 12 noon 2pm – 4pm

#### **Public meeting**

29th November	7pm - 9pm
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### **Rowantree Centre, Pomeroy**

#### **Drop in sessions / exhibitions**

30th November	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm
1st December	10am – 12noon 2pm – 4pm 7pm-8.30pm

#### **Public meeting**

30th November	7pm - 9pm
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# Introduction – An Invitation to Participate

Your views matter and can help shape how Mid Ulster District develops in the future. Mid Ulster Council has commenced preparation of the Mid Ulster Local Development Plan 2030 with publication of a Preferred Options Paper (POP).

This is the first formal stage in the preparation of our Local Development Plan. The POP is a consultation paper to promote debate on issues of strategic significance which are likely to influence the shape of future development within Mid Ulster. The intention is to stimulate a wide-ranging, yet focused, debate and encourage feedback from a wide variety of interests.

This POP has been prepared to inform interested parties and individuals on the matters that may have a direct effect on the area and to set out possible options for development as well as the council's preferred option to address those matters. This paper provides the public and stakeholders with an opportunity to put forward their views and influence the plan from the outset.

The POP proposes strategic guidelines for accommodating growth across Mid Ulster, together with housing allocations and policies. It also explores how the creation of new jobs and prosperity can be facilitated and how our environment can be enhanced and infrastructure improved. It provides a series of maps showing where possible constraints on development could be introduced and indicates directions of growth for the towns.

The POP is subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). The SA is a continual process which runs parallel with the preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP). An SEA Interim Report (consisting of SA Scoping Report and assessment of alternatives) is published under separate cover alongside this paper.

## Background

### What is the Local Development Plan?

The Local Development Plan will provide a blue print for accommodating new homes, businesses and leisure activities to improve the quality of our lives and meet the needs of our growing population whilst protecting our natural and built heritage for our children and our children's children.

The Plan will comprise a Plan Strategy and a Local Policies Plan. The Plan Strategy provides the framework for accommodating growth and managing sustainable development across the whole district. It is our first opportunity to tailor planning policy to local needs.

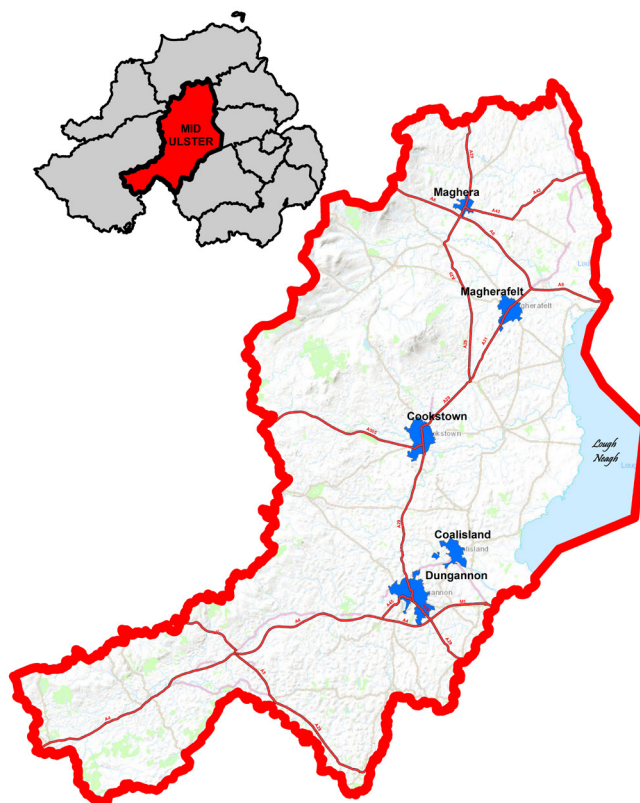
Once the Plan Strategy is agreed a Local Policies Plan will be prepared focusing on each town and villages by defining settlement limits, land use zonings, environmental designations, and introducing bespoke policies as appropriate to individual places.

The purpose of Plan is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and land use proposals that will implement the strategic objectives of the RDS and guide development decisions within Mid Ulster up to 2030.

### Plan Area

Mid Ulster District which incorporates the former Council areas of Cookstown, Dungannon & South Tyrone and Magherafelt, straddles two counties and has a combined area of 1955 square kilometres. It contains a varied landscape and possesses a diverse mix of rural and urban communities, from the main towns to the remote rural communities such as Dunnamore, Swatragh and Straw. Characterised by its rural nature, given the large proportion of households located in the small towns, villages and countryside it runs from Swatragh in the north to Fivemiletown in the south where it borders the Republic of Ireland. The district is dominated by the Sperrin Mountains in the west and the shores of Lough Neagh in the east.

Mid Ulster has a young population with those under 65 years accounting for 86.16% of its population, 2.17% higher than the Northern Ireland average. This figure however is set to decline to 81.59% by 2030, alongside Northern Ireland wide trends as the percentage of people aged 65+ continues to rise. The Agricultural Census (NI) 2015, confirmed that there were 4,155 farms in Mid Ulster, second highest only to Fermanagh and Omagh. And as of 2011 manufacturing provided 25.8% of employment, significantly above the Northern Ireland average of 10.9%. Levels of social deprivation varies throughout the district as does the prevalence of criminal behaviour, however Mid Ulster as a whole has lower recorded crime rates relative to the regional average.



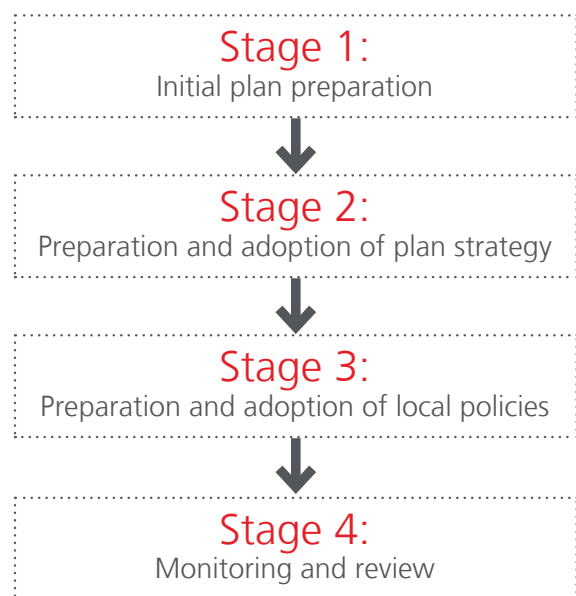


## Plan Process

The Local Development Plan (LDP) will comprise two development plan documents; The Plan Strategy (PS); and The Local Policies Plan (LPP).

The Mid Ulster Local Development Plan 2030 Plan will replace the Cookstown Area Plan 2010, Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010 and Magherafelt Area Plan 2015 upon adoption of both stages.

### Key stages in the LDP process:



**Stage 1:** Prior to the preparation of the PS and LPP the Council will prepare its Timetable, Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), produce its preferred options paper (POP) and undertake the initial stages of the sustainability appraisal (SA). The Mid Ulster Local Development Plan Timetable is attached at Appendix 1 and sets out the council's programme for the production of the Plan including key milestones and timelines, covering all elements of the process through to adoption. The SCI promotes a more meaningful and effective approach to enable interested parties and the local community to engage early in the plan process and throughout its preparation. The POP indicates the council's preferred options for growth and development in the area and provides a basis for consulting the public and stakeholders who will have an opportunity to put forward views and influence the LDP from the outset.

**Stage 2:** Preparation and publication of the draft PS, which will be independently examined prior to adoption. The draft PS will be based on information gathered and public / stakeholders responses to the POP. As part of this process, the council will carry out a range of assessments including (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Rural Proofing and publish them alongside its draft Plan Strategy for public consultation. At this stage an Independent Examination (IE) will examine the Draft PS against soundness tests relating to how it has been produced; how it has taken account of central government plans, policy and guidance; its coherence; consistency; and effectiveness. The Independent Examination examiner will then issue a report of its findings to the Department who will in turn consider these and issue a binding report to the council who must incorporate any changes outlined and subsequently adopt the PS. The PS will establish the strategic direction of the Plan and provide a level of certainty on which to base key development decisions in the area alongside the necessary framework for the preparation of the LPP. It will set the aims, objectives, overall growth strategy and associated generic policies applicable to the Plan Area.

**Stage 3:** The LPP which will be consistent with the adopted PS and incorporate detailed site specific policies and proposals associated with settlement limits, land use zonings and environmental designations required to deliver the council's vision, objectives and strategic policies. The draft LPP alongside associated assessments will be published for public consultation and then similarly to the PS be subjected to IE before adoption.

**Stage 4:** Monitoring and review of the Plan will be essential in establishing if the objectives are being achieved and whether any changes are required. The council will regularly monitor the implementation of the plan using key indicators such as: housing, employment land, and environmental protection. The Council will also prepare an annual monitoring report specifying the amount of housing and economic land, the number of housing completions and any other relevant information regarding the implementation of the LDP. The report will be submitted to the Department. And as required the council will undertake regular reviews of the LDP at least every 5 years from the date of adoption of the LPP and submit its findings to the Department.

### The Process So Far

To date (Stage 1) Mid Ulster Council has published its Timetable (Appendix 1), Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and has also undertaken significant evidence gathering to inform the preparation of this paper. A number of preparatory positions papers and planning policy review papers have been compiled and are available to view on the Councils website at [www.midulstercouncil.org/developmentplan](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/developmentplan)

- Development Pressure Analysis
- Employment and Economic Development
- Environmental Assets
- Housing
- Health, Education And Community Uses
- Housing Allocation
- Landscape Assessment
- Minerals
- Open Space, Recreation and Leisure
- Population Growth
- Utilities
- Strategic Settlement Evaluation
- Tourism
- Town Centre
- Transportation
- Urban Design

The Council has also undertaken the initial stages of a sustainability appraisal (SA). The purpose is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of the LDP. An SA Interim Report (including the Scoping Report) have been produced in parallel with this paper with the aim of considering the options and alternatives contained within this Preferred Options Paper. It is available under separate cover and also on the Councils website.

## Role of the Local Development plan:



## Regional Policy Context

### Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

This Plan is being prepared under the provisions of The Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011, taking into account European, national and regional policies that have implications for the future pattern of development.

### Principles of Sustainable Development

The Northern Ireland Executive's, 'Everyone's Involved - Sustainable Development Strategy,' (May 2010) 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 intends to strengthen the framework to address global issues such as climate change and sets out the following six guiding 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.

### Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environment Assessment

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

The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act) binds this duty by requiring those who exercise any function in relation to local development plans to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development. Additionally it requires an SA to be carried out for the PS and LPP, respectively to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation process.

As the SA for the PS and LPP will incorporate an assessment of environmental effects, it must also comply with the objective of the European Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive) which is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with the view to promoting sustainable development. The SEA Directive was transposed into Northern Ireland legislation through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (NI) 2004, which requires plans to be subjected to, and informed by, an SEA.

The main difference between SA and SEA is that SA is wider in scope as it covers the social and economic effects of plans, as well as the more environmentally focused considerations of SEA as required by the SEA Directive. Whilst the requirement to carry out a SA and SEA are distinct, it is possible to satisfy both these requirements through a combined appraisal process, SA incorporating SEA.

### Regional Development Strategy 2035

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) "Building a Better Future," (March 2012) provides a strategic and long term vision on the future development of Northern Ireland up to 2035. It contains regional guidance to provide policy direction in relation to the economy, society and environment and spatial framework guidance tailored to each component of the spatial planning framework. It sets the context in which to make policy and development decisions in order to achieve sustainable development throughout the region.

The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires the Plan to be in general conformity with the RDS.

The RDS identifies Dungannon and Cookstown as main hubs and Magherafelt as a local hub. Promoting co-operation between places and encouraging clustering of hubs so that services do not need to be duplicated but rather shared, it highlights these three towns which have the great potential for growth and which provide a range of services to the surrounding areas have the potential to form a cluster and are well positioned on two Key Transport Corridors. With reference to Mid Ulster's largely rural demographic the RDS emphasises the need to sustain rural communities living in smaller towns, villages and the open countryside, that this will require new development and employment opportunities which respect to local, social and environmental circumstances. With a key consideration being how these communities access services.

### Regional Transportation Strategy

Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future (ESTF) - A New Approach to Regional Transportation (June 2011) complements the RDS and contains high level aims and strategic objectives to support the growth of the economy, enhance the quality of life for all and reduce the environmental impact of transport. The document sets out the approach to regional transportation and is used to guide strategic investment decisions beyond 2015.

### The Strategic Planning Policy Statement - Planning for Sustainable Development

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) has been one of the most significant developments in terms of the policy context for the emerging Local Development Plan. It has already replaced a number of Planning Policy Statements (i.e. PPS1, PPS5 and PPS9) and will replace the full suite of Planning Policy Statements and relevant provisions of 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland' upon adoption of the LDP Plan Strategy. The SPPS consolidates some twenty separate policy publications into one document and sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It sets out the strategic direction for new councils to bring forward detailed operational policies within LDP's. It also provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development, which are;

- 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.

### Planning Policy Statements

Planning Policy Statements, (PPS's) address particular aspects of land-use planning and provide policies that apply across Northern Ireland. The existing suite of Planning Policy Statements will be cancelled when Mid Ulster District Council has adopted a new Plan Strategy for the whole of the council area. A transitional period will operate until such times as a Plan Strategy for the whole of the council area has been adopted. Any relevant supplementary and best practice guidance will also continue to apply.

### A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (1993) provided a compendium of policies that have gradually been replaced by PPSs and subsequent SPPS. However, it still contains key policies, such as those for controlling Overhead

Cables. The remaining provisions of the strategy will be cancelled when Mid Ulster District Council has adopted a new Plan Strategy for the whole of the council area. A transitional period will operate until such times as a Plan Strategy for the whole of the council area has been adopted. Any relevant supplementary and best practice guidance will also continue to apply.

### Supplementary Guidance

The following supplementary documents support the regional policies:

- Living Places – An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide (September 2014) aims to clearly establish the key principles behind good place making. It seeks to inform and inspire all those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across Northern Ireland.
- Building on Tradition - A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside (May 2012) seeks to aid 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 the countryside.
- Creating Places (May 2000) provides guidance to improve the quality of new housing developments, through the design, character and layout of new housing areas.
- A Design Guide for Rural Northern Ireland (May 1994) provides guidance to improve the quality of buildings in the countryside and assist them to fit into the landscape.
- Development Control Advice Notes explain the planning criteria and technical standards for assessing different types of development.

### Community Plan

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 introduced a statutory link between a council's community plan and local development plan. Therefore Mid Ulster Council's Local Development Plan must take account of its Community Plan. Public participation, particularly at the early stages of local development plan preparation is regarded as crucial in identifying relevant issues and local views in the plan process from the outset. The evidence gathered as part of the Community Planning process in Mid Ulster has also been an important consideration in arriving at the options contained within this paper and in working towards the vision of the emerging Community Plan.

### Equality of Opportunity

The Northern Ireland Act 1998, Equality of Opportunity, requires public authorities to carry out their functions with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, and sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

The Act also requires promotion of good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. The Plan will be accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) examining the likely effects of policies and proposals on the promotion of equality of opportunity. Work has already been undertaken in order to identify the likely issues impacting on equality of opportunity and how the options in this paper may impact on these. An Equality Impact Assessment progress report has been compiled to accompany this Preferred Options Paper and is available to view under separate cover and on the Council's website.



### Rural Proofing

The Mid Ulster LDP and its policies will be subject to Rural Proofing. The Northern Ireland Assembly recently embarked on an exercise to enhance the rural proofing process by placing it on a statutory footing. As a result the Rural Needs Act received Royal Assent on the 9th May 2016 and will commence for Local Councils on 1 June 2017. The Act seeks to safeguard the needs of rural communities, to promote a fair and inclusive rural society by introducing a duty on government and councils to consider the needs of our rural dwellers when they are developing their policies and delivering public services. This new legislation, imposes a statutory duty on Mid Ulster Council to consider rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services.

'Thinking Rural - The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing,' (March 2011) sets out the various stages of the rural proofing process by which all major policies and strategies are assessed to determine whether they have a differential impact on rural areas and, where appropriate, adjustments are made to take account of particular rural circumstances. The objective of the rural proofing is to ensure robust consideration and integration of rural issues at the outset of the policy making process to help ensure fair and equitable treatment for rural areas through the development of policies which are proportionate to need.

### Deprivation

'Lifetime Opportunities - the Government's Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland,' (November 2006) sets out goals tailored specifically for various age groups in order to meet the objective of working towards the elimination of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. It recognises different priorities at different stages in people's lives and the need for policies and programmes to be tailored to these specific needs and targeted at those in greatest objective need. The Strategy highlights a number of general challenges which become the priorities for future policy and action. These are:

- Eliminating poverty;
- Eliminating social exclusion;
- Tackling area based deprivation;
- Eliminating poverty from rural areas;
- Shared future – shared challenges;
- Tackling inequality in the labour market;
- Tackling health inequalities; and
- Tackling cycles of deprivation.

The LDP will have regard to this Strategy as it has a function to create a planning framework which facilitates development and targets investment and resources to tackle poverty and social deprivation in the local area.

### Natural Heritage / Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

International treaties and designations provide protection for our most important natural heritage in Mid Ulster. The 'Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy' (2002) aims to protect and enhance biodiversity up to 2016. It examines threats to biodiversity, provides an analysis of issues, sets out long term goals and discusses appropriate mechanisms and the role of key departments and stakeholders in biodiversity conservation.

Following reports on its progress a new biodiversity strategy is being prepared to help halt the loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems up to 2020.

Another requirement placed on the Council as the responsible planning authority is to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) "on the

conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora" - known as the Habitats Directive. In Northern Ireland, the main piece of legislation relating to nature conservation is contained in the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. This is supplemented by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 for the conservation of natural habitats, wild fauna and flora.

The HRA concerns Natura 2000 sites, which are areas protected for their conservation value. These areas consist of: Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which are designated as sites important for birds; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), which are sites designated to protect important habitats and species; and Ramsar sites, which are globally protected wetlands. The HRA work will be conducted alongside the sustainability appraisal process to ensure the processes inform each other. The HRA will be produced by the Shared Environmental Services in conjunction with the Council and will be reported upon separately at the Plan Strategy stage of the plan process.

### Planning in Republic of Ireland

The RDS encourages cross border co-operation, particularly with regards to improving communications, developing economic and enterprise networks and protecting and managing the environment. This is also encouraged in the Republic of Ireland where a planning framework is provided by development plans and guidance at national, regional, county and local level.

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS, 2002) provides a 20-year planning framework aimed at achieving a better balance of social, economic and physical development across Ireland. The need to support smaller towns, villages and rural areas at the The National Development Plan 2007–2013 (NDP) integrated strategic development frameworks for regional development, for rural communities, for all-island co-operation, and for protection of the environment with common economic and social goals. The NDP has since been succeeded by a Capital Investment Plan, 'Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021' which provides a framework for annual investment in the Republic targeted at increasing infrastructure, supporting economic recovery and jobs, supporting sustainable communities; productivity; education and training; and social inclusion.

The NSS is developed further in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (2010-2022), which presents a vision that by 2022 the Border Region will be a competitive area recognised as, and prospering from, its unique interface between the two economies.

# Growth Strategy and Spatial Framework

The preparation of the Local Development Plan will take account of the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan to facilitate the delivery of a shared vision for the Mid Ulster District. The Local Development Plan will provide a blue print for accommodating new homes, businesses and leisure activities to improve the quality of our lives and meet the needs of our growing population whilst protecting our natural and built heritage for our children and their children's children to enjoy.

The Plan will set out the long term social, economic and environmental objectives and spatial framework for the district. In doing so it will take account of regional policy context set by the Northern Ireland Executive and Central Government Departments.

The following current key issues have been identified within the District as matters which Mid Ulster Council wish to address in developing the vision for the growth of the District.

Mid Ulster has a population which is growing at a rate twice that of Northern Ireland which over the lifetime of the Plan is projected to increase by 21,000. By 2030 one in five of us will be under 16 years old and one in five will be over 65. We will also remain a geographically dispersed population with currently a quarter of us living in the main towns, a third living in local towns and 40% of our homes located in the countryside..

## Key Issues

## Population trends - Mid Ulster

NI population growth	(2001-2015) 9.6%
Mid Ulster Population growth	(2001-2015) 20.9%

NISRA: Mid Year Population estimates August 2016



## Population split

Rural\*  
70.84%



Urban  
29.16%



NISRA: – Review of statistical classification and delineation of settlements. \* Urban is a settlement with a population of 5,000 and above.

## Population estimates

145,930 (2016)  
165,063 (2030)



Age 65 + (2016) 13.84%  
Age 65+ (2030) 18.41%



Age 0-15 (2016) 22.96%  
Rise by 2,363 by 2030



The baseline population figures highlight a number of important sustainability issues for Mid Ulster including a significantly larger growth rate than the national average. This will provide challenges in terms of protecting the environmental characteristics of the area from not only the expansion of urban areas but also through the construction of dwellings in the countryside. Furthermore the growing population will also increase pressures on services and transportation infrastructure and increase pressures on the existing waste management systems.

Mid Ulster has a young population compared to the Northern Ireland average. This younger demographic represents a significant challenge for the Plan to adequately

allocate appropriate land for future housing provision and land for economic development and employment creation.

Whilst Mid Ulster has a smaller percentage of people above 65 years of age than the NI average this figure is on the rise. A Local Development Plan has a role to facilitate housing units to meet the needs of the elderly, particularly sheltered housing and smaller sized units and nursing/care homes. A rising elderly population will increase demand for health and community services, which the LDP will also need to accommodate.

## Employment – Mid Ulster (2014)



63.5% Age 16-64



69.5% Age 16-64



3.4 % Age 16-64



Gross Median wage

NISRSA records that the working population in Mid Ulster is mainly employed in the Services sector accounting for 63.1%, Manufacturing makes up 27.5%, while Construction accounts for 8% (NISRSA: – Merged Report for Mid Ulster (2014). There is also a strong entrepreneurial spirit in Mid Ulster with a higher

proportion of people in self-employment than in Northern Ireland generally. The 2011 Census of those economically active (16-74) revealed almost 19% of males in Mid Ulster are self-employed but only 14% for NI. Dungannon and Torrent's unemployment level however remains poor in comparison to elsewhere in Mid Ulster (Oxford Economics)

## Deprivation – Mid Ulster

5.1% homes assessed unfit (NI 2.4%)



2.2% no central heating (NI 1%)

40.6% homes fuel poverty (NI 43.7%)

MUDC – Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Scoping Report 2016

Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) identifies Magherafelt as the least deprived of the former 26 LGDs in NI, with Cookstown 15th and Dungannon and South Tyrone ranked 12th (MUDC – Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Scoping Report 2016) An ageing population raises issues around the population's mobility, as two thirds of pensioners are living in households without a car. This represents a challenge for the Plan to ensure that services are more accessible to those most vulnerable in society.

Whilst the NIMDM figures for Mid Ulster have shown a marked improvement since 2005 there are still concentrations of areas within the district which deprivation is reflected in income and employment. Under the 2010 figures Coalisland (North and South), Ardboe, Stewartstown and Maghera were the most deprived areas in Mid Ulster. The Plan therefore has an important role to play in addressing employment and low incomes through the provision of an appropriate supply and location of economic development land.

## Life Expectancy & Health Care

NI Male Life Expectancy 77.7

MU Male Life Expectancy 78.8



NI Female Life Expectancy 82.1

MU Female Life Expectancy 82.8



NISRA: – Merged Report Mid Ulster 2016

## Maximum Travel time within Mid Ulster LGD 2014

GP Premises  
15.22 mins



Dentist  
18.42mins



A& E Hospital  
50.39 mins



NISRA: – Merged Report Mid Ulster 2016

Mid Ulster has a marginally higher average life expectancy than that of NI as a whole. This coupled with the fact that almost one half of the people over 60 in NI live with a long term illness will place significant pressure on health services and facilities. The Plan can play its part in ensuring these services are more accessible.

According to NISRA reports:

- Nearly one half of people over 60 in Northern Ireland live with a long term illness/disability,

- Limiting long term illness figures for NI 2001 - 20.4% and in 2011 - 20.69%.
- Limiting long term illness figures for Mid Ulster in 2001 - 20.51% and in 2011 - 19.39%,.
- 10.96% of people in Mid Ulster stated that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others.



## Educational Attainment

20.72% degree qualification or higher\*



43.0% with no or low qualifications\*



404 MU Participants on Training for Success (2015)†

\* NISRA: – Merged Report Mid Ulster 2016

† NISRA: Training for success participants 2015

Education has an important role in promoting economic wellbeing and also improves access to employment opportunities. Whilst the percentage of the population within Mid Ulster with a degree has increased significantly since 2001, Mid Ulster still has a significantly lower

percentage with a third level qualification than NI as a whole. It is not the role of the Plan to zone land for educational facilities however where a need is identified by a provider the Plan can designate and protect this land for this purpose.

## Transport

76.63% of Mid Ulster population travel to work by car \*



1.86% of Mid Ulster use Public Transport to travel to work \*



2004-2012 RTA Causalities fell by 28%†



\*Census 2011 □ MUDC Position Paper Transport 2015 †Oxford Economics MUDC Consultancy Support for Social, Economic and Environmental Data Analysis, January 2015.

Transportation within the Mid Ulster District is an important consideration for the Plan. Mid Ulster has a high reliance on the private car, which is explained in part by the high proportion of rural dwellers within the district. While there is a high reliance on the car it is important to note that 75% of employed people living within Mid Ulster also work within Mid Ulster making connectivity across the district a significant issue. (MUDC Position Paper Transport 2015) In the long term public transport may have a more important role, particularly if rail links are extended into the district.

In comparison to the regional average, Mid Ulster's employed are generally less likely to use public transport to travel to work. The pattern is equally as likely if the persons have no access to their own vehicle, suggesting a problem with accessibility. The long travel times to public services with a 50 minute travel time to an acute care hospital for those living in Mid Ulster highlights the necessity for our roads infrastructure to be appropriate to the needs of the District.

## Housing

48,072 Total No. of Households\*



2.88 Average Household Size Census 2011



20.99% increase in No. of Households between 2001-2011†



\*MUDC : Position Paper Housing Allocation July 2015 † Census 2001

Housing is a key driver of physical, economic and social change and emphasises the importance of the relationship between the location of housing, jobs, facilities services and infrastructure. The role of the development plan is to provide housing land in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy and to manage housing growth to

achieve sustainable patterns of residential development, to support urban and rural renaissance and strengthen community cohesion. Currently in Mid Ulster over 500 households are registered as being in need of social housing.

## Tourism

213,740  
Overnight Trips  
(NINIS 2014)



622,114 Nights  
Stayed Overnight  
(NINIS 2014)



£26.59 Million  
Spend on Over-  
night Trips (2014)



NISRA: Tourism Statistics 2014

Mid Ulster has significant tourism potential, boasting Lough Neagh and its associated wetlands and the Sperrin Mountains, which are two of the nine 'key destinations' identified in the Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020. Unfortunately low tourist visitor numbers

and overnight stays are reflective of low investment in tourism infrastructure. The Plan has an important role in helping the District tap into its tourism potential in a sustainable manner.

## Natural environment

24,848 Ha  
Sperrin AONB  
within Mid Ulster



European and National  
Designations cover  
12% of Mid Ulster



21 Priority Habitats in MU  
out of 45 identified in NI



MUDC Planning Department 2016

Northern Ireland possesses 45 no. Priority Habitats and of these 21 no. have been identified within Mid Ulster. These priority habitats are vulnerable and susceptible to damage. Without the Plan the protection and enhancement of

biodiversity may be impacted on. The pursuit of economic and social objectives must be carefully managed to avoid potential impact on vulnerable habitats and landscapes.

## Open space - Leisure

98 Equipped  
Play Areas  
Mid Ulster



259.7 km  
Cycling, Walking and  
Canoeing trails



Mix of formal and  
informal outdoor  
spaces



\*MUDC : Position Paper Seven Open Space, Recreation and Leisure 2015

Mid Ulster is well served in relation to the provision of formal and informal open space and leisure facilities. The

Plan has an important role to ensure protection of these for our current and future generations.

## Utilities

12 Recycling  
Centres  
Mid Ulster\*



15 Reservoirs  
across Mid  
Ulster District\*



10 Windfarms,  
349 Single Turbines  
approved†



MUDC Position Paper Six Public Utilities 2015 † DOE Stats

Utility provision in the Local Development Plan must take account of the regional planning framework set out by the Regional Development Strategy 2035 and the SPPS to assist judgements on the allocation of housing growth and to ensure that sufficient land is allocated to meet the anticipated needs of the community. The provision

of public utilities within the plan area is primarily the responsibility of a number of government Departments and statutory bodies as well as the District Councils, however the private sector is playing an increasingly important role in this sector.

## Cultural Heritage

Mid Ulster has approx  
14% of NI's  
Listed Buildings



1524 Monuments  
in Mid Ulster  
(1312 unscheduled)



25 Areas of  
Archaeological  
Potential



MUDC – Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Scoping Report 2016

Mid Ulster has a rich cultural heritage and the Plan will ensure that it is protected and enhanced for the benefit of our own and future generations. Through the protection of our cultural heritage the Council has the potential to unlock greater economic benefits from its' historic environment.

This protection is key to the people of Mid Ulster and visitors to our district to understand and enjoy the unique history of the area.

## Vision for Mid Ulster and Plan Objectives

The Mid Ulster Local Development Plan will share the vision of the Regional Development Strategy;

**“An outward-looking, dynamic and liveable Region with a strong sense of its place in the wider world; a Region of opportunity where people enjoy living and working in a healthy environment which enhances the quality of their lives and where diversity is a source of strength rather than division.”**

And it will share the aims of the RDS to:

- Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of the Region.
- 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 adaptation to climate change.

However our Plan will be tailored in line with our emerging Community Plan which presents a vision of:

**“Mid Ulster...a welcoming place where our people are content, healthy and safe; educated and skilled; where our economy is thriving; our environment and heritage are sustained; where our public services excel”**

The role and function of the Local Development Plan for Mid Ulster is to provide a 15 year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of the District in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development. The LDP provides a unique opportunity for the council to shape places for local communities, by adopting a joined up approach linking to other functions such as regeneration, local economic development and community planning.

To address the vision of the RDS, the emerging Community Plan and the current key issues within Mid Ulster our Plan will contain a set of objectives to aid the sustainable development of the District.



## Plan Objectives

To achieve this vision the Local Development Plan will include strategic policies, site allocations and more specific development policies to guide development within the Mid Ulster District to 2030. The objectives of the Local Development Plan are set out below and are in general conformity with the emerging Community Plan and the Councils Corporate Plan 2015-2019.

### Accommodating People and Creating Places

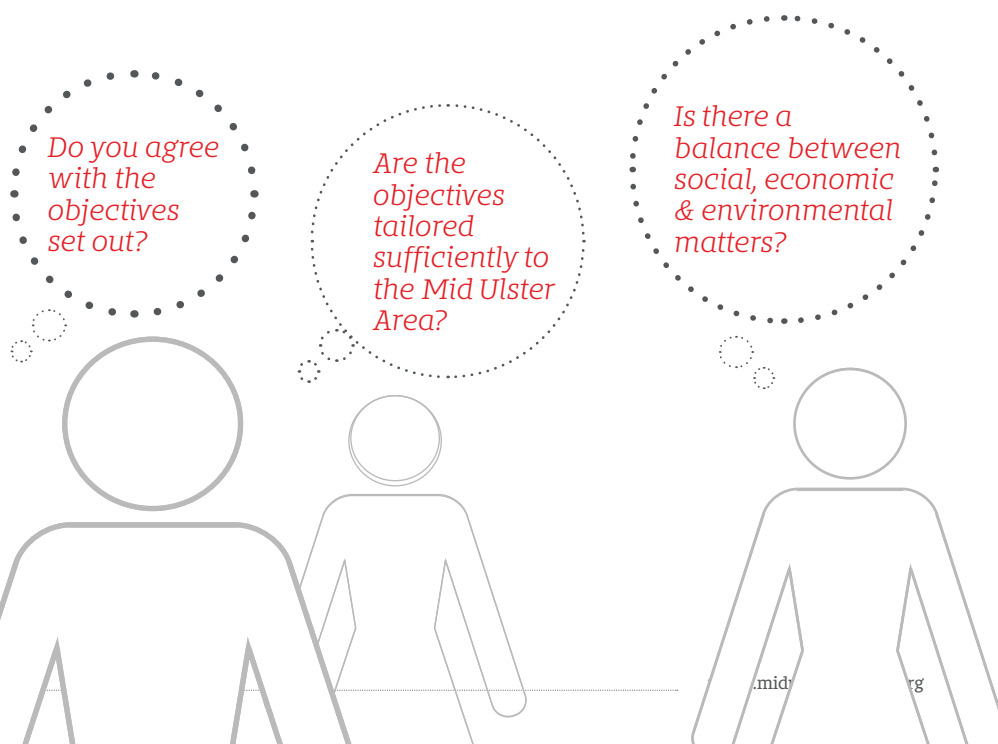
- To build Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt as economic and transportation hubs and as the main service centres for shops, leisure activities, public administrative and community services including health and education. These are the most populated places and the town centres are the most accessible locations for people to travel to including those without a car.
- To protect and consolidate the role of local towns and villages so that they act as local centres for shops and community services meeting the daily needs of their rural hinterlands.
- 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.
- To provide for 11,000 new homes by 2030 in a range of housing capable of meeting the needs of families, the elderly and disabled, and single people, at locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities, for those people with and without a car. (MUDC Position Paper – Housing Allocation Addendum – Revised HGI figures June 2016)
- To recognise the needs of both growing families and carers of the elderly and disabled by accommodating development which allows people to remain within their own communities and does not lead to significant harm to neighbours or the built and natural environment.
- To facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of transportation in accordance with the community plan.
- To accommodate cultural differences in our communities whilst promoting “shared spaces” to bring people together with equality of opportunity.

## Creating jobs and promoting prosperity

- To facilitate the creation of at least 8,500 new jobs by 2030 at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car. (MUDC Position Paper Three – Addendum Employment and Economic Development June 2016)
- To promote diversity in the range of jobs recognising the importance of employment in the primary sector (agriculture forestry and mining), secondary sector (industry and manufacturing) and tertiary sector (administration, commerce, retailing, leisure and tourism).
- To recognise and accommodate entrepreneurship, innovation for large, medium and small firms by attracting new firms and accommodating expanding businesses.
- The need to recognise the importance of self-employment and home working, particularly in rural locations.
- To encourage energy efficiencies and promote use of renewable energy.

## Enhancing the environment and improving infrastructure

- To reduce contributions and vulnerability to climate change and to reduce flood risk and the adverse consequences of flooding.
- The need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and wellbeing.
- The need to accommodate investment in power, water and sewerage infrastructure, and waste management particularly in the interests of public health.
- The need to improve connectivity between and within settlements and their rural hinterland through accommodating investment in transportation to improve travel times, alleviate congestion and improve safety for both commercial and private vehicles as well as more sustainable modes of transport including buses, walking and cycling.
- The need to improve connectivity through telecommunications which both meets the needs of business and private households whilst reducing the need to travel.



## Spatial framework

In line with the Regional Development Strategy and to achieve balanced and sustainable growth the Plan is proposing a Spatial Strategy based on building the Hubs and Clusters and Transport Corridors. Mid Ulster is also served by Local Towns, Villages and Smaller Settlements and Dispersed Rural Communities set within many vulnerable landscapes.

The skeletal framework for development is provided by the transportation corridors. The A4, A5 and A6 are key transport corridors with the A29, A31 and A505 identified as link corridors. Along the corridors are the main hubs and gateways. Belfast is recognised as the primary engine of growth with Derry/ Londonderry as the main economic hub of the North West. Within Rural Northern Ireland, growth is balanced across a polycentric network of hubs and clusters based on the main towns. These have a strategic role as centres of employment and services and in terms of accommodating population and housing growth. Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt have been identified as the three main hubs of Mid Ulster and have the potential to form a cluster. Thus, they will be the primary growth centres in the Mid Ulster District.

Mid Ulster lies in “Rural Northern Ireland” where the RDS supports the development of a strong, diversified and competitive rural economy and a living, working countryside. The RDS also promotes the continuing renewal and revitalisation of towns and villages, improving accessibility of the rural community, and managing and enhancing the natural and built heritage. Thus the Plan’s growth strategy will provide for balanced growth across the smaller towns and villages and recognise the needs of the rural community.

Taking into account the RDS the following Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Plan have been formulated to support our achievement of the Plan Objectives. Planning policies will be formulated to accord with them: -

**SPG 1** - Manage growth based on sustainable patterns of development balanced across Mid Ulster, in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy with settlement limits defined for all settlements to provide compact urban forms and to protect the setting of individual settlements;

**SPG 2** - Focus growth within the three main hubs of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt and strengthen their roles as the main administrative, trade, employment and residential centres within the district;

**SPG 3** - Consolidate the role of the local towns of Coalisland and Maghera as service centres for their hinterlands providing appropriate development opportunities for housing, employment and leisure activities, in keeping with the scale and character of these settlements;

**SPG 4** - Maintain and consolidate the role of the villages as local service centres providing opportunity for housing, employment and leisure activities in keeping with the scale and character of individual settlements;

**SPG 5** - Provide development opportunities within small settlements appropriate to their size and scale, allowing for single houses and small groups of up to 6 houses;

**SPG 6** - Accommodate development within the countryside that supports the vitality and viability of rural communities without compromising the landscape or environmental quality and whilst safeguarding our natural and built heritage;

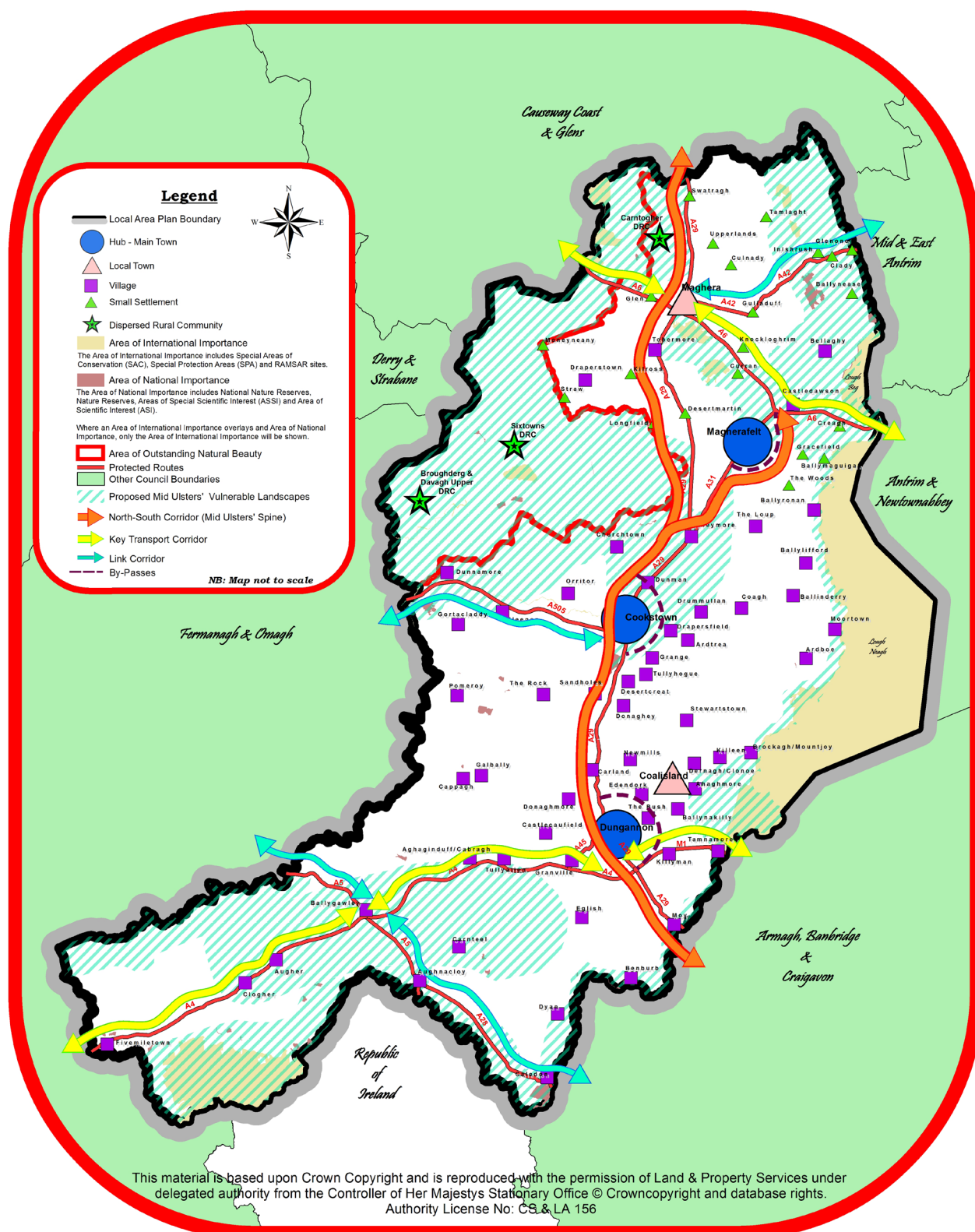
**SPG 7** – Support rural regeneration in remoter areas through the designation of Dispersed Rural Communities (DRC’s);

**SPG 8** – Encourage improvements to public and private transportation provision including railway lines and upgrading of the road network;

**SPG 9** – Facilitate improvements to the A29 which acts as the transportation spine and link between Mid Ulster’s hubs and other trunk roads crossing the district;

**SPG 10** – Facilitate the protection of vulnerable landscapes and conservation interests, from inappropriate and over dominant development while promoting adequate provision of open space and landscaping integrated with broader green and blue infrastructure systems.

# Growth Strategy Map



## Settlements

The RDS has an objective to deliver development in a more sustainable manner. This means providing additional housing in the main urban centres whilst also sustaining rural communities' i.e. smaller towns, villages and open countryside. It is important to reinforce our vibrant rural communities so that they do not begin to decline at the expense of the main urban hubs. This provides a possible framework to accommodate future growth comprising housing, employment, leisure, and health and community development.

The approach to settlement hierarchy is largely dictated by the RDS Spatial Framework and in particular the Evaluation Framework Table and the Hierarchy of Settlements and Infrastructure Wheel. We are therefore limited in terms of the options open to us in considering the Settlement Hierarchy for Mid Ulster. The Settlement Hierarchy should accord with the RDS and the position of each settlement within that hierarchy is considered case by case against the RDS. The role of each settlement in the hierarchy and the related infrastructure that you would expect to see within each is set out in the table below.

## Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Infrastructure

Hierarchy	Skills	Health	Social	Environment
<b>Towns:</b> the main administrative, trade employment and residential centres which provide appropriate development opportunities for housing, employment and leisure activities appropriate to their scale and character. (SPG2 & SPG 3)	Further Education, Special Schools, Library, Post Primary ,	Minor Injuries, Out Patients, Pharmacy Health Centres, Social Services, Day-care Centres,	Leisure Centre, Visitor Centre, Arts & Culture Centres, Community Centre, Sports facility, Welfare Services,	Recycling, Renewables, Water & Sewers Supply/ Treatment plants, waste-landfill, waste - recycle
<b>Villages:</b> Local service centres which provide opportunities for housing, employment and leisure activities appropriate to their scale and character. (SPG4)	Nursery, Primary School	Doctor, Ambulance Outreach Services	Local Halls, Play Areas	Access to clean water Sewage disposal
<b>Small Settlements:</b> provide development opportunities appropriate to their size and scale, allowing for single houses and small groups of up to 6 houses. (SPG5)	Small Settlements may contain only a limited amount of infrastructure at a smaller scale than that contained above in the village's category.			

Commercial	Justice	Productive	Networks
Shopping centres, Retail warehousing, Range of Restaurants, Supermarket, Restaurants, Mix of retail facilities,	Police Station/ District, County Courts, Probation Service Neighbourhood Watch Neighbourhood Watch Neighbourhood Watch	Industrial Park, Tourism Office, Enterprise Centre, Information Office,	Major Roads, Bus/Rail, Park N' Ride, Cycle Network, Link Corridors/Trunk Roads, Bus/Rail to larger centres,
Shop, Pub, Post Office, Petrol Station		Workshop/ Business Unit	Local Roads, Broadband, Urban Street Lighting, Local Bus, Cycle



## Existing and Proposed Settlement Hierarchy in Mid Ulster

Of the three existing Area plans relevant to Mid Ulster District only the Magherafelt Area plan 2015 was prepared in the context of the RDS. The Draft Plans for both the Cookstown Area Plan 2010 and the Dungannon & South Tyrone Area Plan 2010 were published before the introduction of the RDS. There are therefore differences between the three plans in relation to the number of tiers within the settlement hierarchy. The area plans for Cookstown and Dungannon & South Tyrone contain two classifications, Towns and Villages whilst the more recent Magherafelt Area Plan (2015) specifies three designations, Town, Villages and Small Settlements.

In the Cookstown Area Plan, 25 villages are designated in addition to the main town of Cookstown. In the Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan, both Dungannon and Coalisland are designated as towns in addition to 31

Villages. Many of the villages designated in the Cookstown and Dungannon Areas vary greatly in size, form and function and in their capacity to accommodate growth. In the Magherafelt Area Plan 2015 Magherafelt and Maghera are identified as towns in addition to four villages and 21 small settlements.

A Strategic Settlement Evaluation of all settlements against the RDS framework was carried out by Mid Ulster Council in July 2015 (See table 1 below). The evaluations have confirmed Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt as the main towns of the District and has resulted in the proposed reclassification of a number of the other settlements. The ability of each of these settlements to accommodate growth will differ dependent upon a number of factors including physical, environmental and infrastructure constraints. It is considered that this proposed hierarchy provides consistency across the district i.e. a three tier settlement hierarchy consisting of towns, villages and small settlements and also allows for reclassification of existing settlements and identification of new ones.



# Table 1: Proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid-Ulster District.

Hierarchy	Former Cookstown local government district	Former Dungannon & South Tyrone local government district	Former Dungannon & South Tyrone local government district
Towns:	Cookstown	Dungannon & Coalisland	Magherafelt & Maghera
Villages:	Ardboe Ballinderry Ballylifford Ballyronan Churchtown Coagh Drummulan Moneymore Moortown Orritor Pomeroy Sandholes Stewartstown The Loup The Rock	Aghaginduff/ Cabragh Annaghmore Augher Aughnacloy Benburb Brockagh/ Mountjoy Caledon Castlecaulfield Clogher Ballygawley Donaghmore Edendork Eglish Fivemiletown Galbally Granville Killyman Moy Newmills Tamnamore The Bush	Bellaghy Castledawson Clady Desertmartin Draperstown Gulladuff Swatragh Tobermore Upperlands
Small Settlements:	Ardtrea Desertcreat Donaghey Drapersfield Dunnamore Dunman Gortacladdy Grange Killeenan Tullyhogue Tullywiggan*	Ballynakilly Cappagh Carland Carnteel Dyan Dernagh / Clonoe Killeen Tullyallen	Ballymaguigan Ballynease Creagh Culnady Curran Glen Glenone Gracefield Inishrush Kilross Knockcloghrim

Settlements identified in red have been re-positioned from the previous settlement hierarchy within the Cookstown 2010, Dungannon and South Tyrone 2010 and Magherafelt 2015 Area Plans. \*Tullywiggan has been identified as a new settlement

# Housing

## Housing Allocations and Zoning

The RDS introduced fundamental and significant changes to the manner in which development plans must provide for future housing requirements. The approach now taken is known as “Plan, Monitor and Manage” which seeks to ensure that plans are sustainable, balanced and integrated. The RDS 2035 sets policy direction for the provision of housing that aims to deliver development in a more sustainable manner. It sets a regional target of 60% of new housing to be located in appropriate ‘brownfield’ sites within the urban footprints of settlements greater than 5,000 population. Within Mid Ulster this applies to the towns of Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Coalisland. The availability of brownfield land within these settlements may not meet the 60% target. In assessing housing need across the District the RDS expects that Councils will apply the RDS Housing Evaluation Framework and take account of the NIHE Housing Needs Assessment, existing commitments (built, approved, and likely to be approved) and potential windfall (‘Windfall’ sites are those that may come forward on an ad hoc basis as unforeseen circumstances arise and are sites that are assessed against planning policies at that time). It also advises that in preparing a plan a council should undertake an urban capacity study and where appropriate transport assessments. The guidance sets a sequential approach to site identification, adopting existing urban sites first, before expansions to towns and cities and treating major expansion of a village or small rural settlement only in exceptional circumstances, and the creation of new settlements in the last resort.

## Urban Housing in Current Area Plans

The Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010 was adopted in March 2005 and prepared prior to the publication of the RDS. The plan allocates 257 hectares of housing land across Phase 1 and Phase 2 zonings within Dungannon and 121 hectares across both phases in Coalisland. In 2015 just under 31% of the Phase 1 housing land in Dungannon and nearly 22% in Coalisland had been developed (2015 Housing Monitor for Mid Ulster). In 2015, of the 25 zoned housing sites in Dungannon, 3 were complete, 6 had no commitments and the remaining 16 may be described as ‘active’. In Coalisland, 13 of the 20 zoned housing sites were ‘active’, 5 are complete and the remaining 2 had no commitments. Phase 2 land has not been released in either town.

The Cookstown Area Plan 2010 was adopted in 2004 and was also prepared prior to the publication of the RDS. It has zoned 148 hectares of land for housing to be released in two phases in Cookstown. Phase 2 housing land has not yet been released. Land has not been specifically zoned for housing in the villages.

In 2015 within Cookstown 26% of the zoned housing land had been developed (2015 Housing Monitor for Mid Ulster). Of the 20 zoned housing sites, only one was complete and 15 could be described as ‘active’ in that work had already commenced or a planning permission had been obtained or applied for on part or all of the land. The remaining 4 sites had no planning commitments.

The Magherafelt Area Plan 2015 was adopted in December 2011. Approximately 108 hectares of land are zoned for housing across the two towns within it: 77 hectares in Magherafelt and 30.3 hectares in Maghera. In addition, there are 52 hectares of land designated as Housing Land Use Policy Areas across four villages (Bellaghy, Castledawson, Draperstown and Tobermore). The Housing Monitor 2015 confirms that approximately 8.5% of the housing land in Magherafelt had been developed compared to around 39% in Maghera. Of the 25 sites zoned in Magherafelt, 5 were complete, 12 were ‘active’ and the remainder have no commitments. In Maghera, 11 of the 16 zoned sites are ‘active’ and 3 are complete and 2 have no commitments.

Therefore at 2015, all five towns have more than half of the land zoned for housing remaining undeveloped. This is particularly notable for the Cookstown and Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plans which have both passed their notional end dates. This lack of activity may in part be reflective of the cooling of the economic climate.

## Rural Housing

Unlike the Urban Housing Monitor, there is currently no rural housing monitor and therefore an estimate of development can only be made based on the number of applications approved. Approvals for rural houses are currently influenced by the policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 21 (June 2010), which are largely mirrored within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement. In the period 2012-2014 the average number of single dwellings approved per year in the former Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt Districts has been 54, 87 and 104 respectively. Assuming these rates remained constant over a 15-year plan period under the policy context of PPS21 (which is mirrored in the SPPS), there could be an additional 3,670 dwellings approved in Mid Ulster over the plan period.

The challenge for the Plan is to allocate an appropriate level of housing in the rural area so that we achieve our objective of providing for vital and vibrant rural communities and our SPG 6 and to develop a planning policy to manage to such growth.

## Housing Growth Indicators (HGI)

Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) provide an estimate of future housing need in Northern Ireland. The figures use household projections produced by NISRA as the basis for their calculations. The figures are therefore based on current population/household formation trends making the assumption that these trends will continue into the future. They are therefore guidance, rather than a cap on housing development in the area or a target to be achieved.

The latest HGIs issued by the Department use 2012 figures based on household projections and are calculated for the time period 2012-2025. A Revised HGI of 9,500 has been assigned to Mid Ulster and when broken down over the 13 year HGI period this equates to a yearly pro rata figure of approximately 730 houses per year which equates to a 6.3% reduction in the HGI figure previously allocated to Mid Ulster for the three legacy Council districts for the period of 2008-2025 which was set at 13,300.

## Options for Housing Allocation

In line with our Growth Strategy Map and Strategic Planning Guidelines the settlement growth strategy which the Council wish to adhere to in the allocation of housing land across the District is to:

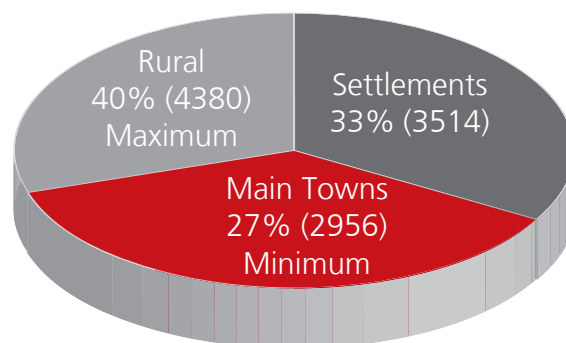
- Focus major population and economic growth on the 3 main hubs. In terms of housing, this means

large scale housing land being zoned in these hubs.

- Provide balanced growth in smaller towns with a degree of housing development being provided for.
- Maintain villages as important local service centres with small housing developments being acceptable.
- Provide opportunities for individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings in the open countryside or in Dispersed Rural Communities.

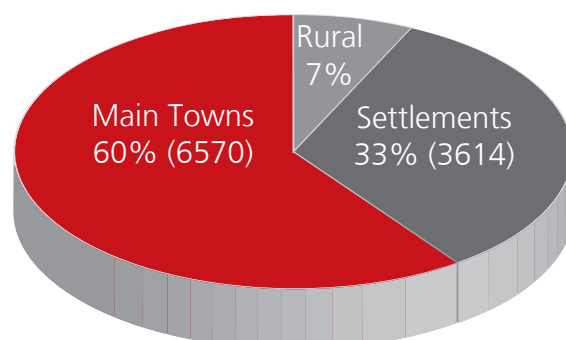
### Option 1 – Equitable Split

This option would seek to grow the hubs whilst ensuring other settlements and the rural area get their 'fair share' based on existing household distribution as per the 2011 census. This would mean that each settlement would be allocated its 'fair share' of new housing allocation based on the household projection figures published by NISRA in March 2015 while the countryside would then get the remainder. The provisional figures which comprise this option are laid out below:



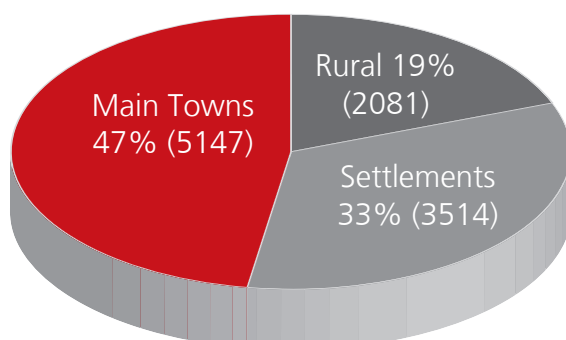
### Option 2 - Based on RDS 60% target

This option would seek to directly address the RDS target of 60% of all new housing being located in appropriate brownfield sites within the urban footprint of the three main hubs. So for the Mid Ulster District that would mean 60% of all new houses being located in the settlements of Cookstown, Dungannon, and Magherafelt. Once again, smaller towns, villages and small settlements would be allocated their "fair share" based on existing share and the remainder would be allocated to the country side. Provisional allocation figures reflective of option 2 are laid out below;



### Option 3 – Urban Drive to the Main Towns

This option would seek to achieve a balance between options 1 and 2 in order to meet regional policy of growth still being focused on the hubs but also recognising that smaller settlements and rural areas must be sustained in accordance with a growth strategy. Therefore the main towns would receive an allocation figure of less than 60% but more than that allowed for in option 1. Again, the smaller towns, villages and small settlements would be allocated their 'fair share' based on existing population and the remainder would be allocated to the countryside. In effect much of the rural growth would be refocused on to the main towns. Provisional allocation figures reflective of option 3 are laid out below;



## Preferred Option

The preferred option for Mid Ulster is **Option 1**. Our main towns are our best locations in terms of infrastructure provision, access to employment, goods and services to accommodate housing. They are also arguably the most environmentally sustainable. At present we have sufficient permissions and land zoned in the towns to meet growth as suggested by all three options. However if housing growth is focused primarily on the hubs we would need to more strictly control single houses in the countryside. This would have a detriment effect on rural communities as they rely on being able to build their own homes both to provide themselves with affordable houses and benefit from family care and support.

Therefore An Equitable Split between settlements is the preferred approach to ensure the main towns provide at least 27% of new housing, but development in the countryside is controlled to ensure growth does not exceed the needs of its existing population, thus avoiding the excessive rural development and speculation of the past.

There are a number of pros and cons with each of the options set out above. In adopting the strong urban focus presented in Option 2 there would be limited opportunity to zone more housing land in the three hubs based on an allocation of 6,570 dwellings in the three hubs. However, the rural allocation would only amount to 777 dwellings over the plan period. Given that from 2012-2014 there were almost 500 rural houses permitted, (DOE Planning Statistics) an uptake of this option would impose greater

rural constraint that which is arguably been imposed by the Departments current operational policy under PPS21 and Strategic Planning Policy. Such a scenario could have a detrimental effect on the vitality and viability of the rural community. Option 3 gives more weight to the rural areas but still maintains an urban focus. It would result in an allocation of 5147 dwellings to the three hubs which is below existing housing land supply. However this option would only allow for 2,081 dwellings in the rural area which based on existing rates of permission (under PPS21) would represent 7-8 years of permissions, which again would suggest inappropriate constraint potentially threatening the vitality and viability of the rural community.

In adopting Option 1, in order to take account of the RDS the hubs should be able to provide a minimum of 27% of the HGI and the rural area should not exceed a maximum of 40% of the dwellings. In effect this means that no additional land is needed in the hubs given that existing commitments and zonings exceed the suggested allocation. However for the rural area, assuming the 40% allocation was only applied for the period 2015-2030 this would allow for 4,380 dwellings which would allow for some minor adjustments to the rural policy and possible designation of additional Dispersed Rural Communities based on the existing criteria.

The outworking of Option 1 for the settlements in Mid Ulster (excluding the potential new candidate of Tullywiggan) is set out in detail in the table in Appendix 2.



## Housing Zoning and Phasing

Initial investigations suggest that at present there is no strategic need for additional housing land zoning in any of the Main Towns. Mid Ulster Council wishes to provide market certainty and protect housing land supply by retaining existing housing zonings where there is a degree of commitment to its delivery demonstrated by permissions and investment by landowners.

The Council also wish to phase land supply land so as to release sufficient land to meet our needs up to 2030 through the Phase 1 housing land supported by Phase 2, which will be held as a land bank for long term expansion, but

which may be released as a consequence of a plan review if housing needs change. Presently only the areas covered by the Cookstown and Dungannon Area Plans have a two phase approach to housing land. Further information on housing allocations and phasing is contained within the Settlements section of this Paper and it is also our intention to undertake a full survey of the zoned housing lands to test whether the owners of the existing zonings are willing to provide their land for future housing development.

*The approach to Operational Policy relating to Housing is detailed in the Housing section of this paper*



# The Economy

## Housing Allocations and Zoning

The emerging Community Plan for Mid Ulster recognises that we want:

- a prosperous, strong and more competitive economy;
- more people at work and in a growing variety of jobs;
- vibrant and competitive towns and villages.

The Local Development Plan can assist in achieving these outcomes.

## Allocations and Zoning

To assess the provision of economic development land over the plan period it is necessary to consider the present picture of business and the labour market across the district. In providing employment, Mid Ulster has a higher proportion of jobs in manufacturing than the regional average. This is a key strength of the new Council area and it has proved to be more resilient than other sectors such as construction which has been seriously affected by the economic downturn. Jobs in manufacturing are particularly important to male employment accounting for 41% of all male employment in the district. Businesses are typically small in size and the district also has higher levels of self-employment. Within the district over a quarter of all jobs are in manufacturing compared to a regional average of fewer than 11%. The presence of regionally important sand, gravel and clay resources within the District has meant that mining and quarrying is a significant employer along with associated concrete production and companies specialising in the manufacture of mining and quarrying equipment. Food manufacture and the agri-food business is also well represented in the district. Service jobs are however comparatively lower in proportion than the Northern Ireland average.

The fastest growing sectors within the economy are invariably those which are service related and exportable. These sectors are currently underrepresented as employers in Mid Ulster (compared to the regional average). Mid Ulster's DEAs are all underrepresented in the employment sectors which are expected to grow most over the next decade (IT, professional services and admin services)

In addition to those land uses which are located in Industrial/Economic Development Zonings, the economy also relies on the creation of employment opportunities in the retail and service sectors. Such activities, which a large number of people need to travel to, are best located in town centres which are accessible by various modes of transport. The strategy for town centres is addressed within town centre and retailing section of this Paper.

## Allocating Economic Development Land

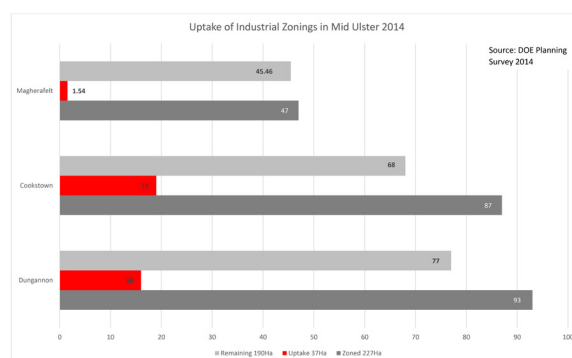
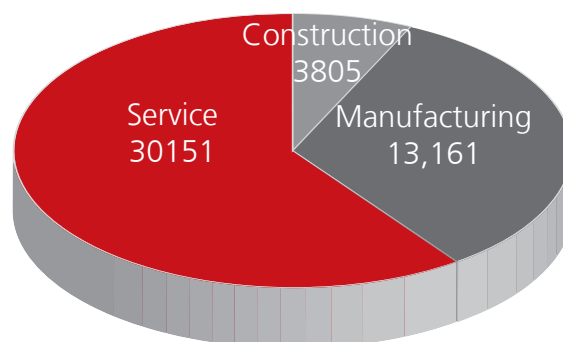
The Cookstown Area Plan 2010 zoned approximately 65.6 hectares of land for industry/mixed business use across seven main sites within the town of Cookstown. A further 12.4 hectares are located outside the settlement limit at Loughry College for the purpose of an Agri-Food Park. 9.2 hectares is also specifically zoned for industry/ mixed business use at

Ardboe Business Park. In 2014 78% of the land zoned for industrial/business use in the Plan had not been developed although all of the sites apart from one, may be described as 'active' in that work had already commenced or a planning permission had been obtained or applied for on part or all of the land. The old airfield at Ardboe has historically been under pressure for economic development however the infrastructure in the area, particularly roads, has not been of an adequate standard to support comprehensive development.

The Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010 Plan zoned 75 hectares of land for industrial and business use at Dungannon across five sites. Four of these sites are located within Dungannon and the fifth is at the industrial estate at Granville some three kilometres south west of Dungannon. In Coalisland 18 hectares of land are zoned across two sites. In 2014 82% of zoned industrial land remained undeveloped.

Magherafelt Area Plan 2015 zoned a total of 47 hectares of land across the whole of the district for industrial use. The Magherafelt Area Plan was adopted in 2011, therefore the take up of zoned industrial land has been limited – less than 4% in 2014. There are also pockets of vacant or undeveloped land available within areas identified as existing industry within Magherafelt, Maghera and the four villages

## Mid-Ulster Jobs by industry 2013



A survey of employment on industrial estates in Omagh and Strabane (Planning Service, 2006) suggests that for every hectare of operational industrial land, 50 jobs are provided. Mid Ulster Council Position Paper 3 – Employment and Economic Development calculated at least 8500 new jobs are required by 2030. This figure has been primarily informed by the employment target of 70% of the economically active set by the Department of Trade and Investment along with the Department of Education and Learning adjusted to allow for current employment rates and increased population projections up until 2030 published by NISRA. If these opportunities were to be provided on economic zonings this would mean that a minimum of 170 hectares is required over the plan period. Such a scenario implicitly assumes that all new jobs will be on zoned land, which will not be the case, this however ensures a degree of flexibility will allow the plan to provide a choice of sites at different locations and of different sizes to encourage economic growth.

## Options for Allocation

### Option 1: Equal Share

This option would provide each of the towns an equal share of economic development land aiming to provide around 55-60 hectares minimum in each town. The benefit of this approach is that it treats each location with an equality, thus recognising the full potential of Magherafelt as an employment location where the supply of land has arguably been less.

### Option 2: Hinterlands and Catchment

Assuming the former council districts broadly coincided with their hinterlands it is possible to proportion growth providing regard to their catchment. In Mid Ulster the former districts equated as 27% Magherafelt, 41% Dungannon and South Tyrone and 32% in Cookstown (2011 Census). This option would therefore result broadly in an allocation of 45ha for Magherafelt, 70ha for Dungannon and 55ha for Cookstown.

### Option 3: Population of Town

Based on the 2011 Census 11,599 people lived in Cookstown, 14,340 people lived in Dungannon and 8,805 people lived in Magherafelt. Apportioning growth on this basis suggests that 60ha should be allocated to Cookstown, 65-70ha for Dungannon and 40-45ha for Magherafelt.

### Preferred Option

**Option 1** is the preferred approach. Based on the amount of land that the three former plans zoned for industrial and business use, and factoring in 2014 industrial land uptake figures provided by the DOE, Mid Ulster Council Area had 190 Ha available in 2014. With the indicated need to provide at least 8500 jobs by 2030, equating to 170 ha, the zoning allocations within the existing Area Plans have the capacity of land zoned to cater for employment up to 2030.

### Supply and Location

Whilst on the surface there appears to be a large supply of zoned industrial land for uptake and sufficient to provide the necessary jobs, this masks a market failure. Uptake has been small primarily due to land owners not releasing land for industrial development. Where accessible serviced sites have been provided up take has been high in the case of Invest NI's Granville Industrial and Business Park.

The most recent industrial land up take figures provided

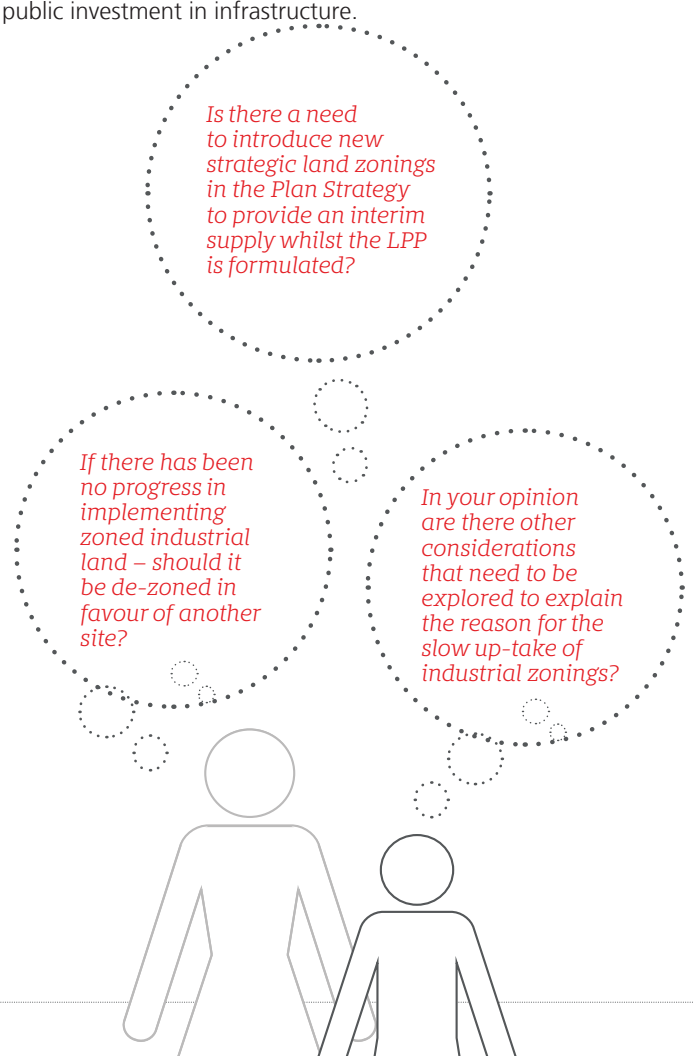
by the DOE are 2014 figures and may not reflective of the current situation as most of the business' acquiring land are still at the early stages of the development process. However, questions remain as to whether all of the currently zoned sites are deliverable in terms of their being a willing seller and someone willing to invest in any infrastructural requirements. Due to the issue of uptake of zoned land and issues around a lack of accessible serviced sites, Mid Ulster District Council wishes to address this matter within their plan strategy. A full survey will therefore be undertaken to test whether the owners of existing zonings are willing to provide their land for economic development at market value and whether there are any other land owners willing to provide land. An evaluation of sites will be undertaken before final zonings are determined. At present there is a shortage of public service sites in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt and they would benefit from additional zonings. The Settlement section of this Paper contains more detail on options for growth direction of economic development land for a number of settlements within the District.

Feedback is welcomed on the issue of zoning industrial land within easy access of Ballygawley interchange. An opportunity may exist due to the connectivity with transport links. However, on the other hand there are low numbers of people living in that area, to provide workers. To bring such a proposal forward it would also be necessary to review the status of Ballygawley as a settlement, the levels of housing provided and the investment in social infrastructure the Council and other government bodies are willing to invest here. This said there is no reason why this idea could not be included with the same scenario also being applied with easy access to the Castledawson Roundabout which could provide an option for future zonings to serve Magherafelt. This location would in some ways be better because of its connectivity to the public transport system and closeness to Magherafelt, therefore not requiring the same degree of public investment in infrastructure.

*Is there a need to introduce new strategic land zonings in the Plan Strategy to provide an interim supply whilst the LPP is formulated?*

*If there has been no progress in implementing zoned industrial land – should it be de-zoned in favour of another site?*

*In your opinion are there other considerations that need to be explored to explain the reason for the slow up-take of industrial zonings?*



# Transportation and Connectivity

## Strategic Approach

In preparing the Local Development Plan (LDP) an important consideration is transport and connectivity requirements within the District particularly in the allocation of land for future development. In doing so consideration will be given to the DRD (DFI) Regional Transportation Strategy – Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future and the relevant Transport Plans. This will ensure that the LDP and Transport Plans have a complementary role to play in promoting greater integration of transportation and land use planning.

Consultation will be required with Transport NI when considering land use allocations and future development sites. This will allow for a detailed assessment of the impact of proposed development on the highway network and the possibility of providing suitable access. In the long term public transport may have a more important role, particularly if rail links are extended into the district. It is suggested that there are three options open to the Council in how they can approach transportation provision within Mid Ulster:

### Option 1 –Focus on walking, cycling and public transport

This option is centred on maximising and encouraging the use of public transport as the primary mode of travel within Mid Ulster. It will involve the promotion of measures to not only encourage the use of public transport but also to discourage the use of the private car e.g. reducing the number of car parking spaces in town centres, increasing the cost of using car parks, introducing constraints within the towns to make it more difficult to get into the town using the private car and by increasing the number of cycle ways and bus service provision. This option is one that may be suitable in a city location but it is considered to be idealistic in the Mid Ulster context as it fails to take account of the fact that Mid Ulster has an extremely dispersed rural community. This option fails to recognise rural aspirations and the rural way of life and its success would almost certainly be unachievable.

### Option 2 – Focus on roads and private transport

This option is centred on maximising the use of roads and encouraging the use of the private vehicle as the primary mode of travel within Mid Ulster. It will involve measures such as increasing the number of car parks and car parking spaces within towns, reducing the cost of car parking and improving roads infrastructure which may indirectly result in less investment in cycle ways and bus services. The only role of the Local Development Plan in the context of this option would be to safeguard existing roads infrastructure and car parks. This option is not considered to be a feasible one for Mid Ulster primarily as Council only has responsibility for off street car parking, whilst DFI is responsible for roads infrastructure and investment. This option would also be unsustainable. It would result in an increase in car usage and consequently in pollution and would also lead to inertia and increased isolation and social deprivation, especially for section 75 groups and rural dwellers, who do not have access to private vehicles.

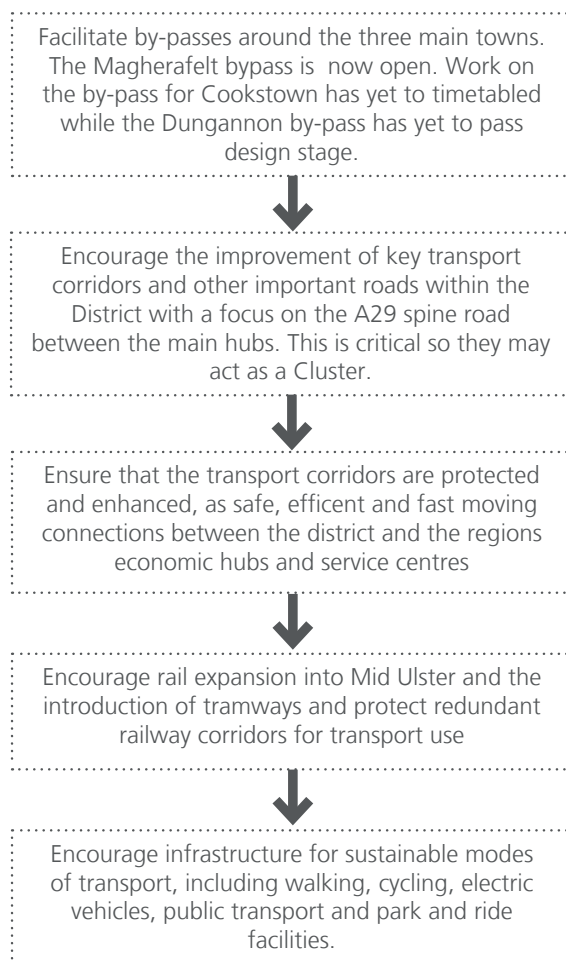
### Option 3 – Focus on roads and more sustainable modes of transport

This option takes a more balanced approach to transportation development within Mid Ulster and given the high reliance on the private car within this area this approach will provide choice to the public. The use of public transport will be encouraged through measures such as designing for buses within our towns and settlements. It will also encourage the use of Park and Ride facilities through concepts such as car-pooling and also encourage the provision of these facilities at key locations across the district. This option will also seek to encourage the use of existing walk ways and increase the provision of these to ensure connectivity particularly within our towns. The design of new housing developments in a manner that can support connectivity within our towns will also be encouraged.

### Preferred Option.

**Option 3** is the Preferred Option. This option will ensure that those living in rural and urban Mid Ulster will be provided with a choice of travel modes and that all people are treated fairly and equitably. This option will put less strain on natural resources (e.g.) fossil fuels and will contribute to economic growth throughout the district.

Whilst the ability of the Local Development Plan to encourage a modal shift may be limited, its ability to achieve greater connectivity across the Mid Ulster region should be further explored. It is considered that the **Transportation and Connectivity Strategy** for the Mid Ulster LDP should be:





## Environment

In preparing the Local Development Plan the potential impacts of development on the environment is an important consideration. There is a need to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to environmental issues in the allocation of land for future development. It is suggested that there are three options open to the Council in how they can approach the management of the Environment within Mid Ulster:

### Option 1 – Each case on merits – Developer led

This option is essentially a developer led approach centred on the individual assessment of each application against potential impacts and threats from the proposed development on both the local and regional environment. Although this approach takes account of existing international, national and local environmental designations it does not identify bespoke policy areas such as Special Countryside Areas, Areas of Constraint or Areas of High Scenic Value. This may lead to inconsistencies in decision making and potential environmental damage to our most vulnerable landscapes and to our built and natural heritage.

### Option 2 – Constraints approach – Plan led

This approach takes account of existing international, national and local environmental designations but is based entirely on a plan led approach by identifying areas of constraint within the LDP to protect vulnerable landscapes and our environmental assets from inappropriate, over dominant development while allowing limited opportunities for fishing, tourism and agriculture. This approach would provide a high level of protection consistently across the district. However, it may discourage development coming forward and could lead to constrained growth.

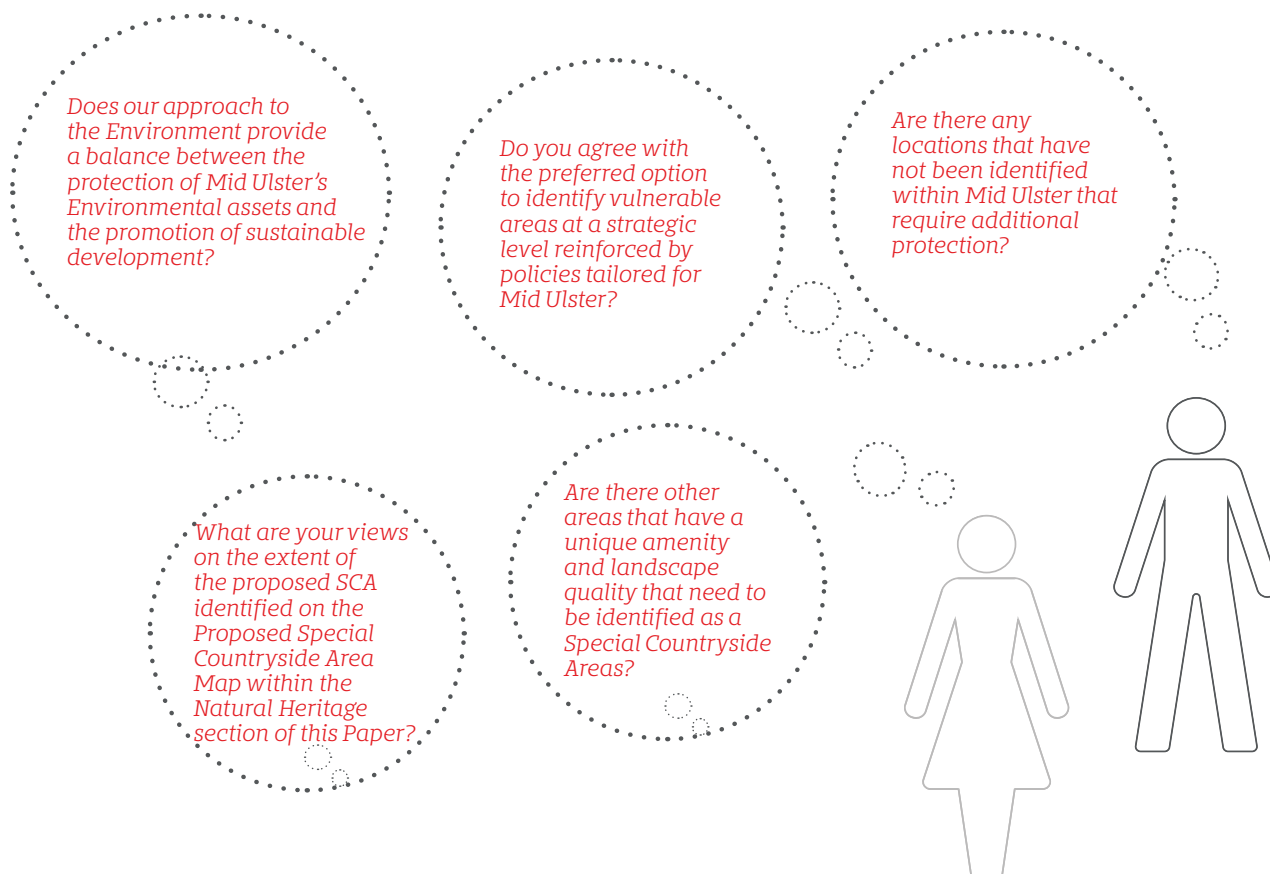
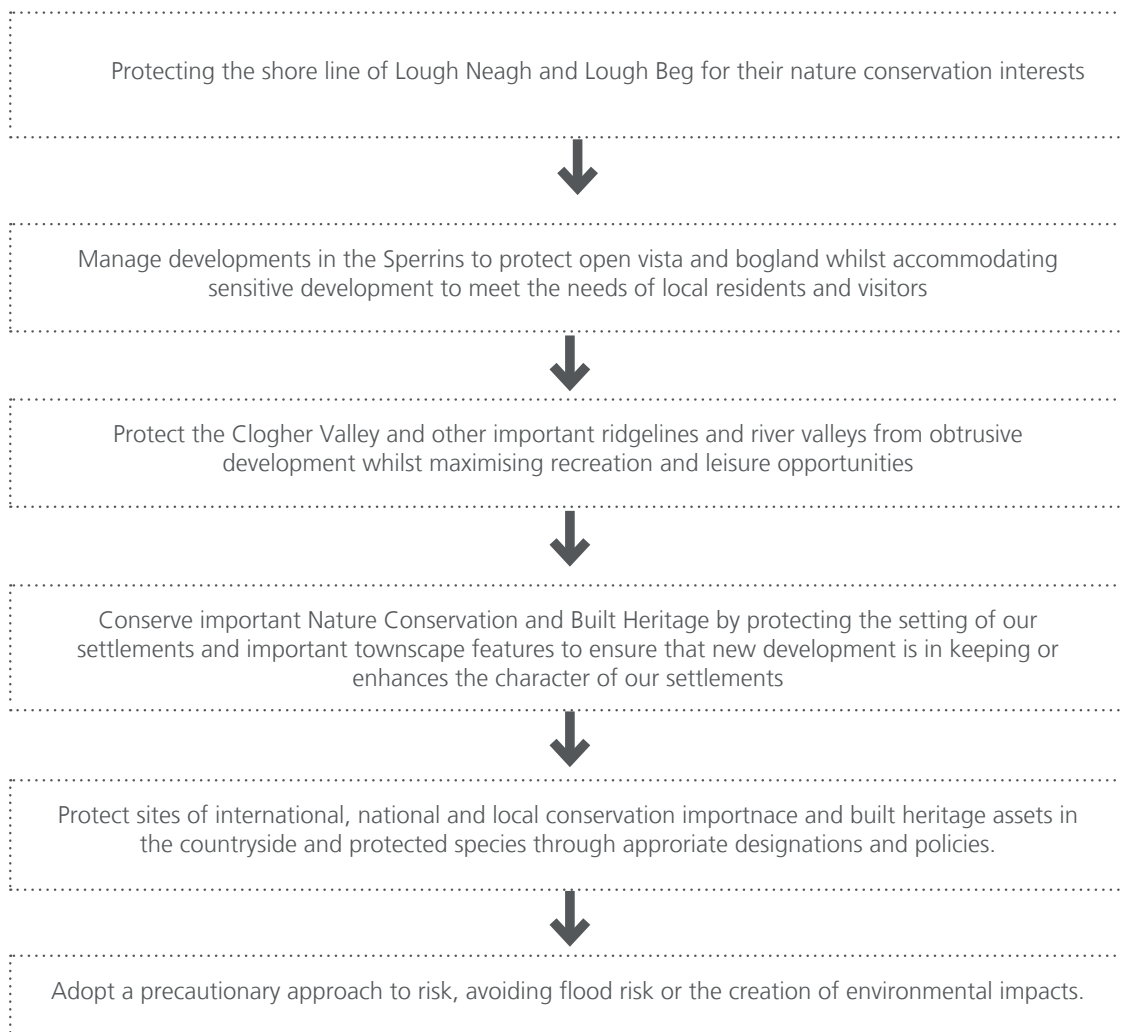
### Option 3 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development-

Plan led in partnership with scope for developer led schemes  
This option is a more sustainable development method which adopts a measured approach providing a balance between protection and growth. In addition to taking account of existing international, national and local environmental designations Areas of Constraint based on vulnerable landscapes and protection of our most important environmental assets would be identified as well as a Special Countryside Areas (SCA) at the Loughshore wherein the level of designation at this location is such that all development would be restricted. This would be balanced with appropriate policy to allow applications to be determined in a consistent manner to promote sustainable development within Mid Ulster.

### Preferred Option.

**Option 3** is considered the Preferred Option for Mid Ulster. This option will ensure the protection of the environmental assets of Mid Ulster by setting clear constraints at a strategic level and provide a balanced approach by delivering key policies to control development in a consistent and sustainable manner.

## Key Environment measures:





# General Principles Planning Policy

The objective of the planning system is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land whilst furthering sustainable development and improving well-being. This means the planning system should positively and proactively facilitate development that contributes to a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable Northern Ireland. Strategic planning policy within the SPPS advises us to simultaneously pursue social and economic priorities alongside the careful management of our built and natural environments for the overall benefit of our society.

The SPPS states that the guiding principle in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance. Strategic policy also advises that in furthering sustainable development and improving well-being it is crucial that our planning system supports the Executive's Programme for Government commitments and priorities as well as the aims and objectives of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) which is its overarching spatial strategy for Northern Ireland.

The SPPS goes on to state that in formulating policies and plans and in determining planning applications planning authorities will also be guided by the precautionary approach that, where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, its protection will generally be paramount, unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. It is within the context of this strategic policy that General Principles Planning Policy for Mid Ulster has been tailored.

## General Planning Policy Strategy

Mid Ulster's strategy in relation to General Planning Policy incorporates the regional strategic core planning principles of the two-tier planning system which are:

- 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.

## Policy Approach Options

It is considered that there are no reasonable alternative options for this subject as any alternative would not be consistent with the strategic policy and the core planning principles of the SPPS. Furthermore during the review of the various subject policies it was considered that many of the general considerations contained within them, and which relate to all development irrespective of type, could be reflected in one overall policy applying to all development. The approach to this policy is therefore set within the context of the SPPS which states that sustainable development should be granted permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Mid Ulster Council wishes to tailor a General Planning Policy which allows for balanced decision making in the integration of a variety of complex social, economic, environmental and other matters that are in the long term public interest. This is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development. All development proposals will be determined against the General Planning Policy and the suggested wording is provided below.

# Suggested Policy Wording

## General Principles Planning Policy

GP1- Planning permission will be granted for sustainable development where the proposal accords with the Plan and there is no demonstrable harm in relation to the following:

### (a) Amenity

- Development should be compatible with surrounding land uses, the amenities of nearby residents and have regard to the character of the area in which it is located. In considering the impact on amenity regard should be given to the following:
  - Levels and effects of noise and vibration;
  - Lighting;
  - Loss of sunlight, daylight and privacy;
  - Odour and fumes;
  - Levels and effects of emissions including dust, smoke, soot, ash, grit or any other environmental pollution to water, air or soil.

### (b) Nature and Scale of development

- Development should be in accordance with the Strategic Planning Guidelines within the Plan in terms of its nature and scale and should ensure that it would not prejudice the operation of an existing enterprise. (See Economic Development Policy within the Plan)

### (c) Siting, Design and External Appearance

- New development should respect their surroundings whether urban or rural having regard to the street scene and pattern of development in the urban setting and the impact on character and local landscape in the rural setting. New development must respect the prevailing building height of 2-3 stories within the district. Developments proposing buildings above this height will be required to submit a Design and Access Statement to demonstrate design quality when requested.
- The siting of development should have regard to the relationship of the development to existing buildings and the visual effects of the development on the surrounding area and landscape.
- Where relevant consideration should be given to issues of size, scale, form, massing, height, and density and external appearance should have regard to the locality in terms of style, fenestration, materials and colours.
- Development should be sited and designed so as to not have an adverse impact on public safety and should create safe and accessible places for all people.
- The principles of passive solar design and use of renewable technologies shall be taken into account in the siting, design and layout of all new development where appropriate.

(See Urban Design Policy and Rural Design Policy for further design considerations. This policy is also supported by supplementary design guidance.)

### (d) Advertisement

- Proposals for advertisement, or which are likely include advertisement, will be required to demonstrate they have no significant impact on amenity or public safety.

### (e) Access, Road Layout and Parking Provision

- Proposals should ensure that the existing road network can safely handle any extra traffic the proposal will generate or suitable developer led improvements are proposed to overcome any roads problems identified. Where appropriate a Transport Assessment should be submitted to evaluate the transport implications of a development.
- Adequate and safe access arrangements, manoeuvring and servicing areas should be provided and a movement pattern that, insofar as possible, supports walking and cycling, respects existing public rights of way and provides adequate and convenient access to public transport.
- Car parking should be provided in accordance with published standards as set out in supplementary guidance. An exception may be made where the proposal is located in a town centre or other highly accessible location well served by public transport or where there is spare capacity within nearby public car parks or adjacent on street car parking.

**(f) Meeting Needs of People with Mobility Difficulties**

- All development including buildings, open spaces and transportation schemes should take account of the specific needs of those people whose mobility is impaired by including:
  - facilities to aid accessibility e.g. dropped kerbs, tactile paving, removal of unnecessary obstructions;
  - convenient movement along pathways and an unhindered approach to buildings;
  - pedestrian priority to facilitate pedestrian movement within and between land uses;
  - reserved car parking for those with mobility difficulties and for parents and children; and
  - ease of access to public transport facilities and taxi ranks.
- New buildings should provide ease of access without the hindrance of steps or other such obstructions. Where appropriate a Design and Access Statement will be required to demonstrate how the needs of those with mobility difficulties, including visual impairment, has been given consideration.

**(g) Other infrastructural requirements**

- All development should demonstrate adequate infrastructure is in place to deal with waste, sewerage and drainage.

**(h) Landscape Character**

- Development proposals should respect, protect and/or enhance the region's rich landscape character, features and sites designated for their landscape quality at any level. They should also reflect the scale and local distinctiveness of the landscape.

**(i) Biodiversity**

- Development proposals should respect, protect and/or enhance the district's rich and distinct biodiversity and sites designated for their contribution to the natural environment at any level.

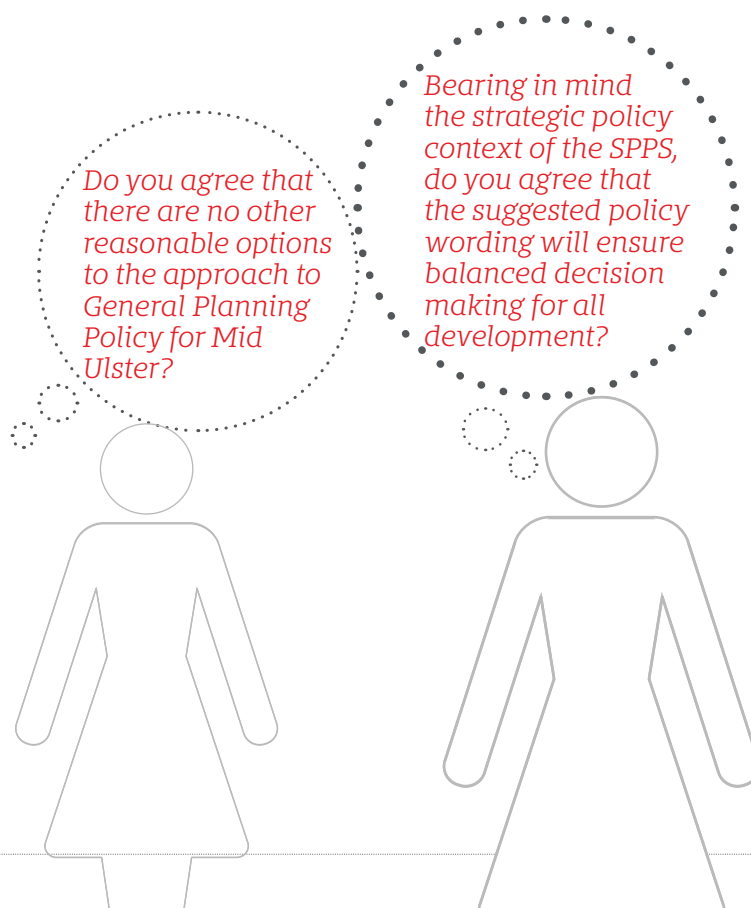
**(j) Planning Gain and Developer Contribution**

- In determining an application appropriate weight will be given to proposals and/or developer contributions which include a planning agreement or which will provide local infrastructure, community facilities and other benefits which may be intended to offset the loss of, or impact on any amenity or resource. Developer contribution

**Amplification**

In all cases regard should be given to current guidance and advice by central government or Mid Ulster District Council and any subsequent amendments.

Under the provisions of the Planning Act 2011 a planning application should be determined in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The criteria in this policy represents those considerations which normally apply to a range of different types of proposals. However, it is not possible to indicate all potential material considerations that may arise. Accordingly a precautionary principle will apply in line with the SPPS which states that, where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, its protection will generally be paramount, unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.



## Housing Policy

Good quality housing is a fundamental human need that plays a significant role in shaping our lives and our communities. A home is a vital part of people's lives and contributes to creating a safe, healthy and prosperous society. The planning system can play a positive and supporting role in the delivery of homes to meet the full range of housing needs of society, within the wider framework of sustainable development.

A basic planning principle exists that when land is zoned for a particular use it will be protected for that use. In this case that principle applies to land zoned for housing. The former area plans for Dungannon & South Tyrone and Cookstown identified Phase 2 land zoned for housing. This was not the case in the Magherafelt Area Plan. It is the Council's intention to ensure that Phase 2 land is not released for development until such times as current phase 1 zonings have been developed and a review of both will be undertaken to inform the Local Policies Plan (LPP). This will resist the occurrence of piecemeal development. It is therefore logical to have a policy to address this principle. The strategic approach to housing allocation for the Mid Ulster District area up to 2030 has been set out in the Growth Strategy and Spatial framework section of this paper.

## Housing in Settlements

As set out in the growth strategy and in line with the RDS main growth will be focused on the three main hubs of Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt with balanced growth being catered for in smaller towns.

### Regional Strategic Objectives & Policy

The SPPS sets out the strategic objectives and policy that must be taken into account in the preparation of LDPs.



This has been taken into account when setting the key objectives of Mid Ulster Councils Growth Strategy, and making housing allocations.

## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives and Community Plan

There are also LDP objectives relevant to this subject:

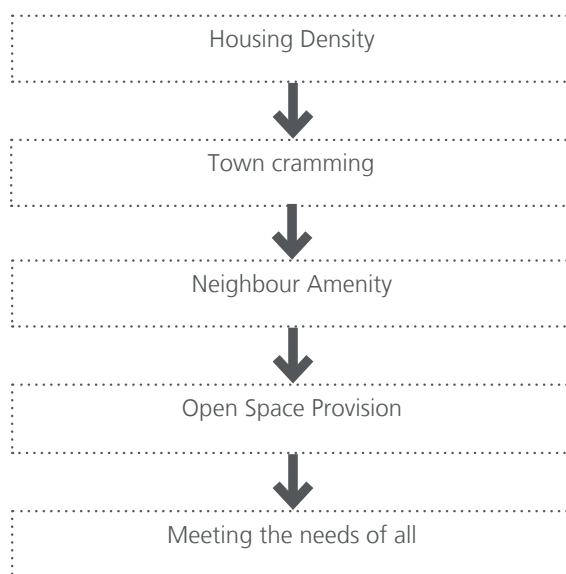
- To provide for 11,000 new homes by 2030 in a range of housing capable of meeting the needs of families, the elderly and disabled, and single people, at locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities, for those people with and without a car.
- Encourage a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures.

Some of the issues that have come out of the Community Planning consultation engagement are also relevant:

- More social housing needs to be built
- Council's new Planning powers should be used to ensure developers provide sufficient green/communal spaces

## Mid Ulster Strategy

Planning policies for this subject are primarily to promote Good Design leading to Quality Residential Environments. In the experience of Mid Ulster some key issues have come to light post adoption of PPS7 and PPS12 that have not been fully resolved. The issues that need to be considered are:



The above themes are referred to in regional policy and guidance, however better results may be achieved by tailoring planning policy to be more explicit in terms of its requirements on these issues.

## Housing Density

The character of an area can be protected through the use of housing density. It is important that on larger sites within towns land is efficiently used. Therefore minimum densities should be set. Given Mid Ulster has traditionally low densities, often what was termed as the ¼ acre plot, a minimum of 10 units per hectare would be appropriate to ensure that the character of our towns is retained. A maximum density of 30 units per hectre will adequately cater for a mix of house types and public open space.

- Promotion of densities that respond to the individual settlements character is supported in recent regional policy.
- Mid Ulster has historically low density levels owing to the rural nature of the district.
- Higher density will be encouraged in town centre sites that benefit from established public transport networks.

## Policy Approach Options

**Option 1 – Current Policy.** Continue to operate within current policy that discourages over intensification of individual sites to respect their context.

**Option 2 – Set densities in policy.** Encourage that applications respond to the local context and set a range by way of the number of houses per hectare for sites over a specified site area.

### Preferred Option.

**Option 2** is the preferred approach by the Council as it is tailored to Mid Ulster district and it will ensure an appropriate density is adhered to.

## Town Cramming - Extensions and Alterations

Town cramming occurs when a development is imposed on a site without due regard to its surroundings, neighbour amenity, sense of place and integration into the area. In some cases higher densities may be achievable giving regard to the area. However the introduction of high rise residential buildings, narrow streets, back to back housing or other densities akin to inner city living would be inappropriate to Mid Ulster.

- The option to extend and alter your existing house offers occupiers the opportunity to improve and adapt their home to suit their individual needs. This offers a sustainable form of development and should be encouraged.
- Current Policy offers guidance on areas to be considered in achieving a successful development that is respectful to both the existing building and the wider context.
- It is felt that areas addressed in the guidance section of current policy could be transposed into policy for future development in the Mid Ulster Area.

### Policy Approach Options

**Option 1 – Current Policy.** Continue to operate within current policy which sets the criteria for proposals to extend and alter individual properties. Most of the existing criteria is proposed to be included in the general principles policies section.

### Option 2 – Subordinate and Ancillary.

Introduce policy to ensure that Extensions and Alterations to residential developments are to be designed to be subordinate and ancillary to the main use of the existing building and do not detrimentally impact on the private amenity space, access and off street parking provision.

### Preferred Option.

**Option 2** is the preferred approach. Extensions and alterations to existing building stock should be subordinate and ancillary to the main use of the existing building, this will avoid town cramming, over development and back land development.

## Neighbouring Amenity

Neighbouring amenity can be protected by ensuring adequate separation between properties and the avoidance of tandem development. Creating Places suggests a minimum distance of 20m together with the suggestion of a min 10m rear garden depth.

There is an identified trend within the district of reduced separation distances within residential developments. This impacts on the ability of individuals to enjoy their own home.

- Trend in Mid Ulster is below 20m in recent housing developments.
- Amenity on sloping sites is not adequately addressed within current policy.
- Opposing storey height is not currently addressed in current guidance or policy

## Policy Approach Options

### Option 1- Adopt Current Policy and Guidance.

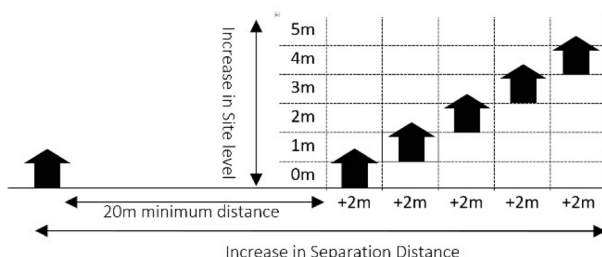
The current suite of policies and guidance documents offers a framework for assessing individual applications. Current documents could be adopted and carried forward to the Plan Strategy.

### Option 2- Minimum dimensions in policy.

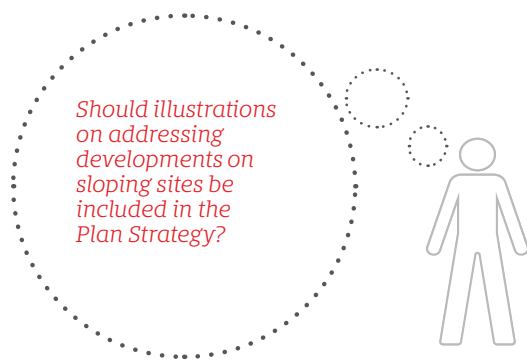
Provide a policy of encouragement to set a minimum separation distance of 20m between facing windows and impose greater distances on site of varying levels, supported by illustrated examples.

### Preferred Option.

The first option to adopt the current policy and guidance approach does not maximise on the opportunity to tailor specific policies that reflect the Mid Ulster District. The preferred approach is **Option 2** which will accommodate the introduction of specific policy to address concerns over residential amenity. The opportunity to provide examples by way of illustration will provide clarity to applicants and planning officers.







## Open space provision

Open space provision is often pushed to the fringes of housing developments and labelled as amenity space to satisfy current planning policy. This identified trend is prevalent in Mid Ulster and is not sufficiently addressed in current policy provision and can be detrimental to the creation of Quality Residential Environments.



Is this the correct approach to Open Space provision?



Is the Open Space provision well designed and integrated?

- Open spaces are often unconsidered and not designed to be a functioning element of the development. Through time they often present problems with management and security.
- The outgoing PPS8 sets the minimum requirement for open space provision in new residential developments as 10% of the site area for proposals containing 25 unit or more on sites of one hectare or more. This is reinforced in the SPPS by the inclusion of the words well designed. ns

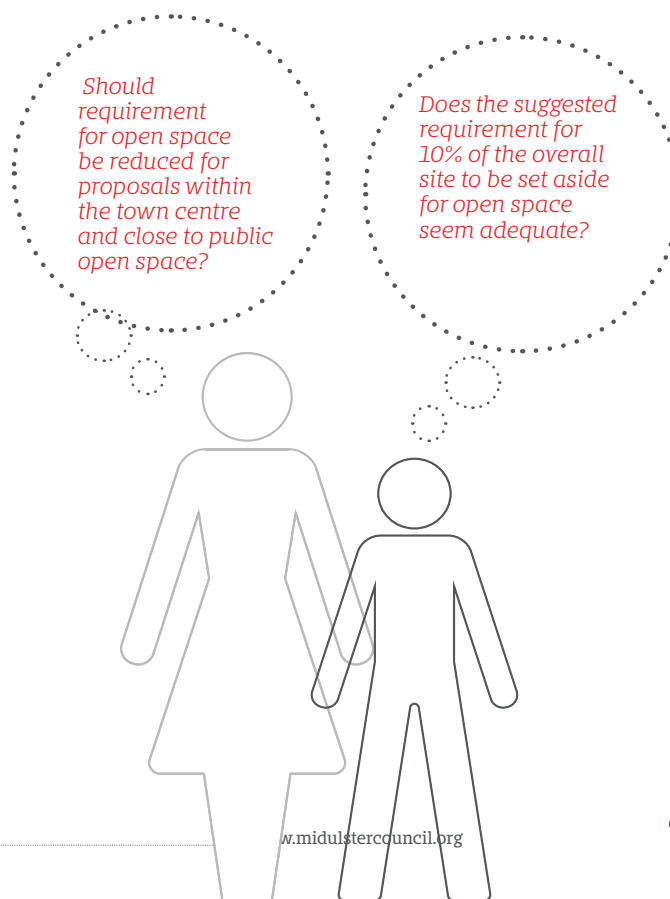
## Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** – Adopt current policy which sets a minimum open space requirement for housing developments over a prescribed threshold to be designed and integral but does not call for a landscape strategy.

**Option 2** – Landscape strategy. In addition , encourage the requirement for the submission of a detailed landscape strategy to demonstrate that the open space provision is adequate, well designed and integrated.

### Preferred Option.

A combination of options (a) and (b) is suggested. The minimum standard is reinforced with a policy of encouragement for the submission of a Landscape strategy. The Landscape strategy would form part of a Design and Access Statement to clarify the design of the Open Space provision and demonstrate that it is integral to the development.



## Meeting the needs of all

Planning policy statement PPS12 and the SPPS calls for the requirements of all members of the community to be met when creating quality residential environments. Achieving balanced communities with access to a wide variety of house types, size and tenure to meet the different needs while encouraging community cohesion by providing opportunities to engage in local employment, shopping, leisure and social facilities. This approach should also extend to the creation of developments that are linked to the wider context and blue and green infrastructure avoiding insular housing developments.

### Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** – Adopt current policy to require the applications to provide a range of house types, tenures and integration with centres of employment, community services and public transport and take advantage of existing infrastructure.

**Option 2** – Tailor policy for Mid Ulster to set a requirement that developments are integrated into the wider context and blue green infrastructure.

#### Preferred Option.

Option 2 is the preferred approach to encourage Quality residential developments that link to the wider context.

## Design and Access Statements

Design and access statements (D&AS) are a current requirement under planning policy for all residential developments to demonstrate the design approach of each scheme. There are also types of developments where the submission of such a document is a requirement under legislation. Provided that the correct approach to design is followed the production of such a document is not onerous on the part of the applicant the D&AS can be a useful tool in the determination process.

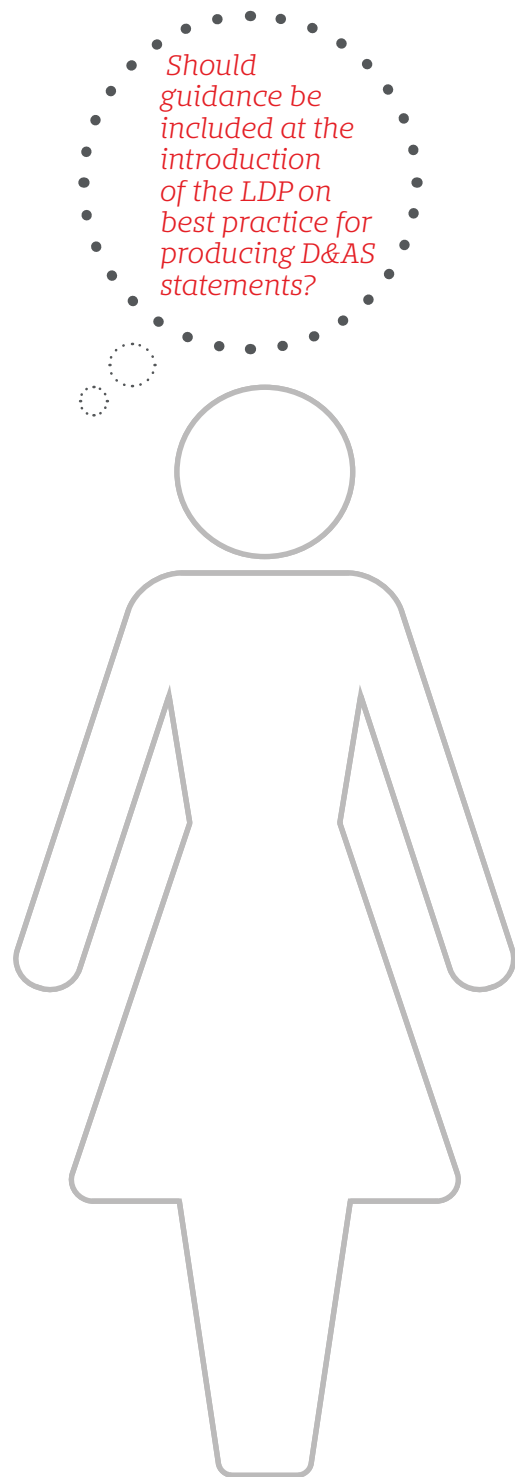
### Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** – Adopt current policy that requires the submission of a Design Concept Statement to accompany all residential developments above that required under legislation.

**Option 2** - Policy of encouragement for the submission of a D&AS to demonstrate how the applicant has achieved a Quality Residential Environment when requested by the individual case officer.

#### Preferred Option.

The introduction of a policy of encouragement would provide the individual case officer a tool to request the agent / applicant to demonstrate how they have achieved a quality residential environment through the submission of a D&AS where the design approach is unclear.



General themes of good design to include but not limited to respecting and responding to context and passive design will be dealt with in general policies at the outset of the Plan and will relate to all development. The policy approach is based on getting designers to think through proposals prior to making a submission. Having due regard to not only the character of the area but the wider considerations such as recreational and health to meet the needs of the community as a whole. Good Design and Passive Design Principles are included in General Principles Planning Policy set out at the introduction to the Plan and will apply to all development:

# Suggested Policy wording

## Policy HOU1 - QUALITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN URBAN AREAS

### Protection of Land zoned for Housing

*Development of non-residential uses on land zoned for housing will conflict with the plan unless exceptionally they are ancillary to the housing development and provide community or recreational uses such as health, education or a neighbourhood shop.*

*Phase 2 lands will be safeguarded for housing but will not be released for development, either in part or in full prior to a review of housing land to inform the Local Policies Plan. Until the Local Policies Plan is adopted planning permission will only be granted for single dwellings that are in accordance with Policy CT1 of Development in the Countryside and do not prejudice comprehensive development.*

New Housing developments within settlements will need to demonstrate that it will provide a quality residential environment by;

### Creating a Sense of Place and Avoid Town Cramming

Housing developments which create a sense of place and avoid town cramming will accord with the plan where:

- Small scale development should respect the character of the area taking account of settlement patterns scale and the existing urban grain and design of existing properties. Exception may be made for larger scale development where the opportunity exists to create a new neighbourhood with its own identity and local neighbourhood facilities.
- On sites of 0.5 hectares or over, densities of developments should respond to its surroundings and normally be in the range of 10-30 units per hectare. Higher densities may be acceptable in town centres, mixed use areas or zonings identified for social and affordable housing.
- Developments should provide adequate separation distance to prevent over dominance and overshadowing, protect privacy and avoid overlooking. Normally a minimum distance of 20 metres between facing windows of habitable rooms and a minimum distance of 12 metres between a front or rear elevation and a gable.
- Tandem development should be avoided in new housing on Back land sites.

### Meeting the Needs of All

Housing Development will accord with the plan where the needs of all:

- In residential developments of 50 units or more or on sites of 2 hectares and over, social housing should be provided at a rate not less than 25% of the total number of units. This policy will apply where a need for social housing has been identified by the relevant strategic housing authority until such times that the Local Policies Plan brings forward sites with Key Site requirements addressing social housing needs.
- By adequately catering for motor vehicles but encourage other alternative modes of transport to meet the needs of those without a car.
- On sites of 25 units or more or on sites of 1 hectares and over, there should be a mix of house types to cater for the needs of families and small households, providing access for all.
- By demonstrating a safe and sustainable environment for current and future occupiers by providing connections and linkages to schools, community facilities, and public transport networks that connect to the wider community and blue green infrastructure to avoid insular developments.

### Adequate Public and Private Open Space for Developments

Housing developments will accord with the plan where it provides adequate public and private open space by:

- Providing a minimum of 10% of the site area to be adequately equipped, landscaped and well-design to form an integral part of the proposal for all residential developments over 25 units or sites of 1 hectare or more.
- Ensuring that suitable arrangements are in place to address the future management and maintenance of open space in new residential developments
- Providing adequate garden areas for new housing with a rear garden depth to be not less than 10 metres.

### Residential Extensions

Extensions and Alterations to residential developments will accord to the plan where they are:

- Designed to be subordinate and ancillary to the main use of the existing building and does not detrimentally impact on the private amenity space, access and off street parking provision. Regard will be given to current statutory design guidance.
- Accommodation must be of adequate size and layout with sufficient facilities as not to compromise the standard of living for current and future residents.

### Amplification

In addition to the policy requirements housing development will also be required to meet all highway standards and accord with the general principles policies. The scale of the development will accord with the Strategic Planning Guidelines and meet any key site requirements as set out in the Local Policies Plan.

In order to achieve Quality Residential Developments, applicants will be encouraged to provide Design and Access Statements (D&AS) to include a landscape strategy for larger or sensitive sites where they are not required under legislation. Where the proposal represents the partial development of an area zoned for housing in the plan or neighbouring undeveloped land, the developer will be required to demonstrate a comprehensive approach to consider neighbouring land and so to avoid piecemeal development. Regard will also be given to regional strategic design guidance (currently creating places).

## Policy TH1 - TRAVELLERS ACCOMMODATION

There is currently no Traveller accommodation needs identified for Mid Ulster District, this is subject to continual review by the statutory housing authority. Should a future need arise policy will be brought forward at the plan review stage.

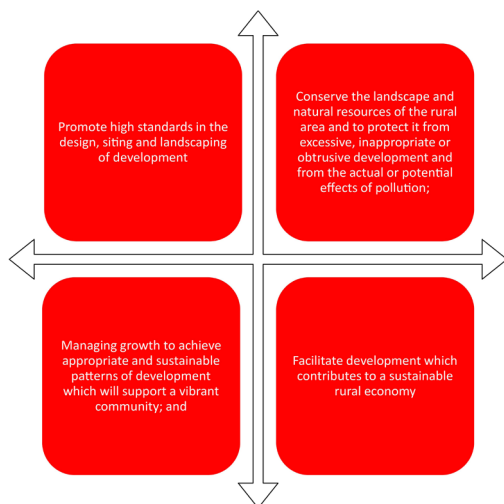
### Key Questions

- Q. Should land zoned for housing be considered for development ancillary to housing?
- Q. Do you agree with the proposed housing densities for Mid Ulster between 10-30 houses per hectare?
- Q. Do you feel separation distances are adequate to protect private amenity?
- Q. Do you agree with a minimum garden depth of 10 metres for new housing proposals?
- Q. Do you feel that 10% of housing land is adequate to be allocated for open space provision?
- Q. Do you agree that tandem development should be resisted on back land sites?

# Housing in the Countryside

In preparing our new LDP the SPPS states we should bring forward a strategy to facilitate sustainable development in the countryside. It must promote clustering, consolidation, grouping new development with existing buildings and re-using previously used buildings. In Mid Ulster the key issues that must be addressed is the provision of a rural policy that will provide a little more flexibility than that contained Planning Policy Statement 21, recognising our aging population and the increasingly important role carers play in supporting a vibrant rural community.

## Regional Strategic Objectives & Policy



In addition to meeting the strategic objectives of the SPPS, the strategy for housing will take into account the key objectives of Mid Ulster Councils Growth Strategy, together with the Mid Ulster Community Plan.

## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

There are a number of LDP objectives relevant to this subject:

- 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.
- To recognise the needs of both growing families and carers of the elderly and disabled by accommodating development which allows people to remain within their own communities and does not lead to significant harm to neighbours or the environment.

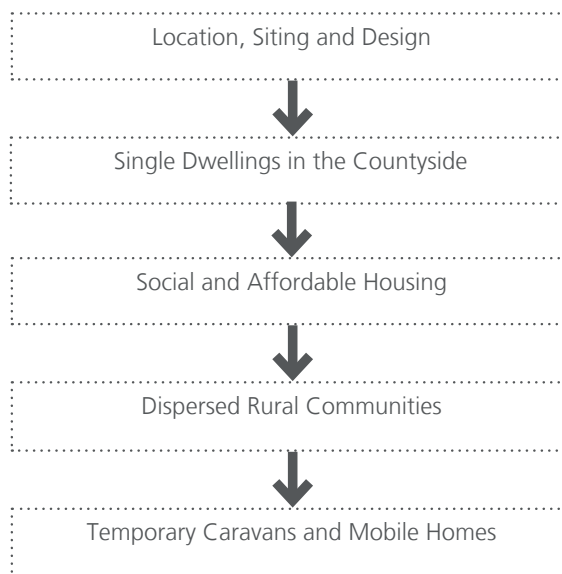
## Mid Ulster Community Plan

There are a number of issues arising out of the extensive community consultation on our emerging Community Plan that we wish to consider in our approach to housing in the countryside:

- The need to provide more social housing and low-cost housing and look at how derelict/empty rural houses might be re-used
- A move away from a one-size-fits-all Rural Planning Policy
- Rural Planning needs to be based on the reality that most rural people are not farmers/connected to the land - planning needs to be made more user friendly and responsive to local needs

## Mid Ulster Strategy

Policies to cater for development in the countryside are primarily to promote sustainable design to support and sustain our vibrant rural communities while conserving our highly valued and unique landscape. In our experience in Mid Ulster key issues have come to light post adoption of PPS21 that have not been fully resolved. The issues that need to be considered are:



## Design

The above themes are referred to in regional policy and guidance, however better results may be achieved by tailoring policy to be more explicit in terms of its requirements.

## Housing in the Countryside Policy Approach options

### Location, Siting and Design

The RDS recognises that to sustain rural communities new development opportunities are required. However the location siting and design of such development is paramount to achieve a balance between protection of the environment and sustaining rural communities.

### Policy Options

The SPPS clearly sets out the policy approach for the location, siting and design of proposed development in the countryside. This policy is reinforced through existing rural design guidance in the form of Building on Tradition. Therefore presently there is no alternative policy approach in relation to this subject.



# Suggested Policy wording

## POLICY CT1

All residential development in the Countryside shall be required to:

- Integrate with its setting by utilising existing vegetation and landform and avoid unduly prominent or artificially created sites;
- Respect rural character by complimenting settlement patterns in the locality and avoid creating or adding to ribbon development;
- Avoid contributing to urban sprawl or mar the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside;
- Be of appropriate design in terms of height, size, scale, massing, architectural detail and finishes.

Special care should be given to ensure that any proposal is sensitive to environmental issues. Appropriate distances should be maintained between tree root systems and

*Should existing rural design guidance be tailored for Mid Ulster?*

## Single dwelling in the Countryside

The SPPS recognises that policy for single rural dwellings in the countryside should reflect strategic policy but be tailored to reflect the local needs of Mid Ulster Council. This approach allows for areas outside of Special Countryside Areas to accommodate single dwellings in the following circumstances:

- use of existing
- On an established farm
- Personal and domestic circumstances
- For business enterprise
- Part of existing clusters
- Infilling a gap site
- Provision for replacement
- Conversion or re

Mid Ulster has one of the most densely populated rural areas in Northern Ireland. (NISRA). It also has a successful and self –dependent rural population, evident by the high concentration of rural industry and rural entrepreneurs (Economic Development Position Paper). An effective countryside policy is required which will provide for the domestic and business needs of local people to ensure vital and vibrant rural communities. It is considered that the current policy doesn't adequately provide this. A return to a policy approach based on location, siting and integration (similar to 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland') is not considered as a realistic option as it would result in the erection of too many dwellings and a dispersed pattern of development in the Countryside. This would be contrary to the approach of the RDS and SPPS which is to cluster and consolidate development and would not be considered sustainable.

## Single Dwelling Policy Approach Options

### Option 1 Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This option would adopt the current policy based approach of PPS21 and the SPPS. This is considered to be a realistic option. However, PPS 21 adopts a policy approach that is much stricter than we require in rural Mid Ulster and based on the revised HGI figures will not deliver the required number of dwellings over the plan period. PPS 21 does not recognise the particular needs of our rural area.

## Option 2 More Flexible Approach

This option would tailor the existing policy to recognise the needs of Mid Ulster, which will provide a little more flexibility by adding additional circumstances in which a single dwelling may be accommodated. Such circumstance may include:

- Clarification of dwellings in Farm Clusters
- Dwellings for care givers or those availing of care
- Clarification on infill development
- Clarification on the '10 year rule'
- Clarification on single dwelling for Business use

This is realistic option and would not conflict with the regional strategic criteria set out in the SPPS. This policy could be tailored to bring it more in line with the objectives of our strategy to meet the domestic and business needs of the rural community.

## Preferred Option

The preferred option is **Option 2** which introduces a policy approach that is similar in spirit to the outgoing PPS21 but is tailored to reflect the particular needs of Mid Ulster.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY CT2 - DWELLINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

A Dwelling in the Countryside will conform with the plan where it comprises a:

(a) **Dwelling in an Existing Non-Farm Cluster** - The cluster must comprise a group of 4 or more substantial buildings and be located at a focal point (i.e.) a cross roads or a community building and can be absorbed through rounding off or consolidation. The site must have existing buildings on at least two sides.

(b) **Dwelling Infilling a small Gap Site** - In a small gap site (of not more than 70m frontage) capable of accommodating up to 2 dwellings. The gap must be located between 3 substantial buildings, each with their own defined curtilage, fronting onto a road or laneway.

Exceptionally a single dwelling may be permitted on a smaller gap site (of not more than a 35m frontage) located between 2 dwellings, each with their own defined curtilage, fronting onto a road or laneway.

(c) **Replacement Dwelling** - The building must exhibit the essential characteristics of a dwelling and as a minimum all external structural walls must be substantially intact.

(d) **Conversion/re-use of Existing Buildings** - The building must be of permanent construction. "Steel framed" buildings such as those used for the purposes of agriculture, industry or storage are not eligible. Alterations should be sympathetic to the existing building and any extension should be minor. In some cases this may facilitate more than one dwelling.

(e) **Dwelling on a Farm** - The dwelling must be on a farm which has been established for 6 years and is currently active (as verified by DAERA) and no permissions obtained under this criteria in the last 10 years from the date of the application. The dwelling should also be located next to a group of substantial farm buildings. Where there are health and safety reasons or reasons relating to the efficient use of the farm or its expansion, consideration will be given to a site which is visually linked to the farm. Only in exceptional circumstances will a site be considered not visually linked to a farm group, where the house is to provide for a retiring farmer to allow for the disposal of the farm or where significant environmental benefits have been demonstrated by the applicant.

(f) **Dwelling in a Farm Cluster** - Exceptionally, on farms that are not active and/or established or where a permission has been obtained in the past 10 years, a dwelling may be accommodated within a farm cluster. The cluster must comprise 3 or more substantial farm buildings (excluding domestic garages and small sheds) and the site must be located within the farm holding and bounded by a building on at least 2 sides.

(g) **Dwelling to meet Personal and Domestic Circumstances** - Provided there are compelling and site specific reasons related to the persons personal or domestic circumstances and where there are no practical solutions to meet the particular circumstances of the case, such as an extension or attached dwelling.

(h) **Dwelling for a Carer or someone availing of care** - Provided the care is delivered by or received from an immediate family member and the dwelling is in the form of an extension to an existing dwelling to form a separate attached residential unit, or change of use of an existing building within the curtilage to form a separate residential unit.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY CT2 - DWELLINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

(i) **Dwelling for a Business Enterprise** - Provided there is a site specific and operational requirement for an employee of the business to live next to the business and where the business has been established for at least 6 years and is operating from a building of not less than 150.sqm. The dwelling must be sited adjacent to the established business

Occupancy conditions will be used where a Personal and Domestic Circumstance case, a Caring case or a Business Enterprise case is presented. In all instances the onus will be on the applicant to demonstrate how they meet any of the criteria.

In cases relating to dwellings within farm and non-farm clusters, infill sites or an attached dwelling (dwelling for a carer) the key test is the impact on rural character. In assessing such applications regard will be given to the rural design guide, 'Building on Tradition', or any subsequent design guides. Substantial buildings include dwellings and large farm buildings but exclude domestic garages and sheds, portacabins and other temporary structures. Farm buildings must be on the farm holding and relate to the operation of the farm.

*Does the suggested policy satisfactorily cater for care givers or someone availing of care?*

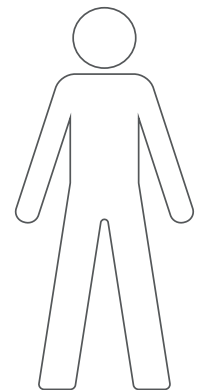
*Do you agree with the opportunity for a dwellings within the existing farm cluster?*

*Are there any other circumstances where a dwelling in the countryside should be considered?*

### Social and Affordable Housing

The LDP must take forward policies to facilitate sustainable social and affordable housing developments for a small group of dwellings to meet local housing needs identified by the statutory housing authority. The location of such developments should be sited adjacent to or near a small settlement.

The SPSS sets out the Strategic Policy direction in relation to Social and Affordable housing, therefore presently we do not consider that alternative policy approaches currently exist, therefore the policy approach will adopt the approach set out in the SPSS.



## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY CT3 - SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Groups of Dwellings in the Countryside will conform with the plan where they provide Social and Affordable housing to meet the needs of the rural community as identified by the relevant housing authority and where they are located adjacent to or near a village or small settlement.

### Dispersed Rural Communities

Dispersed Rural Communities (DRC's) are identified in the Magherafelt and Cookstown Area Plans. They are recognised within PPS 21 and are defined as rural areas that display symptoms of economic and social disadvantage that may contain dispersed communities with a strong sense of identity. They have been identified by the Department in the interests of promoting rural regeneration. There are a number of these communities identified in the outgoing area plans namely, Carntogether, Sixtowns, and Broughderg and Davagh Upper. It is important to note that they are not settlements and all relevant policy that applies to the countryside apply

## DRC Policy Approach Options

### Option 1 – Remove DRC's

In line with the SPSS this option would remove all reference to DRC's within the LDP. Given that DRC's exist already in Mid Ulster this option would result in removal to the detriment of the communities they serve.

### Option 2 – Retain and identify new DRC's

This option would retain the existing DRC's and identify new candidates while tailoring current PPS21 DRC policy in relation to what is considered appropriate to the needs of Mid Ulster. This could provide flexibility within the policy to include controls for single dwellings and "clachan" type development within a DRC. Single dwellings may be facilitated for those that contribute to the local community and add to the vitality of the area to sustain rural communities. DRC's tend to be located in countryside areas of low development pressures and as such could potentially sustain additional development.

### Preferred Option.

The preferred option is the approach set out in **Option 2** as there are certain remote areas in the district with very low development pressure where the facilitation of limited residential development would assist in the regeneration of that rural area. It is clear that there is merit in putting forward a case to retain our existing Dispersed Rural Communities and to include policies for development within these.

Furthermore consideration could be given to designating additional DRC candidates within the Mid Ulster District

- Slate Quarry (NE of Pomeroy)
- Curglassan (N of Stewartstown)
- Tirgan (NW of Moneymore)
- Aghamullan (SE of Coalisland)

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY CT4 - DISPERSED RURAL COMMUNITIES

A Single Dwelling in a Dispersed Rural Community will conform with the plan where the applicant has a strong connection to that community or where they make a substantial economic or social contribution to that community. In such cases an occupancy condition will be attached.

A group of Dwellings in a Dispersed Rural Community will conform with the Plan where it represents a "Clachan" style development of no more than 6 dwellings, located at a focal point (i.e) Community Building or Cross Roads.

Single dwellings are required to cluster with existing buildings and all new development must avoid open isolated sites.

Tourism and communities facilities and Cottage Industries will also be accommodated in Dispersed Rural Communities

*Are there any additional areas within Mid Ulster that should be considered as a DRC?*

*What definition and design controls should be attached to a 'clachan'?*

*How would it be best to demonstrate a connection and contribution to a DRC?*

### Temporary Caravans / Mobile homes

Residential caravans and mobile homes, in certain circumstances, may be a sensible temporary solution pending the development of a previously approved dwelling or in response to personal circumstances. However in the main, caravans and mobile homes are not a suitable solution to housing needs in the countryside and if allowed to proliferate would be detrimental to the rural environment.

Policy Approach Options

### Option 1 – Adopt current policy approach of PPS21.

It is considered that the current policy approach of PPS21 is too restrictive in terms of the siting as it requires that all caravan/mobile homes are clustered with existing buildings.

### Option 2 – Tailor and Simplify.

Temporary Caravan/Mobile Homes Preferred Option.

The preferred option is Option 2 as the SPPS does not specify siting criteria and it is considered that this approach will allow a more flexible approach in relation to those building a new home in the District.

This option would adopt a more simplified policy approach in terms of siting allowing the caravan/ mobile home to be sited next to where the new building is proposed, as well as adjacent to existing clusters but would otherwise be based on the approach of PPS21.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY CT5 TEMPORARY CARAVANS/MOBILE HOMES

Temporary Caravans/Mobiles Homes will conform with the Plan where they are for a temporary period of up to 3 years pending the development of a permanent dwelling or where there are compelling and site specific reasons related to personal and domestic circumstances.

In either case the Temporary Caravan/Mobile Home must be located next to where a new building is to be constructed or within or next to an existing building group.

This option would adopt a more simplified policy approach in terms of siting allowing the caravan/ mobile home to be sited next to where the new building is proposed, as well as adjacent to existing clusters but would otherwise be based on the approach of PPS21.

#### Key Questions

- Q. Do you agree with the criteria for dwellings in conjunction with rural enterprises?
- Q. Do you agree with the principle to retain and protect our Dispersed Rural Communities (DRC's)?
- Q. Should the policy facilitate dwellings for those availing of or providing care, if so should carer's accommodation be limited to extensions to existing dwellings or should consideration be given to separate accommodation within the curtilage?
- Q. Should Garages and small sheds be excluded from the definition of ribbon clusters and farm buildings?
- Q. Do you agree with the principle of a defined width for a 'Gap' infill site for 1 and 2 dwellings if so what should that width be?
- Q. Should additional dwellings be catered for within an existing group of farm buildings even if permission has been granted within the preceding 10 years?
- Q. Do you agree with the attaching of occupancy conditions on approvals where personal and domestic circumstances cases, caring case or business enterprise cases are presented?
- Q. Should the number of proposed units for affordable and social housing adjacent to or near a village or small settlements be limited as defined in PPS21 or should the number of units be determined by the identified need set by statutory housing authority?



# Health, Education and Community Uses

The remit of the council does not extend to the provision of health and education facilities. The council does however provide support and assistance to a range of community groups as well as maintaining buildings utilised for community uses. If in formulating the Local Development Plan any of the service providers identify a land need this can be protected for this use. Equally if the providers identify any land that is surplus to requirements the LDP can identify suitable alternative uses. In accordance with the regional policy the plan will seek to locate new developments which maximise efficient use of education, health and community facilities whilst keeping environmental impact to a minimum. Research was conducted by the Council and published in Mid Ulster Position Paper – Health, Education and Community Uses in January 2016. This paper establishes the current provision and shortcomings in the facilities for Health, Education and Community Uses in the Mid Ulster District Council Area. The key findings are outlined within this section.

## REGIONAL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### The Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)

A core principle of the RDS is to promote sustainable development under the three pillars of environment, the economy and society with one of the 8 aims of the RDS being:

“to promote development which improves the health and wellbeing of communities”.

In order to realise this aim, the RDS states that improved health and wellbeing is derived not only from easy access to appropriate services and facilities, although this is important, but also from the creation of a strong economy set within a safe and attractive environment. The RDS also states the importance of ensuring that they have access to services, education, employment, health and leisure and to ensuring there are good transport links to achieve the latter.

### Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

Strategic planning policy states that while the planning system cannot directly create policy for health and education it can play an active role in improving the health and wellbeing of people and communities. The planning system can engage with relevant authorities to reduce health impacts such as policies that reduce pollution, noise, managing the proximity of fast food outlets to schools and improve social cohesion.

Planning can ensure that there are a network of green spaces which provide both environmental benefits and opportunities for social interaction in the community. In

terms of open space planning can protect existing open space and ensure the provision of new green spaces to do sporting activities and play for young children.

The SPPS advises that planning can ensure adequate open space within residential development. This is acknowledging that high density living contributes to poor mental and physical health. If people are living in good quality housing with access to open space it strengthens overall well-being which improves health and communities. This all contributes to the overall aim of sustainable development.

Many of the issues discussed in the SPPS in terms of health and wellbeing of people and communities are addressed in

other sections of this POP within the approach to Housing, Open Space Economic Development, Transportation and General Policy.

## MID ULSTER COMMUNITY PLAN

The MUDC Community Plan is particularly relevant to this topic as it has themes on health and education and the role of the Community Plan will be an important aspect in considering and furthering these issues.

Theme 4 of the Draft Community Plan relates to health and wellbeing. The aim is to create healthier lives, through access to good quality health provision and preventative action to support people to live longer and reduce lifestyle related diseases and also to maintain the independence and wellbeing of older people. Reducing the percentage of heart related deaths in the region is one of the indicators to achieving these aims and this is relevant as deaths from heart disease was stated as one of the key issues in Mid Ulster. Theme 3 of the Draft Community Plan relates to education and skills. The aim is to have good quality education for everyone and have a skilled labour force to meet the needs of industry and for children and young people, to have the best start in life and to have successful learners who are well skilled to maximise employment and other opportunities.

## Health

For health, the former Magherafelt and Cookstown LGD areas are the responsibility of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT). The former Dungannon and South Tyrone LGD area is the responsibility of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT).

In terms of existing facilities, Mid Ulster District has two hospitals, Mid Ulster Hospital and South Tyrone Hospital and neither of these have an A&E and thus cannot be considered as Acute Hospitals. Ambulance response times and travel times to A&E services for Mid Ulster residents are significantly greater than the Northern Ireland average. Mid Ulster is a predominantly rural area and for some residents the travel times may be even higher. An issue therefore is the need to ensure good transport links so residents have access to A&E and other services not currently provided within the District. The overall mortality rate and death rates from cancer and smoking in Mid Ulster are slightly better than NI levels. The main health issues within Mid Ulster District are circulatory problems such as heart disease, respiratory problems, cholesterol levels and childhood obesity. Oxford Economics research has revealed that Mid Ulster has a higher proportion of deaths from cancer, circulatory and respiratory diseases than the NI average.

## Education

Planning for education is the responsibility of the Northern and Southern Region Education Authority. Further education is provided in the three main hubs of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt. Consultation with the education providers in Mid Ulster has revealed sufficient primary school spaces throughout the plan period in the Magherafelt and Cookstown areas, although additional school spaces may be required in the Dungannon South Tyrone Area. In relation to post primary education, additional spaces will be needed in the Magherafelt and Dungannon areas before the end of the plan period.

## Education Proposals

There are proposals for new builds relating to four schools in the Mid Ulster District. Each project either has an approved business case or a business case at an advanced stage of preparation. No further land requirements are envisaged in order to allow these projects to go ahead. The four new build projects are:

- St. Patricks Academy, Dungannon (approval announced by Minister for Education in Jan 2013).
- Edendork Primary School, Dungannon
- New school at Holy Trinity College, Cookstown (approval announced by Minister for Education in Jan 2013).
- GaelscoilUi Neill, Coalisland

Proposals have also been published to discontinue St Pauls College, Kilrea and St Mary's College, Clady with a view to building a new 850 pupil 11-18 catholic maintained post primary school. It is unclear as to where exactly this school will be built and/or what the additional land requirements are. However, with one of the existing schools being located in Kilrea, there is a significant likelihood that the new school will be built outside the Mid Ulster District.

A new 12 classroom school will be built at a new site to accommodate the existing schools of St Johns Primary School, Moy and Moy Regional Primary School. Both schools will maintain their own individual ethos but will be housed on this new site, under the Shared Education Initiative. EA Southern Region has indicated that there are two potential sites which are being considered. One of these is within the Moy Settlement Limit, on land close to the Foxborough / Ridgewood / Ardean Manor Housing Developments. The other is close to the existing Moy Riding School on Derrycaw Road. The latter site is located outside the Mid Ulster District.

There are also a number of School Enhancement Programmes (SEP) which involve major refurbishment or extension projects in the District and these are located at Rainey Endowed Grammar School, Anahorish Primary School, St Marys Grammar School Magherafelt and Dungannon Integrated College. It is not envisaged that these proposals will require any additional land.

Gaelscoil Aodha Rua in Dungannon will benefit from the capital project scheme and Pheonix Integrated Primary School, Cookstown will benefit from funding announced under the Fresh Start Agreement.

In relation to further education campuses, the following proposals are planned in Mid Ulster;

### Southwest College

Development by Southwest College at Dungannon of a Centre for Engineering Excellence.

## CAFRE at Loughry Campus

Consultation with CAFRE has revealed that they are planning a new Science Centre which will house teaching and analytical laboratories for both microbiology and chemistry, classrooms, offices and possibly a new canteen. It will be a new build at the campus and will replace an existing building. Additional student accommodation at their Shannon Hall building is also proposed. They hope to build a new wing with 40 self-catering en-suite rooms for student use.

## Northern Ireland Community Safety College

Department for the Economy advice that work is ongoing in relation to the current position of the Community Safety College Capital Project on agricultural land at Desertcreat. A training needs assessment has been carried out and a dispersed training delivery model has emerged which would see the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service relocate its training facilities to Desertcreat, Mid Ulster. Funding for the Executive's flagship project was approved for the years 2016-17 to 2020-21, totaling £79.4m.

## Community Uses

Mid Ulster District Council currently provides support for 42 community facilities, 6 in the Cookstown Area, 9 in the Magherafelt Area and 27 in the Dungannon and South Tyrone Area. The three main towns all which have a leisure centre. In Maghera there is a leisure centre, a recreation centre in Moneymore and sports arenas in Cookstown (Mid Ulster Sports Arena/MUSA) and Magherafelt (Meadowbank). Issues relating to Open Space and Recreation are considered separately within this paper.

### Community Uses in the Local Development Plan

Each of the three existing Area Plans contain a policy relating to community uses. Community provision is something that could be provided in new housing developments and if there was to be any major urban expansion consideration could be given as to whether as part of that expansion there is a need for community facilities such as a hall, crèche or youth club to be provided and placing the onus on the developer to provide such a facility. The key problem in trying to provide these through the development plan is that on the whole these come forward as a result of shorter timeframes and capital programs and thus over the life of the plan funding opportunities for such facilities will arise which was not previously known about. Therefore the Plan needs to have an appropriate policy to allow community uses to be developed in urban areas regardless of Plan zonings. It is considered that there are no alternative options to this approach and that a policy could be worded along the following lines:

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY COY 1 – COMMUNITY USES

Proposals for the development of a community use within a settlement shall accord with the plan providing –

- (i) There is no significant detrimental effect on amenity;
- (ii) The proposal does not prejudice the comprehensive development of surrounding lands, particularly on zoned sites;
- (iii) The proposals are in keeping with the size and character of the settlement and its surroundings;
- (iv) Where necessary, additional infrastructure is provided by the developer; and,
- (v) There are satisfactory access, parking and sewage disposal arrangements.

In exceptional circumstances where there is no suitable land available in a village or small settlement then favourable consideration will be given to a community use associated with the settlement which is located next to the settlement limits or visually associated with it.



## Urban Design

The ability to provide an urban environment that actively contributes to and enhances community cohesion by promoting positive interaction can bring both individual and commercial benefits to an area by instilling a sense of ownership and stewardship over the local town or public space.

The topic of Urban Design is not widely covered in strategic policy. Therefore MUDC consider it to be a matter for inclusion within the new LDP. The SPPS sets out Core Planning Principles, at the outset, which highlights principles that are currently not reflected in policy, which may be considered when delivering successful urban environments.

### Core Planning Principles



### Key Policy Generators from the Core Planning Principles

#### Improving Health and Well-Being

- The protection of existing, and provision of new, quality open space within or close to settlements plays a vital role in promoting healthy living and tackling inequality through facilitating play, sporting activities, passive activity and interaction with others.

#### Creating and Enhancing Shared Space

- Shared spaces are places where there is a sense of belonging for everyone, where relationships between people from different backgrounds are most likely to be positive, and where differences are valued and respected.
- The planning system has an important role supporting Government with addressing these issues through its influence on the type, location, siting and design of development

- Planning authorities should utilise development planning, regeneration and development management powers to contribute to the creation of an environment that: is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities; has a high standard of connectivity, and supports shared use of public realm.

#### Supporting Good Design and Positive Place-Making

- Good design can change lives, communities and neighbourhoods for the better. It can create more successful places to live, bring communities together, and attract business investment. It can further sustainable development and encourage healthier living; promote accessibility and inclusivity; and contribute to how safe places are and feel.
- Design involves shaping how all elements of the built and natural environment relate to each other through the construction of new buildings, restoration and redevelopment of historic buildings, creation of public spaces and environmental improvements.
- New buildings and their surroundings have a significant effect on the character and quality of a place. They define public spaces, streets and vistas and create the context for future development. The planning system has a positive role in making successful places through its influence on the type, quantum, scale, height, massing, layout, materials, design and location of development and the use of land.
- Key to successful place-making is the relationship between different buildings; the relationship between buildings and streets, squares, parks, waterways and other spaces; the nature and quality of the public domain itself; the relationship of one part of a village, town or city with other parts; and the patterns of movement and activity that are thereby established. The compatibility of a development with its immediate and wider context, and the settlement pattern of a particular area, are important considerations.

### Regional Strategic Policy

Regional policy promotes high quality design to ensure that town centres provide sustainable, attractive, accessible and safe environments.

There are a number of Plan objectives relevant to the subject of Urban Design:

- To protect and consolidate the role of local towns and villages so that they act as local centres for shops and community services meeting the daily needs of their rural hinterlands.
- To accommodate cultural differences in our communities whilst promoting "shared people together with equality of opportunity.
- The need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and wellbeing.



## Mid Ulster Community Plan

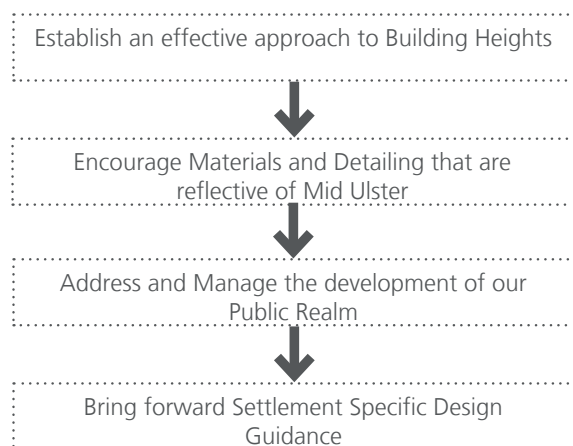
The consultation undertaken to inform the emerging community plan has also identified the following issues relevant to this subject:

- Need to sustain and support the town centres of our three major towns (including their evening/night-time economies) and keep supporting village renewal/regeneration
- Continue with multi-focussed town centre regeneration and village renewal schemes (ie integrating proposals for business, public realm and traffic management) and make a concerted effort to remove dereliction.
- Look at Maghera as a 'Gateway to Mid-Ulster' and at Aughnacloy as a main gateway to NI. Invest in the 'Gateway Entrances' to all local towns and villages
- Keep a focus on the villages and regeneration and visual impact.
- Increase the amount of public art, especially in town centres.
- Keep town/village centres and civic facilities such as The Burnavon, key assets as neutral/shared spaces and make sure public spaces are well lit.

## Mid Ulster Strategy

Having established the desire to address Urban Design within the new LDP it is considered there are a number of key issues to address as follows:

### Key Issues to be addressed



### Establish an effective approach to Building Heights

The three main settlements in the district display differing patterns in relation to established building heights. Historically tall buildings would be used to signpost important civic buildings reinforcing their role both socially and in terms of hierarchy within a town. Given recent planning permissions within the Mid Ulster District Council area, this established pattern may becoming diluted. Therefore a requirement exists to address the issue of building height in the new LDP. Building Height or tall buildings are not currently defined within Planning Policy in Northern Ireland.

Magherafelt and Cookstown display a similar pattern with the predominant building height 2-3 storey evident within the town centre. Dungannon's established building height is perhaps more varied with a pattern of 3- 4 storey within the centre moving up to recent approvals for 5 – 6 storey buildings moving away from the town centre. The argument may exist that taller buildings may be accommodated due to the topography within Dungannon.

Many International and UK examples exist of maximum building heights policies in various formats. Careful consideration must be given to planning proposals that involve high or tall building in assessing the potential impact on surrounding context including buildings in area of specific historical or architectural significance. Critical views of the potential development from within the townscape and the impact on context should bear significant weight when considering a development proposal.

## Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** - Establish zoned areas of height constraint in the LDP within, but not limited to, town centres, to respect the context of local areas and buildings of architectural and historical merit to protect the established built environment.

**Option 2** - Introduce a general policy in the introduction to the LDP stating that the desire is to retain the existing prevailing building height of 2-3 storeys evident throughout the Local Plan Area. Any proposals for buildings over this storey height may be requested to demonstrate, by the submission of a Design and Access Statement, that it respects and positively contributes to the established character of the area.

### Preferred Option.

preferred approach is **Option 2**. This will provide a degree of certainty for developers as well as controlling the development of tall buildings by providing an opportunity to demonstrate quality design by providing a Design and Access Statement.



Dungannon



Cookstown



Magherafelt

## Address and manage the development of our Public Realm

The three main towns in the Mid Ulster Council District all benefit from current public realm master plans. This reinforces the council's commitment to and recognises the value in providing an attractive public realm. Introducing a policy to control the design of our public realm would be operationally difficult to enforce on individual applications as it may lead to a fragmented approach to the design of the townscape.

It is considered that the transition between the urban and rural landscape is often overlooked with the main approaches to local towns and settlements punctuated by a series of unattractive left over spaces on the fringes of development. Out of town retail and business parks often being dominated by a mass areas of tarmac providing car parking spaces to serve these facilities.

## Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** - Continue to assess individual applications within urban areas on their individual merit as per current procedure.

**Option 2** - Introduce developer contributions for all commercial applications within the town centre to promote the development of the local public realm to encourage community cohesion and attract investment.

**Option 3** - Provide policy for the requirement for a landscape strategy to form part of the submission for all major commercial, industrial and leisure applications to demonstrate how they have reduced the impact of large expanses of car parking as well as integrate into the local context. The landscape strategy may form part of the D&AS when requested

**Option 4** - Picking up on the discussion in Government Action for our Urban Environment Published by Place May 2011, when it calls for the details of Policy QD1 of PPS7 should apply to all development and not only restricted to Residential developments. General design policy should be included at the outset of the plan.

### Preferred Option.

The preferred approach combines the options set out at points 1,3&4 above. This will ensure that our Public Realm is duly considered within all applications to develop land.

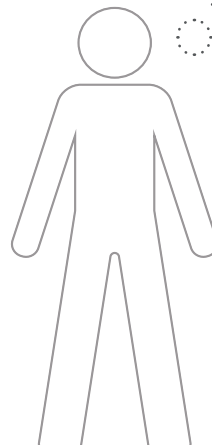
## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY UD1

New development must respect the prevailing building height of 2-3 stories with in the district. Developments proposing buildings above this height will be required to submit a Design and Access Statement to demonstrate design quality when requested.

*Is requesting a D&AS reasonable above 2-3 stories?*

*Is it important to protect established building height?*





# Suggested Policy wording

## POLICY UD2

Adequate Provision is made for Public and Private Open Space - It is important that green areas are both an integral part of development and opportunities are taken to link and connect landscaping and access to the wider blue and green infrastructure. Where appropriate planted areas or discrete groups of trees will be required along site boundaries and in large areas of car parking in order to soften the visual impact of the development and assist in its integration with the surrounding area.

Particular attention should be given to the transition between urban and rural environments.

Access for all is provided - The development allows for a movement pattern that provides for pedestrians, cyclists, those with mobility difficulties and those relying on public transport. Where appropriate measures to ensure traffic calming should be incorporated into a development. Existing public rights of way must be respected;

The development is adequately designed to promote personal safety and deter crime;

Where appropriate a Design and Access Statement may be requested to demonstrate this.

### Encourage materials and detailing that is reflective of Mid Ulster

The SPSS places particular importance on the careful consideration of materials and detailing in Core Planning Principles by asserting: New buildings and their surroundings have a significant effect on the character and quality of a place. They define public spaces, streets and vistas and create the context for future development. The planning system has a positive role in making successful places through its influence on the type, quantum, scale, height, massing, layout, materials, design and location of development and the use of land.

Current Policy wording of PPS7 Policy QD1, which solely applies to residential development, also refers to materials and detailing. There may be an option to extend the policy wording of QD1 to cover all types of development in the urban environment to include commercial, industrial, leisure and civic.

A rich variety of architectural detailing and a diverse use of material is evident within the settlements throughout the Mid Ulster Area. Often the building materials used have a connection to the surrounding area and provide a distinctive sense of place.



Fivemiletown



Moneymore



Cookstown

## Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** - The current policy on materials and detailing relates to residential schemes only. This could be extended to cover all developments within the urban context.

**Option 2** - This approach would require the submission of a Design and Access Statements when requested to accompany applications within the urban context, thereby giving the applicant the opportunity to clearly demonstrate their individual design approach to each site. The applicant would be expected to analyse the context to include, but not limited to, materials and local architectural detailing.

## Preferred Option.

The preferred option is a combination of Option **1** and **2**. This approach recognises the value that MUDC places on our built heritage by extending the requirement to consider detailing and materials for our commercial and civic buildings. It also provides an opportunity to demonstrate quality design by providing a Design and Access Statement.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY UD3

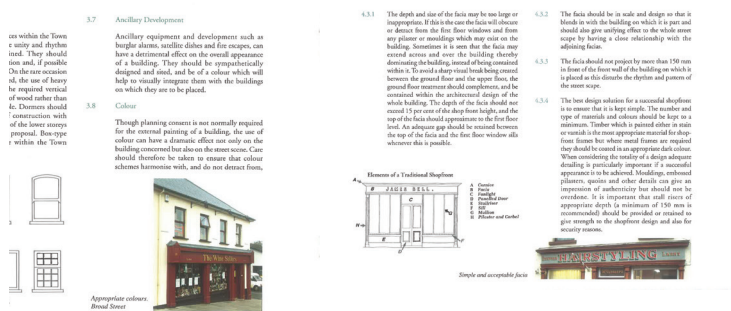
The development respects the surrounding Context and the Character of the area - in terms of topography, existing vegetation as well as layout, scale, proportions, massing and appearance of buildings, structures and hard and soft landscaped areas. The design of the development should draw upon the best local traditions of form, materials and detailing. Where appropriate a Design and Access Statement may be requested to demonstrate this.

## Bring forward Settlement Specific Design Guidance

The SPDS offers the opportunity to bring forward plans, policies and guidance documents in the LDP specific to local urban areas. These areas may not be of a distinctive character to warrant Conservation Area designation. However, because of their own unique identity, it may be appropriate to identify and define these as areas of townscape or village character. Previously the former DOE would have produced area specific design guidance in the format of a booklet to identify architectural and historic attributes of a

particular area to aid the applicant in providing applications that respond to the local context. Magherafelt Town Centre design guide was published in August 1995 and is the only publication that relates to the Mid Ulster Council Area. The guidance contains historical details on the formation of the town as well as indicating noteworthy buildings. It includes such information as shop front design and provided details of listed building within the town.

## Design Guides



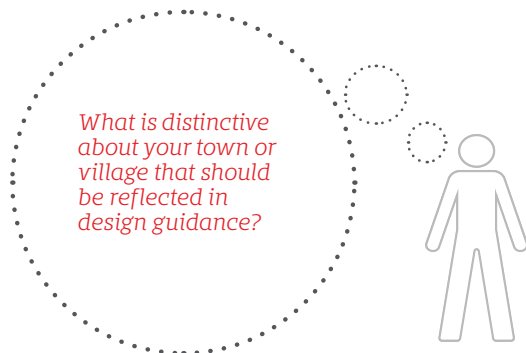
Does respecting the traditional details and materials of an area matter?

When should new and innovative design be encouraged?

The SPSS asserts that Place-making is a people-centred approach to the planning, design and stewardship of new developments and public spaces that seeks to enhance the unique qualities of a place, how these developed over time and what they will be like in the future. Key to successful place-making is identifying the assets of a particular place as well as developing a vision for its future potential.

## Policy Approach Options

**Option 1** - Continue to operate current approach by assessing each application on a case by case basis.



**Option 2** - Produce Design Guidance specific to identified individual settlements within the district. Guidance could be contained at the introduction to each settlement within the Local Policies Plan.

## Preferred Option

**Option 2** is the preferred option as this will allow for the individuality of each settlement to be reflected in the Guide where appropriate, and ensures that guidance is tailored to reflect these circumstances.



### Key Questions



#### Building Height Policy

Is it important to protect established built hierarchy?  
Is requesting a D&AS for proposals above 2-3 storey height reasonable?



#### Public Realm

Does a landscaped entrance to our settlements matter?  
Should we consider reducing the impact from carparking by landscaping?



#### Materials and Detailing

Should the Local Policies Plan bring forward design requirements in relation to fenestration, material and details?



#### Settlement Specific Design Guides

Should design guides be prepared for particular settlements after the plan is complete?

# Open Space, Recreation and Leisure

Open space, sport and outdoor recreation are important components of life. They provide many cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits and contribute positively to physical and mental health and a better quality of life. Everyone, particularly children, the elderly and those with disabilities, should have easy access to open space and the opportunity to participate in sport and outdoor recreational pursuits. For these reasons we attach great importance to the retention of our existing open spaces, the creation of attractive new spaces and the promotion of more opportunities to participate in sport and outdoor recreation in the future.

The Council have a key role in the provision of recreational facilities, along with bodies such as local sports clubs, schools and colleges, and Sport NI.

## Key Issues

In Mid Ulster we benefit from numerous **Informal and Passive Recreation** facilities, well distributed throughout the District, in urban areas and in the countryside providing invaluable recreational spaces. Examples include Drum Manor Forest Park, Dungannon Park and Moydamlaght Forest. Throughout the remainder of the District, further recreation facilities exist in association with the natural resources of the area such as the rivers, lakes and heritage sites.

We also benefit from **Indoor Recreation and Leisure** facilities such as Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt and Maghera Leisure Centres, Mid Ulster Sports Arena (MUSA) and Meadowbank Sports Arena. However those which are Council owned are largely located within the main and small towns only, with villages not benefiting from such Council owned facilities.

Currently Mid Ulster is well served by **play pitch** provision. It is important we recognise the potential value of school sports facilities in addressing play pitch provision and any shortfalls throughout the District. Our Council endorse the importance of dual use of educational facilities in this area. Research carried out in Mid Ulster Position Paper Seven Open Space, Recreation and Leisure June 2015, concluded that if we exclude education grass playing pitches, Mid Ulster would require 4 additional playing pitches however including education we currently have 51 pitches beyond the minimum standard. For our future needs over the plan period excluding education, 46 additional pitches would be required, however including education pitches we will have 10 beyond the minimum standard. The dual use of education facilities is therefore a key consideration in these findings.

**Children's play park** provision in Mid Ulster could be described as deficient in some areas. Cookstown is best provided for in terms of quantum, however distribution across the town means access is not convenient for all. Dungannon and particularly Magherafelt are deficient in quantum and distribution. The smaller towns, Coalisland and Maghera do have play areas, however they are not easily assessed by all, particularly on foot.

## Regional Strategic Objectives and Policy



Strategic Policy (SPPS) states that there will be a policy presumption against the loss of open space to competing land uses in LDP's irrespective of its physical condition and appearance.

The SPPS also requires LDP's to bring forward policy in relation to new residential development and to ensure appropriate location of intensive sports facilities and pay particular attention to high noise generating sports.



## MID-ULSTER OBJECTIVES



## Strategic Approach

To ensure protection of existing areas of open space as well as ensuring that everyone has access to it, there are three options open to the Council at a strategic level.

### Option 1 – Leave as is in Current Area Plans

This option would mean that the current zonings and protection provided by the three extant area plans would remain. Given the provision of playing pitches this would not be unduly problematic however there would be a shortfall if population continues to grow at the anticipated rate and education facilities were not utilised. If we were to adopt this approach we would not be addressing the issue of childrens play parks which are lacking in Magherafelt town and poorly distributed within Dungannon. In relation to indoor leisure given the range of existing facilities it does not appear there will be a shortage in the three main towns. However leisure facilities in themselves can be an economic activity generator and job creator.

### Option 2 – Plan Intervention

This option would zone land for pitches and children's play (in accordance with achieving the minimum standards) and reserve sites for leisure development. To adopt this approach the Council would require the zonings to be underpinned by a programme for providing them and the land required would have to be bought by the Council at alternative development market value. This would mean that this approach would be difficult to implement in any meaningful way. There is also no immediate need to address pitch provision and therefore plan intervention is not considered necessary in relation to the zoning of land.

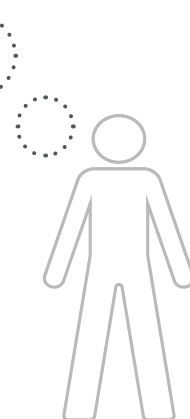
### Option 3 – Balanced Approach

This approach would protect existing open space through the use of appropriate planning policy and zone new open space or indoor leisure where Mid Ulster Council is financially committed to acquiring the land. In order to determine the need for new open space zoning at the Local Policies Plan further examination of the use of the existing provision will be undertaken. The deficiency in childrens play would be addressed in this approach. The Housing Executive has in the past been willing to facilitate these on land in their ownership. The private sector should be required to provide open space on housing and other land proportionate to the size of the development and where appropriate equip it for children's play and recreational use. In terms of leisure, given it is primarily developer / privately led it is difficult to foresee exact needs of the area therefore a policy focusing large scale commercial leisure on opportunity sites within or near town centres, accessible by a range of transport modes is wise, and smaller scale leisure would be accommodated within settlement limits.

### Preferred Option

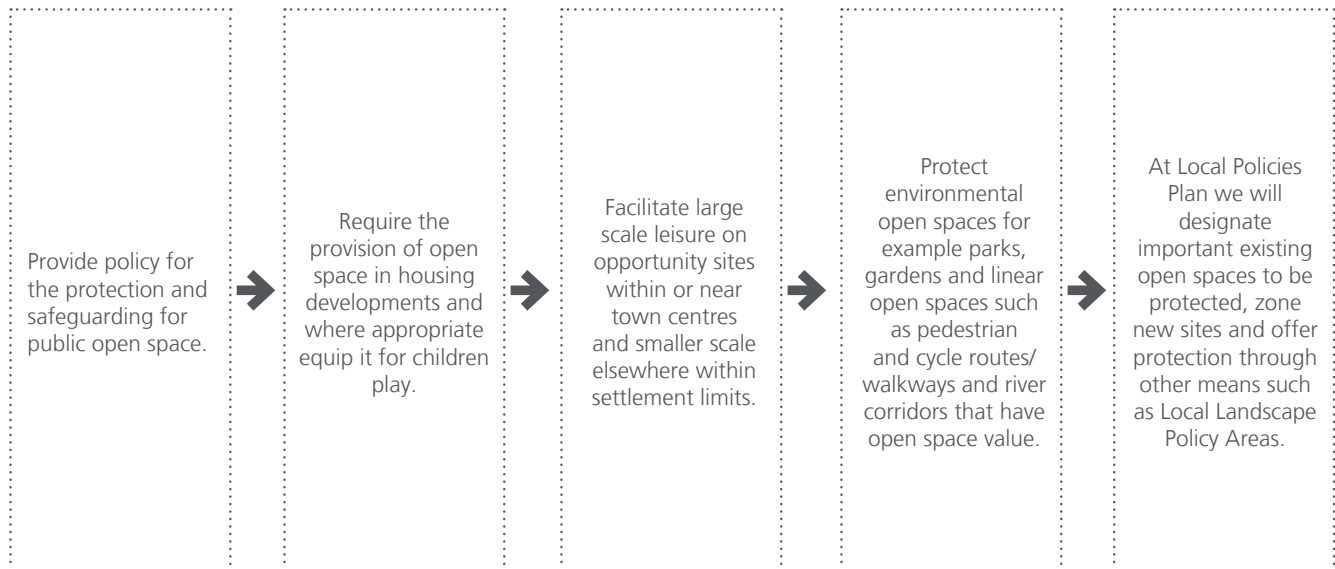
**Option 3** is the preferred option as there is no immediate need to address pitch provision and therefore plan intervention is not considered necessary in relation to the zoning of land. Planning policy is necessary to ensure provision and protection of open space and also to ensure sports and recreation facilities coming forward are appropriately sited.

*Are you aware of any new or impending Open Space, Recreation or Leisure development within the district which should be considered as part of the Local Policies Plan?*





**MUDC'S Strategy for the retention, creation and promotion of Open Space, Recreation and Leisure is as follows:**



## Planning Policy Approach

Planning policies are necessary to ensure that adequate protection is balanced against the development of facilities to address our needs and to ensure that sites are accessible and well distributed and to ensure that the objectives and strategy for Mid Ulster are realised.

### Protection Against The Loss of Open Space

#### Option 1 - Adopt existing policy approach

Existing policy, PPS 8, will not grant permission for development that would result in the loss of existing open space or land zoned for the provision of open space, irrespective of its physical condition and appearance. An exception to this policy is where it can be clearly shown that redevelopment will bring substantial community benefits decisively outweighing the loss of the open space. Another exception is where it can be demonstrated the loss of open space will have no significant detrimental impact on the amenity, character or biodiversity of an area to other alternative provision and small scale development criteria. The caps existing policy places on development is considered overly restrictive for Mid Ulster and would not necessarily address local circumstances.

#### Option 2- More flexible policy approach

With this approach there would remain a presumption against the loss of open space and any exception would only be accepted where demonstrated either redevelopment would bring substantial community benefit that outweighs the loss of the open space; or its loss will have no significant detrimental impact. In line with the SPPS this approach would be less prescriptive than existing policy within PPS 8. This approach would remove existing caps on open space / playing pitch development.

#### Option 3 – Strengthened policy approach

This option would combine the two exceptions to policy outlined by PPS 8 and SPPS. In this option the only exception to the presumption against the loss of open would be where it is demonstrated that redevelopment would bring substantial community benefit that outweighs the loss of the open space and (not or) where its loss will have no significant detrimental impact on open space provision, amenity, character or biodiversity of an area. Compensation for the loss of open space when required would also form part of this option.

#### Preferred Option

**Option 3** is the preferred option because it takes account of the RDS, SPPS and LDP objectives while providing an exception where the relevant criteria is met.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY OS 1 - PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE

Development that results in the loss of open space shall not accord with the LDP irrespective of its physical condition and appearance.

An exception can be made where it is demonstrated it will bring substantial community benefits that outweigh the loss of the open space and it will have no significant detrimental impact on open space provision, amenity, character or biodiversity of an area.

Where appropriate, compensatory measures to include provision for more intensive recreational use (3G sports pitches) on site or in other locations capable of serving the area will be given consideration.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY OS 2 - PROTECTION OF RIVER CORRIDORS

Proposals on sites adjacent to a main river will conflict with the plan unless it has been demonstrated that:

- (a) a biodiversity strip of at least 10 metres from the edge of the river is provided and accompanied with an appropriate landscaping management proposal
- (b) public access and recreation provision is provided where appropriate;
- (c) there is no significant adverse impact on nature conservation
- (d) the proposal will not compromise or impact on the natural flooding regime of the main river and complies with the requirements Flood Risk Policy; and
- (e) any development would not prejudice future opportunities to provide a riverside walk.

## Outdoor Sport and Recreation

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach of PPS 8

This approach directs outdoor sports facilities (pitches etc.) to be located within settlements. Exceptions are permitted where there is no alternative site within the settlement and it is located close to the edge of settlement, subject to there being no unacceptable level of disturbance to people living nearby, farm livestock and wildlife and environmentally sensitive features and locations or areas valued for their silence and solitude. Development of facilities ancillary to water sports need to be compatible with any existing use of the water, including non-recreational uses and ensure there is no conflict with provisions of any local management plan.

### Option 2 Relaxed Policy Approach

This approach would relax the policy for the determination of outdoor sports provision and recreation so that it could occur

anywhere subject to the tests of PPS8 in relation to noise impacts and the tests relating to water activity and ensure development is open in character, does not include large stadia and buildings are ancillary and small in scale.

### Option 3: Zone land within LDP to meet all Future need

This option is not considered to be realistic. Over the life-span of Plan needs will change particularly in rural areas where provision will be led by communities and clubs which may not even have formed yet.

### Preferred Option

**Option 2** is the preferred approach because Mid Ulster's settlement pattern is much more rural based with high numbers living in the country and because it has such a proud tradition of sports clubs all already located in the countryside.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY OS 3 - OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATION

Proposals for outdoor recreation and sports facilities will accord with the plan where they are located in the settlements.

Proposals for outdoor recreation and sports facilities in the countryside will accord with the plan provided:

- a) they avoid permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land; and
- b) remain open in character without large scale buildings such as stadia's and large scale stands and any buildings are ancillary and small in scale;
- c) it is demonstrated by the applicant that it will not result in unacceptable levels of disturbance to people living nearby, to farm livestock and wildlife or to any areas that are valued for their silence and solitude.

Proposals for development of facilities ancillary to water sports adjacent to inland lakes, reservoirs and waterways will accord with the plan provided:

- (a) they are compatible with any existing use of the water, including non-recreational uses; and
- (b) it is demonstrated that there is no conflict with the provisions of any local management plan.

# Indoor Sport and Intensive Outdoor Sports Facilities

A key issue is to be able to provide indoor sport and recreation facilities in locations to cater for our urban and rural population and larger scale indoor facilities in a sustainable manner to meet needs of all the district. Indoor facilities tend to be located in our towns which we wish to see continue. However, at times rural based clubs and societies require small scale indoor facilities in the rural area, which current policy does not cater for. Noise and general amenity are also important considerations particularly sports generating high levels of noise or attracting large audiences. Such issues will however be contained with General Principles Planning Policy and are not necessary in this particular policy.

## Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

The existing policy approach requires that indoor type sports facilities be located within settlements with an exception for stadia where it is demonstrated that there is no land within the settlement and the proposal is located close to the edge of the settlement. Current policy approach doesn't allow for indoor facilities outside of the settlement limit.

## Option 2: Relax policy approach

This option would involve a relaxation in relation to the provision of indoor sport and recreation so small scale facilities could be developed outside villages and small settlements to reflect the predominantly rural population in Mid Ulster and predominance of clubs and societies. This option would however require that indoor sport facilities continues to be provided predominantly within the settlement limits and where there are no sites available a sports stadium may be acceptable close to the settlement limit.

## Option 3: Tighten existing policy approach

This option would remove all exceptions and only allow indoor facilities and stadia within settlement limits. This approach would be overly restrictive and in no way tailored to the rural nature and needs of Mid Ulster.

## Preferred Option

**Option 2** is the preferred option because Mid Ulster's settlement pattern is much more rural based with high numbers living in the countryside and it has such a proud tradition of sports clubs all already located in the countryside.

## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY OS 4 – INDOOR SPORT AND INTENSIVE OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

In settlements proposals for indoor sport and recreation or outdoor sports requiring stadia, large scale stands or large ancillary buildings will accord with the Plan. Where there are no available sites available within a town a sports stadium may be acceptable close to the settlement limit.

Elsewhere within the countryside small scale indoor sport and recreation facilities will accord with the plan provided:

- (a) it is outside a village or small settlement where there is no alternative site available within the settlement which could accommodate the development, it is located close to the edge of the settlement and is visually associated with it;
- (b) it is part of a farm diversification or tourism project; or
- (c) it involves the re-use of an existing locally important building.

### Key Questions

- Q. Do you agree with the preferred approach to the protection of Open Space?
- Q. Should exceptions to the loss of Open Space be required to demonstrate substantial community benefits and no significant impact on Open Space provision, amenity, character or biodiversity of an area?
- Q. Are there other Main Rivers to which Protection of River Corridors policy should apply?
- Q. Should the policy approach to Outdoor Sport and Recreation in the countryside be relaxed to allow for such development provided they avoid loss of best agricultural land, are open in character without large scale stadia, and will not result in unacceptable disturbance to people living nearby, farm livestock, wildlife or any areas valued for their silence and solitude?
- Q. Does the policy for Indoor Sport and Intensive Outdoor Sports Facilities provide sufficient scope for development in the countryside in Mid Ulster?

# Economic Development

Mid Ulster requires the creation of at least 8,500 new jobs over the plan period<sup>1</sup>. The Plan must therefore ensure there is an adequate supply of land to allow for this growth and also ensure that there are appropriate planning policies in place which facilitate economic development, whilst at the same time protecting the environment and ensuring no undue harm is caused to the amenity of nearby land uses.

As of 2013 manufacturing accounted for 27.5%<sup>2</sup> of employment in Mid Ulster, significantly above the Northern Ireland average of 10.9%.<sup>3</sup> A lot of manufacturing jobs are linked to the quarrying industry located in the district with employers such as Sandvik and Terex and arguably is a result of the large amounts of sand and gravel resources available in Mid Ulster. The Agri Food sector is also a significant employer in the district with companies such as Linden Foods, Moy Park and Karro (Vion) Foods also based here.

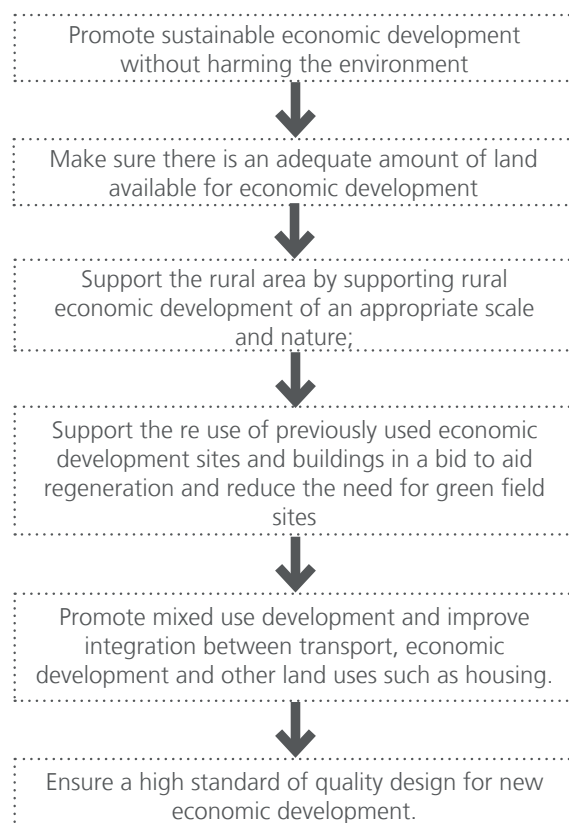
Despite the economic downturn, construction jobs are also very important in Mid Ulster with around 8% of jobs in the District being construction based, compared to 4% in Northern Ireland.<sup>4</sup>

With a high amount of jobs coming from the construction and manufacturing sectors, the amount of jobs in the service sector is relatively low compared to the Northern Ireland average. It is not anticipated that the manufacturing sector will grow in the coming years and this means that the Plan will need to support the growth of office based / IT type jobs to supplement any decline in the traditional employment generating industries in Mid Ulster.

The approach to the allocation and distribution of zoned land within the district is dealt with in the Growth Strategy and Spatial Framework section of this paper. However, it is anticipated that much of the economic development occurring in the District will take place on un-zoned land including sites in the countryside. Therefore this section will address planning policy for the management of economic development.

## Regional Objectives

There are a number of regional objectives which are relevant to this subject and these are identified in the table opposite.



## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

There are a number of local objectives which are also relevant to this subject.

- Build Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt as economic and transportation hubs.
- To help bring about the creation of at least 8,500 new jobs by 2030 at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car.
- To promote diversity in the range of jobs to include employment in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and mining), secondary sector (industry and manufacturing) and the tertiary sector (administration, commerce, retailing and tourism).
- To recognise and accommodate entrepreneurship in large, medium and small firms
- Attracting new firms and aim to bring high value jobs to the District.
- The need to recognise the importance of self-employment and home working, particularly in rural locations.
- Support existing rural businesses and recognise the issues facing them such as broadband / communications availability, accessibility to ports and improving the road network

Most of these objectives will be reflected in the Local Policies Plan which will involve zoning of land. However, planning policy is also needed to manage development proposals which present themselves in the form of a planning application.

<sup>1</sup>(MUDC Position Paper Three – Addendum Employment and Economic Development June 2016)

<sup>2</sup>NISRA Merged report for Mid Ulster

<sup>3</sup>NISRA Quarterly Employment Survey Employee Jobs by Industry Level

<sup>4</sup>NISRA Quarterly Employment Survey Employee Jobs by Industry Level

## Policy Approach Options

In seeking to address the issues outlined and in working to meet the various objectives it is considered that there are two options for the policy approach in relation to this subject:

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy

Adopt the policy approach of PPS 4 which:

- facilitates development in settlements;
- protects zoned land and sites of existing industry;
- allows for controlled expansion of existing industry in the countryside;
- prohibits new business start-ups in rural areas.

### Option 2: More Flexible approach tailored to Mid Ulster

Tailor the existing policy to a more flexible approach to reflect the local needs of Mid Ulster. This approach would simplify the existing policy and would allow for:

- More flexibility within settlements including the removal of any floor space limitations for business uses;
  - Provision of workshop style development within the countryside;
  - Offsite expansion of established economic enterprises;
  - Small economic enterprise on edge of settlement locations;
- In this option the LDP would also contain Rural Industrial Policy Areas where it is desirable to protect existing rural industry. This option recognises the importance of clusters for the expansion for existing rural industry and of allowing an opportunity to expand rural business and employment uses.

The following areas are considered to be candidates for Rural Industrial Policy Areas:

- The Creagh
- Area around Sandvik between Ballygawley and Cabragh
- Ballygawley
- Fivemiletown
- Newmills
- Edendork
- Castledawson Interchange
- Tamnamore
- Ardboe

## Preferred Option

**Option 2** is the preferred option. This option will allow us to tailor the relevant policies to suit the needs of Mid Ulster and will reflect the SPPS approach which provides a less prescriptive economic policy.

For example, a simplified policy approach in urban areas would allow economic development on zoned land, and elsewhere it would simply be assessed on its own merits. The floor space cap on economic proposals in villages and small settlements could also be removed to help our villages and small settlements to grow. In rural areas, the 5 planning policies for economic development could be replaced by a single policy which makes policy more flexible for those who live and work in the countryside. It could also allow for the extension to an established economic development as normal practice as opposed to an exception. It is felt that the existing policy approach is appropriate for protecting existing industrial sites from development which would be incompatible and would prejudice the future operation and therefore will be carried for in the preferred option for Mid Ulster.

*Do you agree  
with the policy  
approach of a more  
flexible economic  
development policy?  
If not, tell us why.*



## Suggested Policy wording

### POLICY ECON1 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SETTLEMENTS

Within towns, proposals for economic development on land zoned for such purposes will conform with the Plan. In all other cases proposals will be determined on their individual merits. Within villages and small settlements proposals that are of an appropriate scale, nature and design and subject to meeting the general planning principles policy, such as compatibility with nearby residential use, will be given favourable consideration.

### POLICY ECON2 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Proposals for economic development in the countryside will conform with the Plan where they represent firm and not speculative proposals and do not harm the established character of the rural area and where they comprise:

- provision of a small workshop accommodation of no more than 100sq.m. floorspace for self-employment ancillary to a dwelling;
- expansion within the curtilage of an established economic development use which is of an appropriate scale and nature;
- off-site expansion of an established economic development use, including existing premises extending beyond the curtilage, where it is demonstrated that relocation of the enterprise is not possible for operational or employment reasons and the proposal makes a significant contribution to the local economy and will not undermine rural character;
- re-development of an established economic development use or re-use of an existing redundant non-residential rural building;
- a new building as part of a farm diversification scheme where a redundant farm building is not available or there is no suitable building available on the farm;
- major industrial proposals where it is demonstrated that the proposal will make a significant contribution to the regional economy and where it is demonstrated that due to its size or site specific requirements it needs a countryside location. Where there are no site specific reasons an edge of town location will be favoured;
- development of a small rural community enterprise/centre, enterprise or economic development outside of a village or small settlement where the use will be associated with the settlement. Where practicable edge of settlement location will be favoured.



## POLICY ECON3 - PROTECTION OF ZONED LAND AND EXISTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SITES

Proposals which will result in the loss of land zoned for economic development (existing or proposed) will not accord with the Plan unless it is demonstrated that there are important community and employment benefits. Elsewhere within the settlement, change of use of existing economic development land, or land last used for these purposes, may be permitted where there is no need to protect it for employment purposes and redevelopment of the land would result in environmental benefits.

## POLICY ECON4 - DEVELOPMENT INCOMPATIBLE WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT USES

A proposal for development in the vicinity of an existing or approved economic use that would be incompatible with this use or that would prejudice its future operation will not accord with the Plan.

### Key Questions

- Q. Do you agree that a size restriction should be placed on small workshop in the countryside?
- Q. Do you agree that the policy should:
  - accommodate workshop style development in rural areas;
  - allow of site expansion in rural areas;
  - remove floor space restriction in settlements;
  - allow for small enterprises on edge of settlement locations?
- Q. Do you agree with the principle that the Plan should contain Rural Industrial Policy Areas (RIPA's)? In addition to the suggested candidates are there any other candidates which you think should be considered?
- Q. Do you agree that the existing policy approach provides suitable protection from incompatible land uses to existing industrial sites?

# Town Centres and Retailing

Town Centres are the focus of much economic and community activity and provide important employment opportunities. Retailing and related facilities, including employment and leisure and cultural uses affect the vitality and viability of our town centres and it is important to be mindful of this when considering the policy options for Mid Ulster.

## Key Issues:

The three main towns of Dungannon, Cookstown, and Magherafelt have varying levels of retailing performance:

### Dungannon

- Mixed quality retail provision with limited depth of choice;
- Only 2 partially utilised Development Opportunity Sites out of 8;
- Vacancy rates increased from 2009 to 2013;
- Prime zone A Rental values for 2013 are lower than Cookstown and Magherafelt;

### Cookstown

- Good range and choice of shopping facilitates and vacancy rates below the NI average;
- Seen as the 'shopping capital' for Mid-Ulster;
- Town centre rental values have declined from 2009 to 2013;
- Minimal Rental value decline at the Broadfields Centre since 2009;
- 6 out of 7 Development Opportunity Sites developed or partially developed.

### Magherafelt

- Town centre retail offer is reasonably good;
- Range of local independent, regional and national retailers;
- Vacancy rates in Magherafelt have declined from 2012 to 2013;
- Prime Zone A rental values have declined;
- Rental values for the Meadowlane centre have increased significantly from 2011 to 2013;
- 3 partially utilised Development Opportunity sites out of 6.

Although the UK shops vacancy rate was at its lowest level on record in September 2015 (9.8%), the Northern Ireland retail sector continues to struggle with a significantly higher vacancy rate of 17.3%. Cookstown's vacancy rate however is lower than both the UK and NI averages. Vacancy rates in Coalisland, Dungannon and Magherafelt are lower than the NI average, however, they are higher than the UK average.

United Kingdom	9.80%
Northern Ireland	17.30%
Coalisland	13.71%
Cookstown	8.10%
Dungannon	10.33%
Magherafelt	12.6%

Vacancy rates - September 2015 (Springboard)

The introduction of revised rateable values by LPS effective from 1st April 2015 is anticipated to have the most significant impact on the retailing environment in the province in recent years. These revised non-domestic values will bring reductions in rates for prime retail shops on the high street.

All three Town Centres have a diverse range of shops, retail services, offices and other businesses. This reinforces that Town Centres are not just about shopping provision but

are multi-functional locations which are important to the vitality of the Town Centre. Town centres need to offer an experience over and above the average functional shopping trip which might otherwise be carried out online or at an out-of-town retail park.'

## Regional Strategic Objectives and Policy

Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) Retailing and Town Centres has been cancelled by the introduction of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS). The SPPS sets out the strategic policy that must be taken into account in the preparation of the LDP. It states that we must adopt a town centre first approach for retail and main town centre uses. It also requires that we undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses across the plan area and also prepare town centre health checks which are to be kept under review.

## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

There are a number of Plan objectives relevant to this subject:

- To protect and consolidate the role of local towns and villages so that they act as local centres for shops and community services meeting the daily needs of their rural hinterlands.
- To facilitate the creation of at least 8,500 new jobs by 2030 at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car.
- To promote diversity in the range of jobs recognising the importance of employment in the primary sector, secondary sector and tertiary sector (administration, commerce, retailing, leisure and tourism).
- To recognise the importance of self-employment and home working, particularly in rural locations.

An outcome in our emerging Community Plan is to achieve:

- Towns and villages that are vibrant and competitive.

## Existing Area Plans

The existing Area Plans designate Town Centre boundaries and Primary Retail Cores (PRC) within Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt and Maghera. A Town Centre boundary only is defined for Coalisland. Within the Area Plans Development Opportunity Sites are also identified for the three main towns and the two smaller towns.

### Dungannon

A Primary Retail Core in the area of Market Square and Scotch Street is currently designated. In recent years the extent of this boundary has been questioned on the basis that it does not afford protection to Irish Street. The existing Plan also designates eight Development Opportunity Sites within Dungannon and a number of car parks within Dungannon town centre that are to be protected.

### Cookstown

The primary retail core underpins the attractiveness of the town centre by maintaining a compact and accessible retail pitch and comprises James Street, William Street and Burn Road where the town centres main shopping attractions are located. This part of the town also hosts a Saturday Street Market. The town centre also contains a number of public car parking facilities which protected and Seven Opportunity Sites are also designated in the existing Plan.

### Magherafelt

Magherafelt town is the main shopping and retail service centre for the Magherafelt District and surrounding rural area.

The Primary Retail Core centres around Broad Street, The Diamond, Market Street and Rainey Street with an extension to the south to include the Meadowlane Shopping Centre. The Plan states that the purpose of the Primary Retail Core is to ensure the continuance of a compact and attractive shopping environment, offering both choice and convenience. Unlike Dungannon and Cookstown the Magherafelt Area Plan does not designate car parking areas to be protected within the town centre. Within Magherafelt town centre six Development Opportunity Sites are identified.

### Coalisland

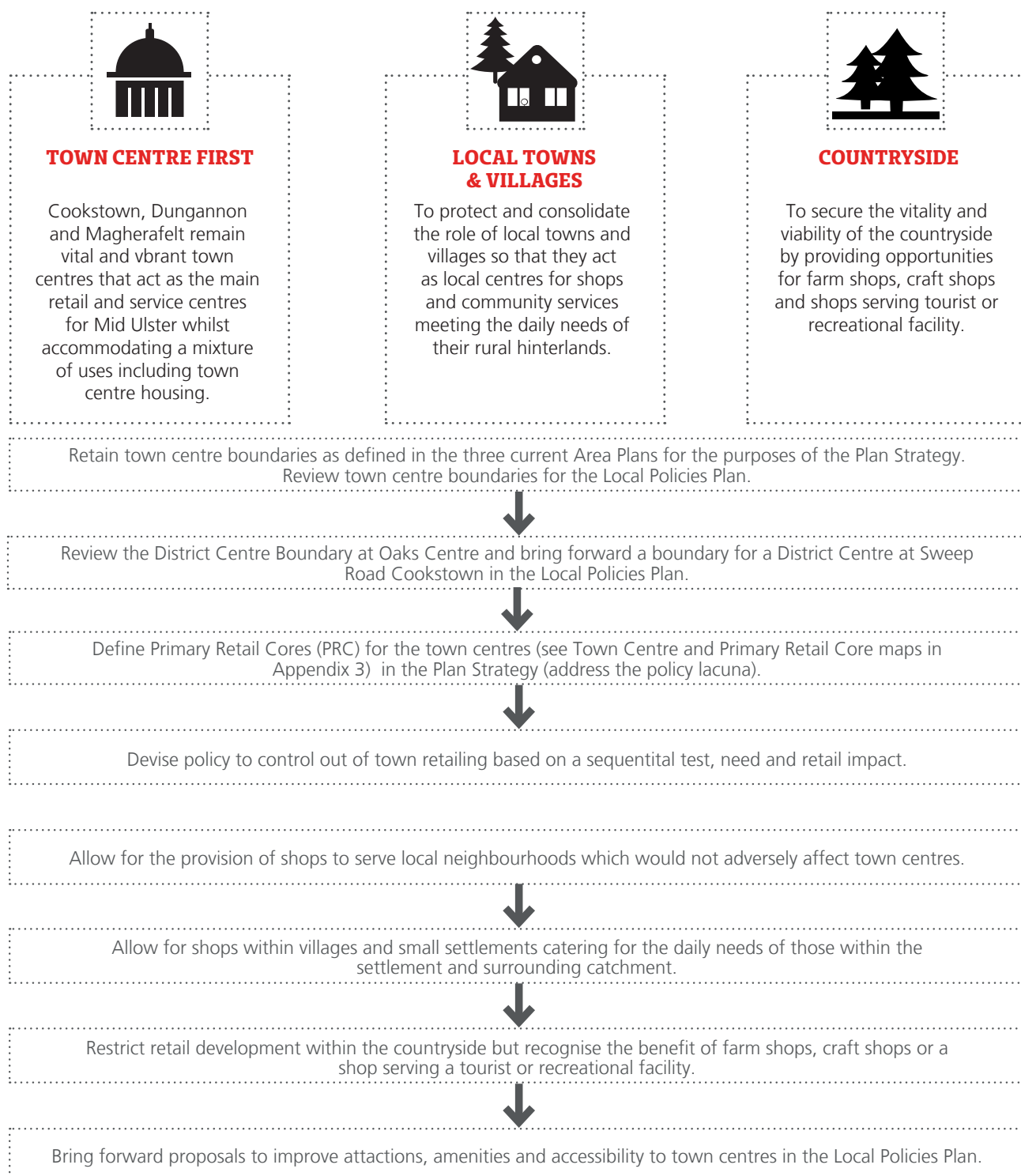
The town centre provides a convenient and compact centre with a range of local retail outlets complemented by restaurants, cafes, bars and services. Coalisland also contains two Development Opportunity Sites and a number of public car parks which are to be protected.

### Maghera

A Town Centre is designated within the Plan and includes Main Street, Bank Square, St. Lurarch's Road and small sections of Church Street, Hall Street, Coleraine Road, Station Road and Fair Hill. The Primary Retail Core includes most of Main Street and part of Coleraine Road. Within Maghera town centre three Development Opportunity Sites exist.

### Proposed Retail Strategy for Mid Ulster

To address the Key Issues relevant to our towns in Mid Ulster and our plan objectives it is necessary to bring forward a strategy for town centres and retailing which will contain appropriate policies and proposals to promote town centre first for retail and other main town centre uses and recognise the importance of a mix of uses within town centres. The strategy, together with the appropriate policies, will reflect the aims and objectives of the SPPS but are tailored to our own specific circumstances in Mid Ulster.

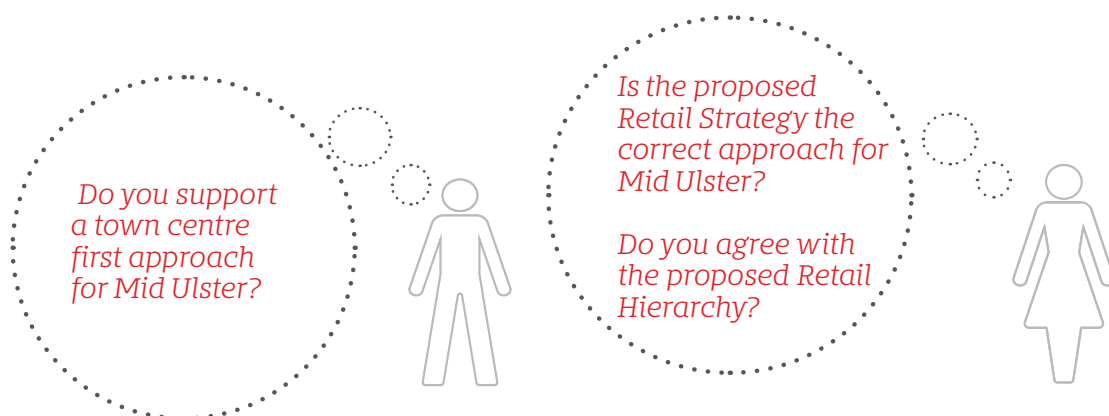


# Proposed Retail Hierarchy for Mid Ulster

To implement the retail strategy a proposed retail hierarchy has been identified.

	Hierarchy	Purpose	Location	DesignationBoundary
HUBS	Town Centre	To provide for a wide variety of retail and retail related uses for residents within the catchment	Cookstown Dungannon Magherafelt	Town centre boundary designation Primary retail core extended and Opportunity Sites exist
	District Centre	To provide for the daily shopping needs of residents with that quadrant of the town	Oaks Centre Sweep Road	District Centre Boundary None Designated
	Local Centre	To provide for the daily needs of local residents within a neighbourhood	None	None Designated
	Out of Town Retail Outlet Centre	To promote and reflect the towns traditional links with linen and textile industry	Linen Green	No Boundary / Designation
	Edge of Centre Supermarkets And Superstores	To compliment the town centre in meeting the daily needs of residents within the catchment	Tesco at Dungannon	No Boundary / Designation
LOCAL SERVICE CENTRES	Local Town Centres	To provide for a range of users to meet the day to day needs of small towns and rural hinterland	Coalisland Maghera	Town centre boundary designation. Primary retail core exists in Maghera and proposed in Coalisland. Opportunity Sites exist
	Villages	To provide limited retail and related uses to meet the day to day needs of the village and its rural surroundings	As proposed for the new settlement hierarchy for Mid Ulster	No boundary or designations
	Small Settlement	To provide village shops for the daily needs of residents in the locality	As proposed for the new settlement hierarchy for Mid Ulster	No boundary or designations
RURAL	Countryside	To provide for the daily shoppingFarm shops, craft shops and shops serving tourist or recreational facilities	N/A	N/A

The Council intends to carry out a Retail Study to identify whether there is a capacity to support further retail expansion.



## Retail Policy Approach Options

The SPPS states that we must adopt a town centre first approach for retail and main town centre uses. It also requires that we undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses across the plan area and also prepare town centre health checks which are to be kept under review. In this context it is considered that there are no alternative options in respect of retail policy. The Plan will implement the proposed Retail Strategy as set out and this will be accompanied by a suite of planning policies expressed locally in the Plan as suggested below.

This approach will provide an opportunity for a retail study to be carried out and it also ensures that retail cores are defined in a consistent manner across the three main and

two local towns. This approach addresses the planning policy lacuna that has been created upon the adoption of the SPPS thereby ensuring protection of retail units within the Primary Retail Core. Normally this would be undertaken for the Local Policies Plan stage of the process. This approach proposes bringing forward revised Primary Retail Cores at the Plan Strategy and planning policy to complement this.

For the countryside an appropriate policy is also suggested which allows for a number of acceptable retail scenarios in the countryside, as provided for in the SPPS. While no alternative approaches to the issue of retailing in the countryside has been offered it is important to note that the chosen approach does recognise that some opportunities do exist in the form of farm shop, a craft shop or a shop serving a tourist or recreational facility.

## Suggested Policy wording - Retail Development in Towns

### POLICY RE1 - DEVELOPMENT WITHIN TOWN CENTRES

Proposals for new retail and retail-related development will accord with the Plan where they are located within the Primary Retail Core.

Outside of the Primary Retail Core and within Town Centres favourable consideration will be given to other main town centre uses such as cultural and community facilities, leisure, entertainment and businesses that would add to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

New development within Town Centres should respect any conservation interests and the unique character of that centre.

### POLICY RE2 -RETENTION OF SHOP UNITS IN PRIMARY RETAIL CORE

Change of Use from shops to local services such as building society, offices, banks, estate agents, restaurants and hot food take-aways will accord with the Plan except where:

- There would be a significant loss of retail floorspace at ground level;
- It would result in the creation of a cluster of more than 3 non-retail uses at ground floor level;
- The area overall is tending to be dominated by non-retail uses.

The loss of ground floor units within the Primary Retail Core to non-retail or non-retail related uses will conflict with the Plan.

### POLICY RE3 - RETAIL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF TOWN CENTRES

Retail development outside of Town Centres will only accord with the Plan where it has been demonstrated that there are no suitable sites available within the Town Centre or Primary Retail Core. Favourable consideration will be given to edge of centre sites before out of centre locations and providing it has been demonstrated that there is a need for the retail provision and there will be no significant impact on an existing centre.

Any development over 100sq.m net floor area will require an assessment of available/alternative sites including any land at edge of centre locations. Any development above 1000sq.m gross external area should be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment and Traffic



# Retail Development in Rural Area

## POLICY RE4 - NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPS

Within towns suitably located neighbourhood shops will accord with the Plan providing the floor area does not exceed a net floor area of 100 square metres and it does not conflict with the character or amenities of a residential area. Such shops should normally be located within mixed use areas as opposed to a residential area.

## POLICY RE5 - VILLAGES AND SMALL SETTLEMENTS

New retail development within villages and small settlements will accord with the Plan providing it is of a scale that is appropriate to the settlement and will not have a significant impact on retail provision within town centres, other villages or adversely impact on or lead to the closure of existing retail provision within the core of the village/small settlement. Development will normally be restricted to a net floor area of 100 square metres unless the applicant demonstrates that there will be no significant adverse impact on retailing within the village or small settlement or neighbouring settlement.

## POLICY RE6 - COUNTRYSIDE

Within the countryside new retail development proposals for a farm shop, craft shop or a shop serving a tourist or recreational facility or a convenience shop linked to an existing service station will accord with the Plan. Development will normally be restricted to a net floor area of 100 square metres.

Proposals for convenience shops not linked to a service station or development of comparison or bulk good shops, which should be located within a settlement, will conflict with the Plan.

### Key Questions

The council are willing to consider changes to the town centre boundaries and retail designations and would welcome the identification of any potential opportunity sites within our towns.

- Q Do you agree with the introduction of a District Centre at Sweep Road Cookstown?
- Q Should Local and Village Centres be designated?
- Q Should existing Town Centre Boundaries be expanded and if so where?
- Q Are there any opportunity sites which should be included within the existing Town Centres?
- Q Are you in agreement with the extent of the Primary Retail Cores? (See Town Centre and Primary Retail Core Maps in Appendix 3)
- Q Should a sequential test (i.e. primary retail core - town centre - edge of centre) be adopted?
- Q Should shop units within the Primary Retail Core be protected?
- Q Are there adequate constraints on retail development outside of town centres?
- Q Should the threshold for the submission of a Retail Impact Assessment be set at 1000sq.m?

# Minerals

Minerals development in Mid Ulster presents a key challenge in how to sustainably facilitate mineral development whilst protecting our important landscapes and areas of nature conservation interest and environmental assets as well as ensuring that the amenity of local residents is not unduly harmed.

Minerals are an important resource for Mid Ulster. Minerals Development in Mid Ulster employs over 1,250 people, considerably more than any other District in Northern Ireland. Quarries in Mid Ulster produce approximately 3.2 million tonnes of aggregates each year and this equates to an annual value of around £10 million.<sup>1</sup> Sand and gravel are the main mineral deposits within the district. There are also deposits of other minerals such as limestone and gold. There is very little sandstone produced in Mid Ulster.

The construction industry in Mid Ulster is a very important employer, with almost twice as many jobs being provided in construction than the Northern Ireland average.<sup>2</sup> The large amounts of sand and gravel deposits which exist within the district are important in this regard because they provide the materials, close to source, to support the construction industry. Mid Ulster will require in the region of 11,000 new houses to be built during the plan period<sup>3</sup> and will undoubtedly rely on the local construction industry for a large majority of this building work. It is important therefore to facilitate appropriate mineral development to help boost the local construction industry.

Mid Ulster has many areas of high landscape quality, including areas which have been identified as vulnerable landscapes in addition to the existing Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation. These important landscapes, by their nature, tend to be remote, rural areas where mineral deposits are commonly located. Therefore the extraction of important minerals can often conflict with the need to protect important landscapes.

In addition to this Mid Ulster possesses numerous Priority Habitats in Northern Ireland and the destruction of these through development of minerals is a legitimate concern. Bearing all this in mind, the Plan will need to recognise the importance of minerals development while at the same time ensuring that our environment is protected and that the impacts of mineral development on the amenity of neighbouring land uses is minimised.

## Regional Strategic Objectives and Policy

Facilitate sustainable manner through balancing the need for specific minerals development proposals against the need to safeguard the environment.



Minimise the impacts of mineral development on local communities, landscape quality, built and natural heritage and the water environment



Secure the sustainable and safe restoration, including the appropriate re-use of minerals sites, at the earliest opportunity

Mid Ulster is in agreement with these objectives which provide the basis for our strategy and policy.

Strategic policy states that the approach for minerals development, including peat extraction from bog lands, must be to balance the need for mineral resources against the need to protect and conserve the environment. The SPPS states that the Plan should:

- ensure that sufficient local supplies of construction aggregates can be made available for use within the local, and where appropriate, the regional market area and beyond, to meet likely future development needs over the plan period;
- safeguard mineral resources which are of economic or conservation value, and seek to ensure that workable mineral resources are not sterilised by other surface development which would prejudice future exploitation;
- identify areas which should be protected from minerals development because of their intrinsic landscape, amenity, scientific or heritage value (including natural, built and archaeological heritage).

<sup>1</sup> MUDC Position Paper Minerals 2016

<sup>2</sup> NISRA Merged Report Mid Ulster District 2016

<sup>3</sup> MUDU Housing Allocation Position Paper – Addendum 2016

## Policy Approach Options

In seeking to address the issues outlined it is considered that there are two options to the policy approach in relation to this subject.

### Option 1: Applications on merits

This option involves all applications for mineral development within the District, regardless of their location, being determined against a criteria based policy and if a proposal meets that criteria then it will be acceptable. This effectively means that every application will be determined on its merits.

### Option 2: Adopt Areas of Constraint and Mineral Reserve Policy Areas alongside tailored policy

This option involves the development of a strategy based on Areas of Mineral Constraint which will protect areas of intrinsic landscape, amenity, scientific or heritage value from inappropriate mineral development. In addition to Areas of Mineral Constraint, Mineral Reserve Policy Areas will also be included in the Plan and these will be used to protect minerals which are of economic or conservation value from surface development which would prejudice the future development of the minerals in question. Outside of these areas, minerals development which meets the set criteria will be acceptable. Criteria will include issues such as protecting biodiversity and international nature sites, safety and amenity of nearby residents, road safety, impact on the landscape and adequate restoration proposals.

### Preferred Option

**Option 2** is the preferred option as it is in line with regional planning policy which states that the local council should identify areas to be protected from mineral development and protect valuable minerals from surface development.

### Zoning of Areas of Constraint

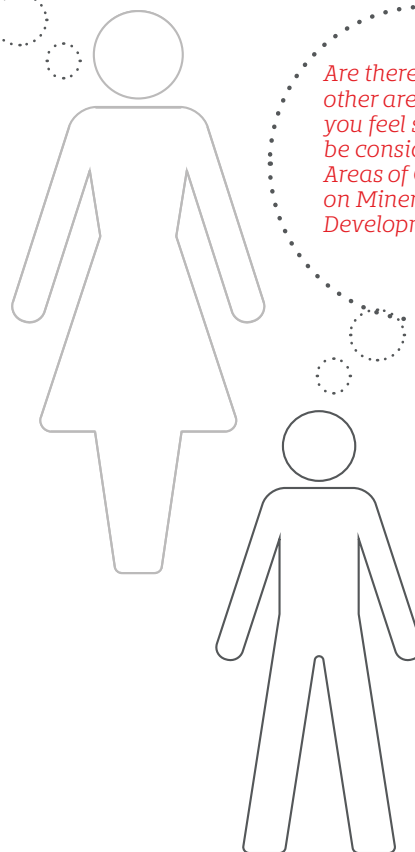
Presently the existing Area Plans for the former Cookstown and Dungannon districts contain Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development whilst the Area Plan for the former Magherafelt district does not. This approach is shown in Map 1 below and does not reflect Mid Ulster's vulnerable landscapes which we wish to protect. The approach shown in Map 2 takes account of all existing vulnerable landscapes within Mid Ulster and seeks to protect them from mineral development. This approach would result in areas which are currently experiencing significant quarrying activity being categorised as an area of mineral constraint. Such an approach would have obvious negative economic implications for the district and potentially our ability to produce sufficient amounts of minerals. The approach shown in Map 3 is more agreeable in Mid Ulster in that it includes many areas of vulnerable landscape but excludes those areas which are currently experiencing significant quarrying activity.

*Do you agree that Areas of Mineral Constraint should be included in the Plan??*

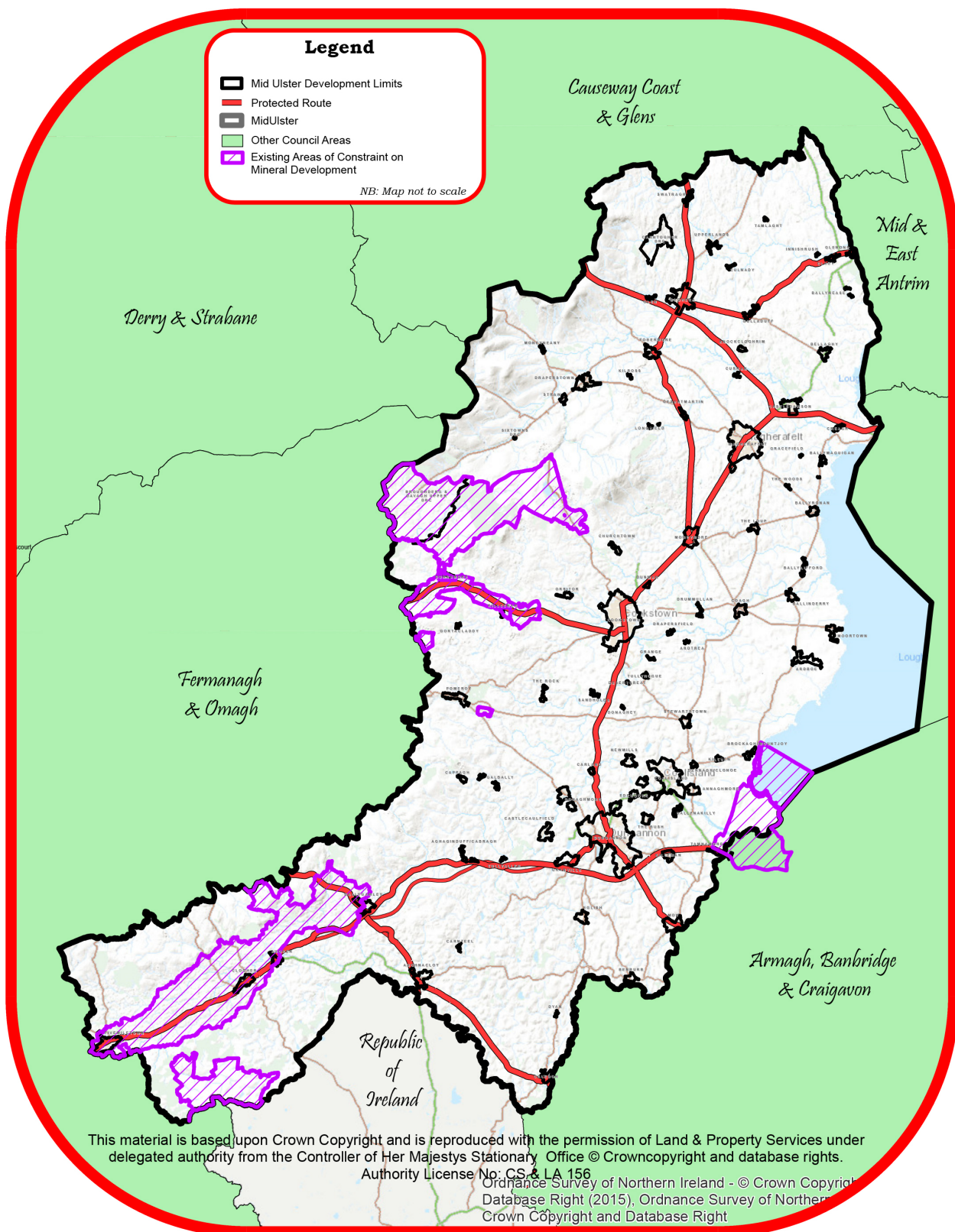
*If so, to what extent should they cover the District?*

*Do you agree with the preferred option? If not tell us why?*

*Are there any other areas which you feel should be considered as Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development?*

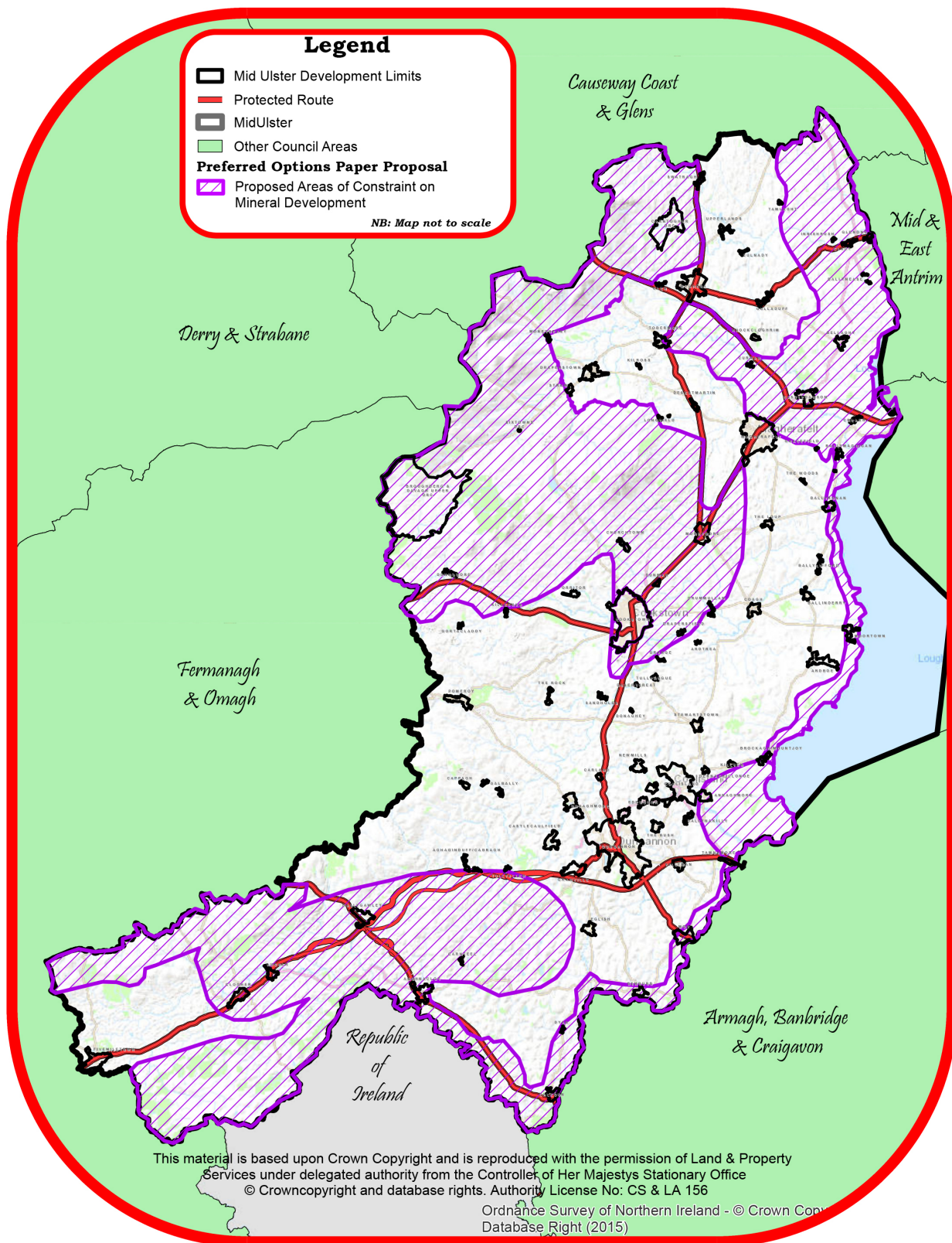


## Mid Ulster Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development - Map 1



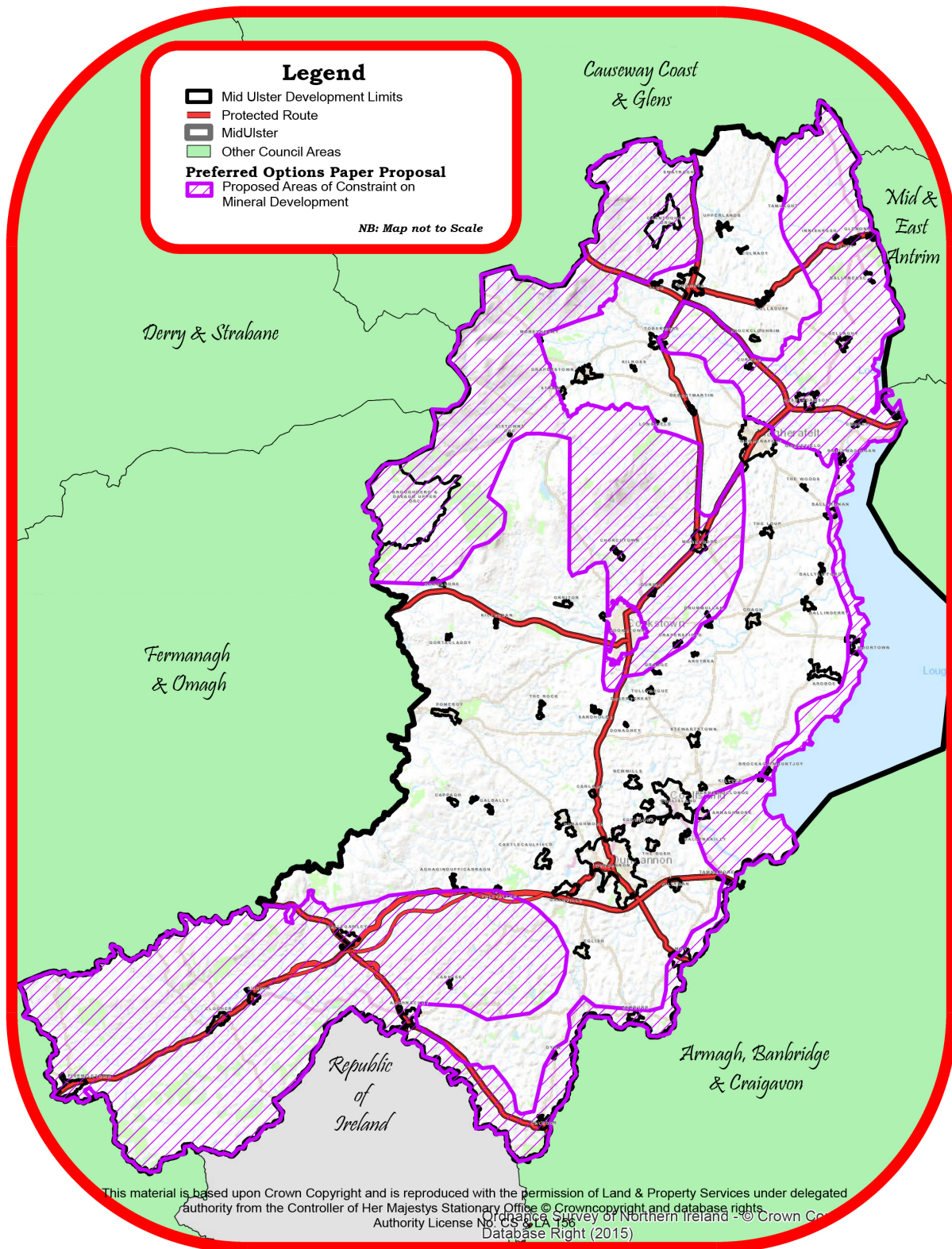


## Mid Ulster Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development - Map 2





## Mid Ulster Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development - Map 3



## Mineral Reserve Policy Areas

Mineral Reserve Policy Areas are intended to protect mineral reserves which are valuable to the local economy and to prohibit surface development at the respective locations which would sterilise or prejudice their future development. The SPPS states that the Plan should safeguard mineral resources which are of economic or conservation value, and seek to ensure that workable mineral resources are not sterilised by other surface development which would prejudice future exploitation.

The existing Plans have designated three Mineral Reserve Policy Areas (MRPA's), located at the following sites;

- to the south of Cookstown to protect important limestone reserves at Ballyreagh,
- at Derraghadoan on the northern edge of Dungannon to protect shale reserves
- on the western edge of Coalisland at Derry Road / Derryvale Road.

In relation to zoning of MRPA's within the new Plan there are three approaches to this:

### Option 1 – Retain MPRA's as per existing Area Plans

This option would see the existing Mineral Reserve Policy Area's being retained with their extent remaining unchanged. The issue with this option is that some of the protected areas may include land where the reserves have been exhausted and no longer require protection thus meaning that the land cannot be released for other development proposals.

### Option 2 – Modify the existing MRPA's

This option would keep the existing MRPA's but the boundaries would be modified where the reserves have already been exhausted. This approach means that where appropriate some land could be released from the protection area to allow it to be considered for other appropriate development.

### Option 3 – Remove MRPA's from the Plan

This option would remove the MRPA's from the Plan. The issue with this approach is that in addition to being at odds with strategic policy it also means that there is potential that the economic value of such reserves cannot be realised to the detriment of the minerals industry or local community.

### Preferred Option

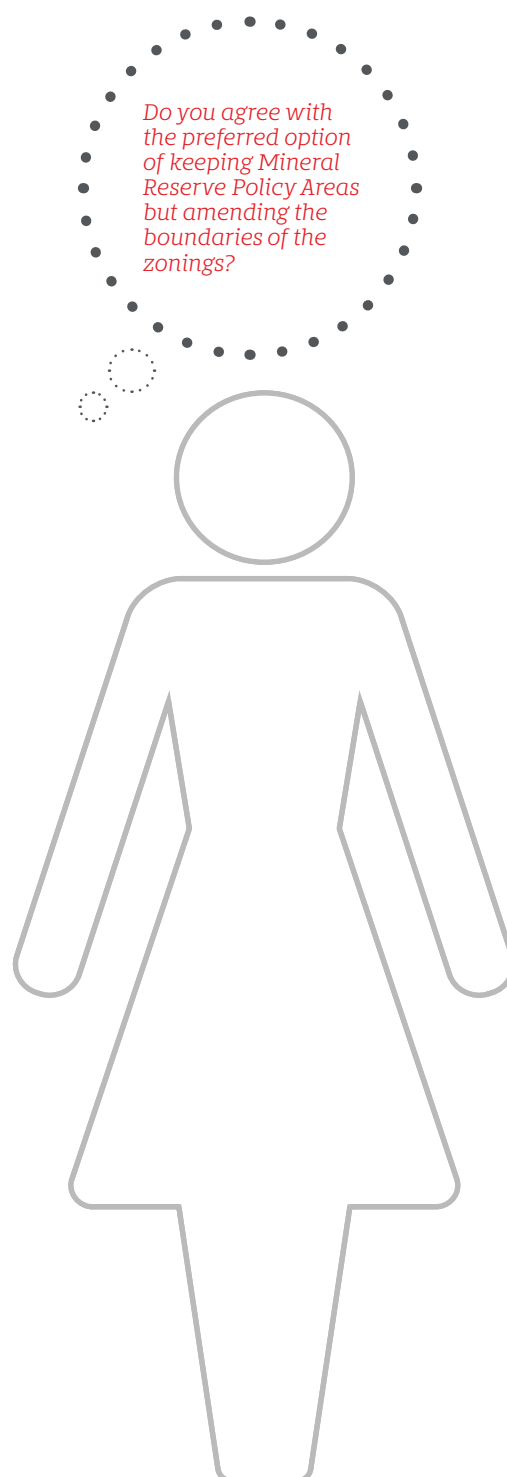
**Option 2** is the preferred option. This option would see the Plan continue to designate Mineral Reserve Policy Areas and this would be in keeping with the approach advocated in the SPPS. However, considering advice from Geological Survey Northern Ireland it is envisaged that the areas could be amended to more accurately reflect the existing needs of the local economy and address scenarios where some reserves have been exhausted.

Option 2 would see the Mineral Resource Policy Area on the western edge of Coalisland being retained although the extent of the zoning would be reduced. The rationale behind the zoning was to support the local clay brick production at Tyrone Brick. However, given the fact the brick production at Tyrone Brick ceased in 2008/2009, the need for such a widescale zoning at this location is no longer apparent. There are parts of the site which have experienced flooding and other parts which are no longer appropriate for extraction

activities given previous industrial activity. In addition, we are now subject of a planning proposal for recreation and economic/mixed use development on part of the current zoning. It is therefore proposed that the exhausted areas be excluded from the zoned area and the remainder retained to allow for clay brick industry to re-establish if circumstances allow it.

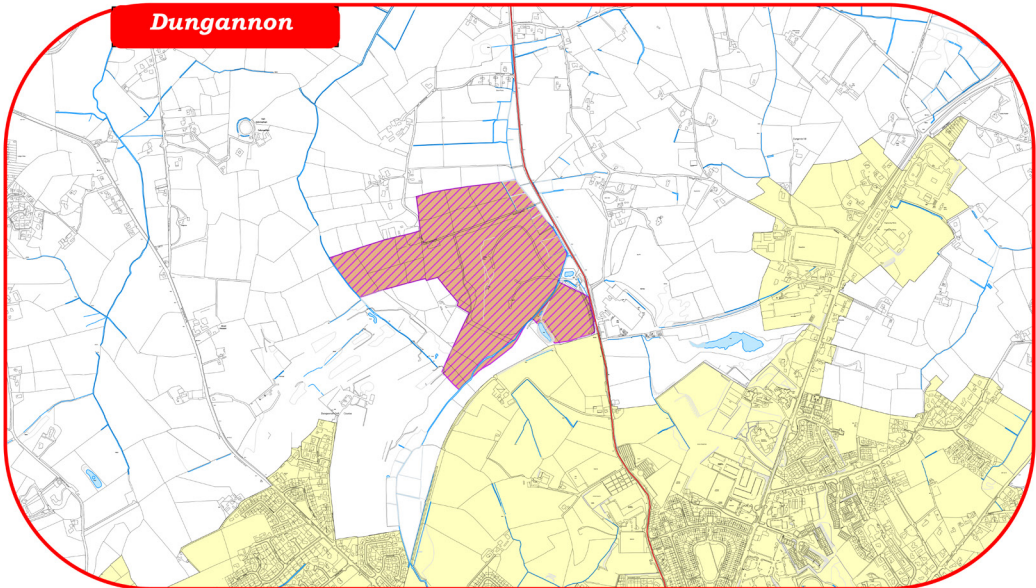
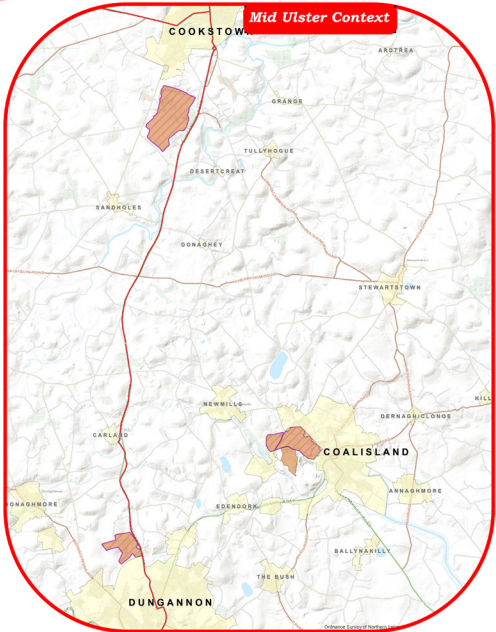
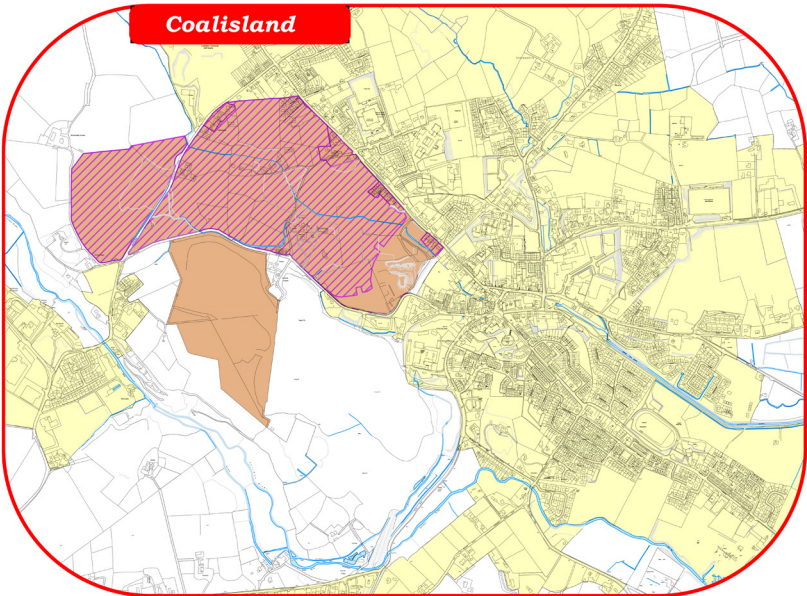
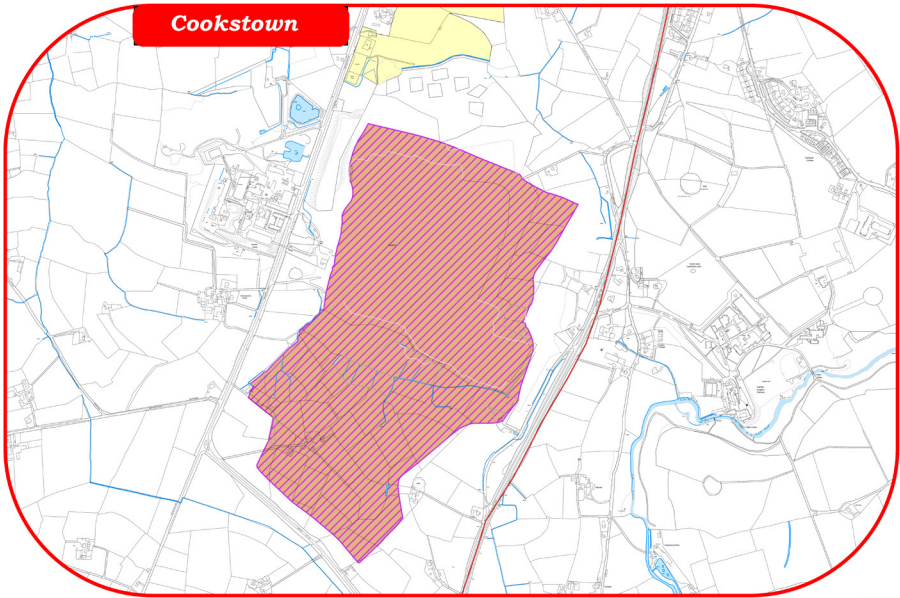
The Mineral Reserve Policy Area at Ballyreagh, south of Cookstown, is subject to ongoing extraction (Lafarge) and it is proposed that this area remain protected, as it is currently in the Cookstown Area Plan, to meet future demand.

The site at Derraghadoan on the northern edge of Dungannon is also still in use by Lafarge Cement production. It is recommended that it remain unchanged at this stage.





Proposed Mineral Reserve Policy Area Map



**Legend**

- Existing Area Plan Designations**
- Settlement Limits
  - Existing Mineral Reserve Policy Areas
  - Protected Route
- Preferred Options Paper Proposal**
- Proposed Mineral Reserve Policy Areas
- NB: Map not to Scale*

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## Suggested Policy Wording

If the options outlined above in relation to Areas of Mineral Constraint and Mineral Reserve Policy Areas were adopted, then suggested mineral policy wording could be as follows;

### POLICY MIN 1- MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Outside of Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development, development shall accord with the Plan where all the following criteria are met;

- a) The development will not prejudice the essential characteristics of a site of international / national or local nature conservation importance including ASSI's, SAC's, SPA's and local / national Nature Reserves;
- b) Special attention is paid to accommodating protected species and protecting biodiversity;
- c) The developer has demonstrated that there will be no significant risk to public safety or amenity caused by dust, noise, blasting, or the use of chemical and / or biological agents;
- d) The developer has demonstrated that the development would not impact negatively upon the safety and amenity of occupants of development in close proximity to the mineral working and / or its transport routes as a result of noise, vibration and dust arising from the excavation process or from the transportation of materials. This criteria will be of particular relevance to proposals involving the use of explosives in the extraction process;
- e) The transportation of materials will not significantly impair the safety and amenity of road users and residents along the roads where extracted materials will be transported, by virtue of unacceptable volume of traffic or by vibration, dust or noise associated with the proposed development;
- f) The development will not have an unduly obtrusive or negative impact on the landscape, such as breaking a skyline or failing to make the most of natural landscape features to aid integration. The location of plant machinery, waste material or the stockpiling of equipment or mineral product are also important considerations when assessing the visual impact on the landscape and the impact of these things will be considered as part of the development in its entirety;
- g) The proposed development must contain details of restoration proposals which are commensurate with the scale of the development and which takes account of the type of deposits in the ground, the excavation methods used and the characteristics of the surrounding landscape.

Applications for the extraction of peat for sale will not accord with the Plan if the proposal fails to protect the bog land and its valuable nature conservation interests as well as protecting landscape quality, particularly in AONB's.  
Applications for the extraction of unconventional hydrocarbons (eg. Shale gas) shall be determined in line with strategic policy as contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).

### POLICY MIN 2 – AREAS OF CONSTRAINT ON MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Extraction or processing of minerals within an Area of Constraint on Mineral Development shall not accord with the Plan. Exceptions may be made for the minor expansion of existing workings OR where the extraction will provide important benefits to the local community such as the provision of building materials for the restoration and repair of buildings of built conservation interest.

In all cases, the following criteria must be met;

- a) The application is for a proposal with a short term of extraction;
- b) It can be demonstrated that there will be limited environmental impacts;
- c) There will be no on site processing of excavated material;
- d) In all of the above cases, adequate restoration proposals are provided in line with part g) of previous policy MIN 1

## POLICY MIN 3 – MINERAL RESERVE POLICY AREAS

Development which would sterilize or prejudice mineral extraction within a Mineral Reserve Policy Area shall not accord with the Plan

It should be noted that further research will be carried out before the Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development and the Mineral Reserve Policy Areas suggested in this paper are finalised. Part of this process will involve the Council writing to the Minerals Industry to ascertain further details on the baseline regarding supply and demand of minerals as well as and the reserves that remain. Part of this research will also involve further engagement with the Department for the Economy as well as full appraisal of any proposed Areas of Constraint and Mineral Reserve Policy Areas.

### Key Questions

- Q. Do you agree with the suggested wording of the subject policies MIN 1, MIN 2 and MIN3?
- Q. Do you agree that there should be exceptions made within the Areas of Mineral Constraint where the proposal involves a minor expansion of an existing works or where a benefit will be provided to the local community?
- Q. Should the minerals policy for Mid Ulster include a specific policy on the extraction valuable minerals?
- Q. Should the extraction of valuable minerals be treated as an exception within Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development?
- Q. Do you think that on site processing of materials should be allowed within an Area of Constraint on Mineral Development, if it can be demonstrated that there will be limited environmental impacts?



# Tourism

The tourism industry in Mid Ulster is relatively small and this is borne out by the following information obtained from NISRA;

- Mid Ulster experiences the third lowest number of overnight trips of all the 11 council districts.
- Mid Ulster receives the second lowest amount of expenditure during overnight stays.
- Mid Ulster has the third lowest number of beds available in licensed accommodation in Northern Ireland.
- Mid Ulster generates less employment from tourism than any other district.

The most popular reason given for visiting Mid Ulster is that of visiting friends and family while in relative terms, a smaller number of people visit Mid Ulster for holiday and leisure than the Northern Ireland average. This illustrates the need to improve the attractiveness of Mid Ulster as a holiday / leisure destination in order for the tourism industry to grow.

One way in which we can increase our holiday / leisure appeal is to promote appropriate activity tourism at sites such as Lough Neagh (fishing, cruising, and water sports) and the Sperrins (hill walking, nature watching). These two sites have been identified as key destinations in the draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020. While using these sites to increase our appeal to tourists, we must also ensure that the impact of promoting tourism at such sensitive sites is borne in mind. Tourism proposals should not impact negatively upon the natural and built heritage and should respect our many and varied environmental assets.

Within Mid Ulster there may also be opportunities for growing tourism around activities such as golf, mountain biking, the new Seamus Heaney centre in Bellaghy and also by improving the night time economy.

The lack of hotel accommodation is an issue that will require consideration in order to facilitate any growth in tourism. At present, there are a number of viable hotels in the District with the 4 main sites of accommodation being located at Corick House, Tullylagon House, The Greenvale Hotel and The Glenavon Hotel. Neither of these could be described as a "resort" hotel and the lack of one of these in the district is notable.

There are some existing tourism assets within the District such as Beaghmore and some well-known activity tourism sites. These sites must be utilised in order to attract more people to the district but not in a manner which will harm our sensitive landscapes and areas of scientific and nature conservation importance.

Taking all this into account, tourism policies in the LDP must protect any existing tourism assets and also contribute towards increasing the number of tourist visitors and the number of bed spaces available, whilst still ensuring there is adequate environmental protection afforded to sensitive sites.

## Objectives

Mid Ulster strategy in relation to tourism incorporates regional and strategic objectives.



An overarching Council objective is to promote jobs in the District and the promotion of jobs in the tourism sector is an important way of ensuring there is a diverse range of jobs across all sectors.

## Strategic Policy Approach

To address the issues outlined and to meet these objectives it is considered that there are 3 options to the policy approach in relation to this subject.

### Option 1 – Existing Development Plan Approach

This approach would maintain the Status Quo by maintaining the existing Tourism Opportunity Zones and Conservation Areas as identified within the current Area Plans alongside existing policies contained within PPS 16. These policies generally permit development in settlements but restrict rural tourism development unless there is a locational need or it will bring substantial benefits to the economy. Major tourism development in the countryside is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. This is an inconsistent approach for the district however since the Area Plan for the former Magherafelt District does not include such Opportunity or Conservation Areas.

## Option 2 – Developer Led Approach

This is a case by case approach. Each case considered on its merits based on defined criteria set out within planning policy, regardless of site location. The onus would be on the developer to meet general planning principles and to show a need for the development in question.

## Option 3 – Flexible Plan Led Approach

This option targets those areas with the most to offer, either by way of existing activities and location by supplementing the existing tourism opportunity zones with additional areas which offer opportunities by reason of their location and attractions whilst also expanding tourism conservation areas. A more tailored approach to policies can be adopted. The tailored approach will allow more flexibility for major tourism development, being less prescriptive in terms of acceptable hotel/guesthouse/hostel development on the edge of a settlement, allowing reuse and conversion of suitable buildings and greater flexibility regarding tourism accommodation run in conjunction with an existing tourism facility i.e. not limit this to self-catering accommodation.

## Preferred Option

The value of tourism needs to be recognised, however, current policy for areas outside of Tourism Opportunity Zones is too restrictive and is in part contributes to Mid Ulster's under developed tourism base. Whilst Mid Ulster does not have the assets of other areas, it equally is not experiencing adverse pressures for tourism such as second homes. Therefore **Option 3** is the preferred option because it promotes tourism development in some areas and restricts it where conservation interests are paramount (see Tourism Map below) whilst providing flexibility for genuine tourism schemes based elsewhere within the District.

The Map below shows the proposed new Tourism Opportunity Zones and Tourism Conservation Zones as well as the existing zonings.

The proposed new Tourism Opportunity Zonings are located at;

- Sixtowns Road, Sperrins
- Clogher Valley – Parkanaur Forest and Favour Royal Forest
- Lough Neagh – Traad, Ballyronan

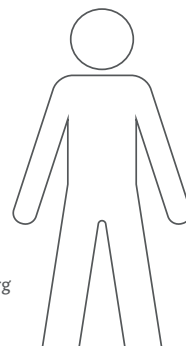
The proposed new Tourism Conservation Zones are located at;

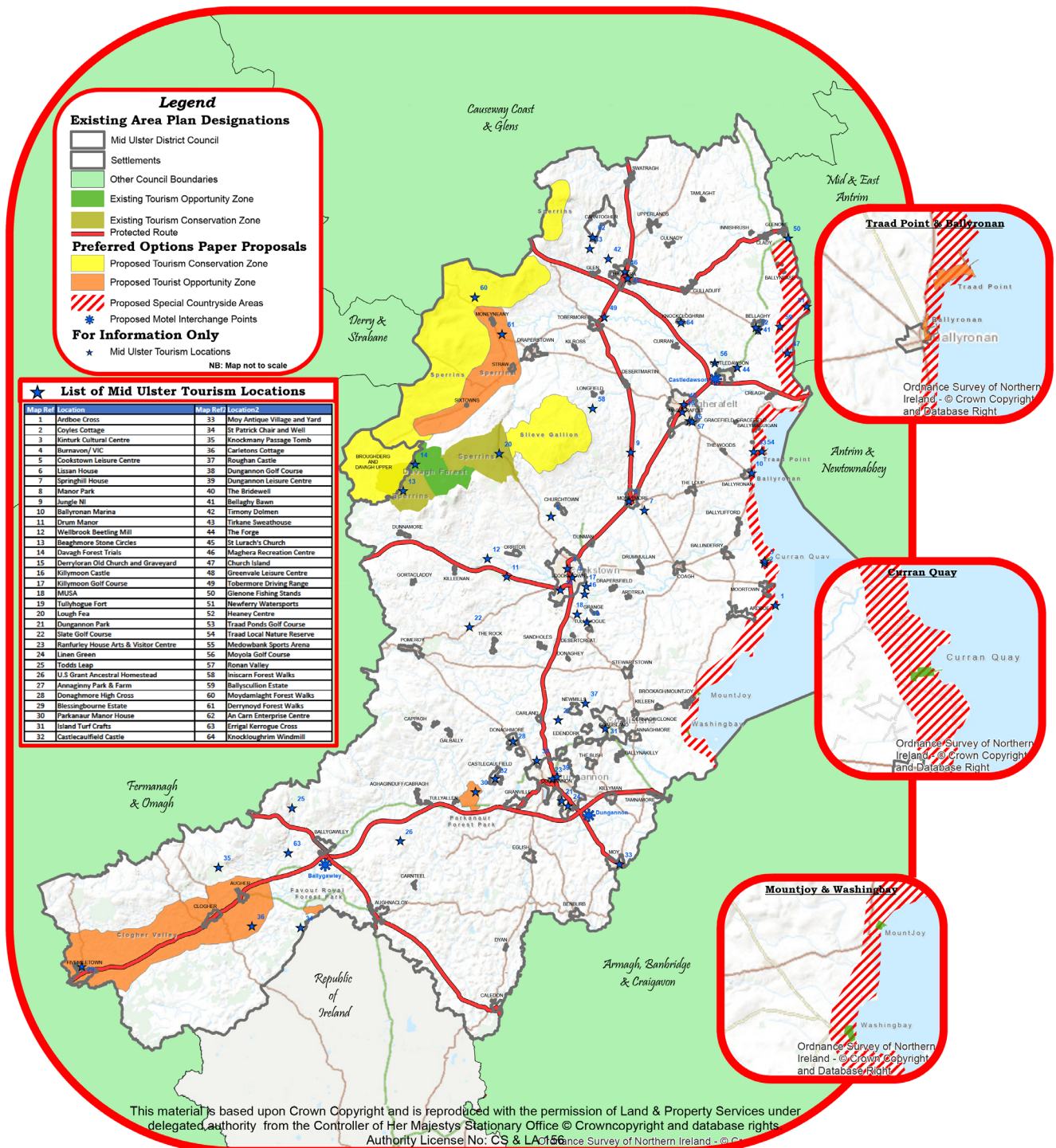
- Slieve Gallion
- Broughderg and Davagh
- North and east of the Sperrin AONB, excluding Sixtowns, Straw and Moneyneaney
- Sperrin AONB, west of Carntogether DRC

*Do you feel that a flexible plan led approach is the correct option?*

*Do you agree with the proposed Tourism Opportunity Zones and Tourism Conservation Areas as shown on the Map below?*

*Do you agree with the proposed Tourism Opportunity Zones and Tourism Conservation Areas as shown on the Map below?*





In order to achieve the policy aims contained in the preferred option, it is felt that the following policy wording may be appropriate.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY TOU 1 - PROTECTION OF TOURISM ASSETS AND TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Development shall conflict with the plan where it would in itself or in combination with existing and approved development in the locality have a significant adverse impact on a tourism asset.

Proposals for new tourism development (facilities and / or accommodation) within Tourism Conservation Zones will conflict with the plan, except where;

- a) The proposal includes minor improvements to infrastructure such as walking and cycle-ways, fishing and canoe stands; or
- b) The proposal includes the provision of tourism accommodation or facilities through the re-use of existing vernacular buildings.

Special care should be given to ensure that any proposal should respect and be sensitive to the character of the local landscape, wildlife and heritage interests.

Important tourism accommodation will be protected from re-development and changes to other uses. These sites comprise of;

- 1. The Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown
- 2. The Greenvale Hotel, Cookstown
- 3. The Tullylagan Hotel, Cookstown
- 4. Corrick House Hotel, Clogher

and any other sites identified in the Local Development Plan.

### POLICY TOU 2 – MAJOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Outside of Tourism Conservation Zones and Special Countryside Areas a proposal for a major tourism development that acts as a resort destination providing both accommodation and major leisure facilities, such as a waterpark, theme park and other similar leisure facilities will accord with the plan where it has been demonstrated that it will be of exceptional benefit to the regional tourist industry and the economy and is on a site that is sustainable in terms of any benefits derived for the local economy and in relation to adverse impacts on the wider environment.

## POLICY TOU 3 – TOURISM ACCOMMODATION

Development of tourist accommodation on unzoned land within settlements and within Tourism Opportunity Zones (see Map A) will accord with the plan subject to the normal planning considerations.

Outside of settlements, Tourism Conservation Zones and Special Countryside Areas, tourism accommodation will also accord with the plan where it comprises;

- a) a hotel, guest house or hostel located at or near to the edge of the settlement and is clearly visually associated with the settlement, where there are no suitable opportunities within the settlement; or
  - b) the re-use and / or conversion of suitable buildings, of permanent construction excluding 'steel frame' buildings, in the rural locality; or
  - c) the sensitive replacement of an existing suitable building with a new building of proportionate size and scale; or
  - d) part of a Farm Diversification scheme which is visually linked to a cluster of existing farm buildings; or
  - e) tourism accommodation run in conjunction with and visually linked to an existing tourism facility, such as; golf course, fishing lake, or outdoor activity centre; or
  - f) self-catering accommodation located within the grounds of a hotel, guesthouse or holiday park;
  - g) in the case of hotels, holiday parks, camping or touring caravan parks that are located within easy access of tourism amenities and where it is demonstrated that the proposal will create a high quality and sustainable form of development. Demonstrated within the site layout, design and landscaping and a viable business case;
  - h) a motel situated at or easily accessible to a key transport corridor, link corridor or trunk roads and at the key interchanges (see Tourism Map) but avoiding direct access onto the key transport corridors;
- Castledawson
  - Dungannon
  - Ballygawley

Proposals for the expansion of all tourism development shall be considered on their planning merits.

Conditions to retain tourism use are likely to be required where this has formed the justification for development in the countryside.

Where a caravan park is located in the rural area, re-development for another use will not normally be permitted other than a reversion to agricultural use.

Special attention should be given to the character of the local landscape, wildlife and heritage interests and in all cases the development must be sensitive to its setting and achieve a high degree of integration. Special attention should also be given to the provision of amenity, space, landscaping and planting and should be proportional to the size and scale of the development.

## POLICY TOU 4 – OTHER TOURISM FACILITIES / AMENITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

Proposals for outdoor tourism facilities, amenities or attractions, such as golf courses, fishing lakes, outdoor activity centres and picnic sites, interpretation and visitor centres, will accord with the plan where they are located within a settlement or a Tourist Opportunity Zone or in the open countryside outside of a Tourism Conservation Zone

Proposals for indoor tourism facilities will also accord with the plan where they are located in the countryside, outside of a Tourism Conservation Zone, where it can be demonstrated that;

- a) it is in association with and requires a site at or close to a tourism asset; or
- b) the type of tourism activity in itself requires a countryside location.

All proposals for tourism facilities, amenities and attractions will be of a scale, design and sited in order to have significant detrimental effect on the amenity of the area or its landscape character. Such proposals should use existing buildings wherever possible. These buildings should be of permanent construction and not 'steel framed' buildings.

### Key Questions

- Q - Do you agree that planning policy in Mid Ulster should allow more flexibility in relation to major tourism and where tourism is run in conjunction with an existing facility i.e. no limitation to self-catering accommodation?
- Q - Should planning policy in Mid Ulster be less prescriptive policy in terms of hotel / guesthouse/ hostel development at edge of settlement locations?
- Q - What are your views on motel development at the interchange locations of Castledawson, Ballygawley and Stangmore Junction, Dungannon?



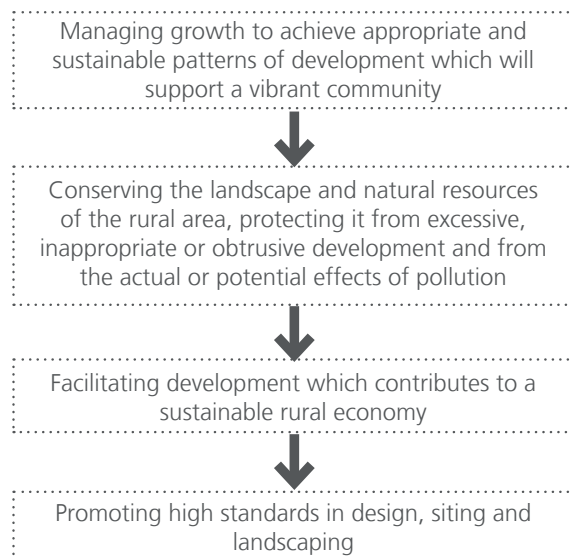
# Agricultural, Forestry & Rural Development

Mid Ulster has a long established link to agriculture, forestry and rural development. The Agricultural Census confirmed that in 2014 there were 24,200 active farms in Northern Ireland, out of this 4,155 farms were registered in Mid Ulster, this was second only to Fermanagh and Omagh. The overwhelming majority (3,227) of these 4,155 farms are classified as very small.

The key issue is therefore how best to facilitate agricultural, forestry and other rural development that contributes to vibrant rural communities to ensure sustainable growth. The LDP will bring policy forward to facilitate appropriately located agriculture and forestry development, appropriate Farm Diversification Schemes along with Conversion and Re-use of existing buildings for non- residential use. All proposals will be subject to Policy CT1- Development in the Countryside in relation to design and siting.

## Regional Strategic Objectives & Policy

The SPPS sets out the following relevant regional policy objectives:



The SPPS adopts a policy approach based on clustering, consolidating and grouping new development, with existing established buildings and the re-use of previously used buildings. It also states that all new development in the countryside must integrate, respect rural character and be appropriately designed. The SPPS does not require the applicant to demonstrate that there are no suitable existing buildings on the holding that can be utilised.

## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

In addition to the objectives of the SPPS there are a number of LDP objectives relevant to this subject:

- 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.
- The need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and well-being.

The feedback from the community consultation undertaken as part of the emerging Community Plan and relevant to this subject highlighted the need for:

- Increased business and job opportunities in rural areas
- A Local Development Plan that provides for urban and rural business growth

## Agricultural and Forestry Development

Mid Ulster has a good distribution of forests spread across the plan area in locations such as Augher (Favour Royal), Pomeroy Forest Park, Caledon Forest Park and Moyola Forest Park. The Council are supportive of commercial sustainable forestry operations by The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs provided they respect local environmental circumstances, and do not have a detrimental impact on open upland landscape and take account of biodiversity.

## Policy Approach Options Policy options

To address the issues outlined there are two options to the policy approach in relation to this subject.

### Option 1 Adopt existing policy approach

This policy approach requires the applicant to demonstrate that no suitable existing buildings are available for conversion prior to gaining approval for a new building. It also requires that the need for the building is demonstrated. This is considered to be too restrictive and overbearing for the needs of the farming community in Mid Ulster.

### Option 2 – Adopt a more simplified policy

This options allows greater flexibility providing the opportunity for new agriculture buildings to be constructed without the need to demonstrate the option for reusing and conversion of existing buildings. This is our preferred option as it caters for a rural district like Mid Ulster where agriculture has a strong presence.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY AFR1 - AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

Development ancillary to the operations of an active and established farm/forestry holding will conform with the plan where it is to be located next to an existing building on the holding and must not appear incongruous to the rural setting. In exceptional circumstances an alternative site away from existing buildings may be considered where there are demonstrable business reasons, health and safety reasons or a need to protect the amenity of nearby residents to site away from an existing building.



#### Farm Diversification

Given the majority of very small farms in the district it is apparent that it is becoming increasingly difficult to operate a farm on a full time basis that is economically viable. Therefore farmers increasingly need to look at alternative means to supplement their business. Farm diversification provides this opportunity by allowing farmers to engage in additional business activity in conjunction with their established farm business.

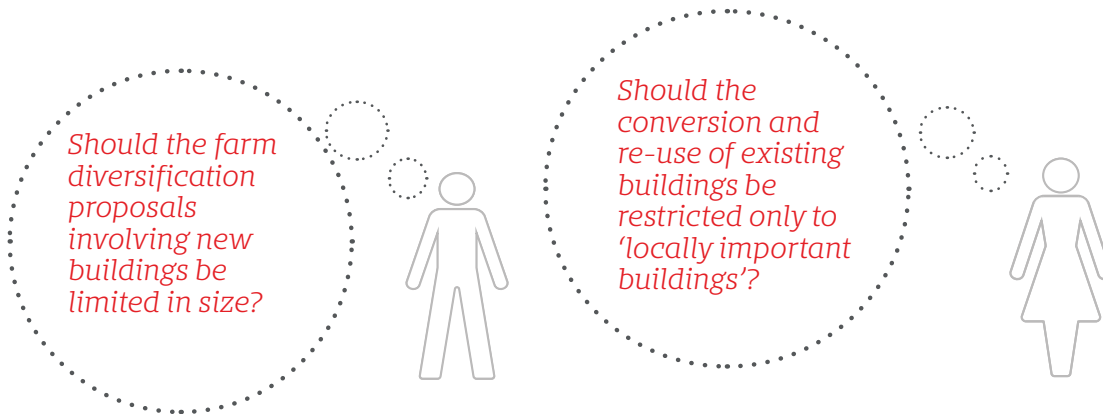
To sustain rural communities and allow for established farms to subsidise their income the existing policy in PPS21 allows for the reuse and conversion of buildings or exceptionally new buildings to be constructed, and run in conjunction with the farm business. To meet the LDP objectives and conform with the approach of the SPPS It is considered that there are reasonable alternative options in relation to the approach to Farm Diversification. Suggested wording for the policy could be along the following lines:

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY AFR2 - FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Farm Diversification, involving the reuse or adaptation of existing buildings, on an active and established farm (for a minimum of 6 years) will conform with the plan providing the proposal is run in conjunction with the agricultural operations on the farm.

Exceptionally, a new building may be permitted where there is no existing building available to accommodate the proposed use, either because they are essential for the maintenance of the existing farm enterprise, are clearly unsuitable for adaption and re-use or cannot be adapted to meeting the requirements of other statutory agencies. The scale and character of the new building must be in keeping with the established rural character.



### Conversion and Re-use of existing buildings for non- residential use.

Within the countryside there are a range of locally important buildings of special character or interest (such as former school houses, churches and older traditional barns and out buildings). In some cases the original uses of these buildings have ceased. Therefore the issue for the plan is how best to secure their retention in the interest of cultural and historic interests. In this context both housing and economic policy must be brought forward to secure the reuse of these buildings in Mid Ulster.

### Policy options

The existing policy in PPS21 allows for the Conversion and Re-use of existing buildings for non- residential use. It however stipulates that the existing building must be of permanent construction. This criteria has been expanded in the SPPS to cover a range of locally important buildings of special character or interest (such as former school houses, churches and older traditional barns and out buildings) One approach could be to facilitate the conversion of any building within the countryside, however such a policy may be open to abuse and could result in land uses incongruous to the rural setting. Therefore the preferred approach of the Council as suggested by the SPPS is to limit the reuse of buildings for non-residential purposes to locally important buildings.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY AFR3 -CONVERSION AND REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL USE.

Farm Diversification, involving the reuse or adaptation of existing buildings, on an active and established farm (for a minimum of 6 years) will conform with the plan providing the proposal is run in conjunction with the agricultural operations on the farm.

Exceptionally, a new building may be permitted where there is no existing building available to accommodate the proposed use, either because they are essential for the maintenance of the existing farm enterprise, are clearly unsuitable for adaption and re-use or cannot be adapted to meeting the requirements of other statutory agencies. The scale and character of the new building must be in keeping with the established rural character.

#### Key Questions

- Q. Should farm diversification be limited to the use of existing buildings or should it allow for new buildings?
- Q. Does the policy for the provision of farm buildings provide sufficient scope to meet the needs of the farmer and protect the countryside?
- Q. Should all buildings be required to group with existing farm clusters?
- Q. Should proposals for farm diversification have to demonstrate that they will be run in conjunction with the farm? If so what evidence should be provided?

# Archaeology and Built Heritage

Our archaeology and built heritage is an asset of enormous cultural, social, economic and environmental value, contributing to our sense of history, place and quality of life. Archaeological and built heritage assets such as tombs and ring forts, historic and vernacular buildings, planned parklands, buildings and features associated with industrial heritage, are all important sources of information about our past, and are often significant landmarks in the present townscape and countryside. This archaeological and built heritage constitutes an irreplaceable record which contributes to our understanding of both the present and the past and is an important economic resource and adds to the quality of our lives and promotes a sense of local distinctiveness which is an important aspect of the character and appearance of cities, towns, villages and the countryside. Mid Ulster has a rich and diverse archaeological built heritage which contributes to our sense of place and history in the District.

The planning system has a key role to ensure that our heritage is managed in a sustainable way in relation to their tourism and recreational value.

The aim of the strategic policy in relation to Archaeology and Built Heritage is to manage change in positive ways so as to safeguard that which society regards as significant whilst facilitating development that will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of these assets and the Plan supports this aim.

Important archaeology and built heritage assets in Mid Ulster include the following:

- 39 State Care Sites and Monuments
- 173 Scheduled Sites and Monuments
- Over 1,000 Unscheduled Sites and Monuments
- 1 Area of Significant Archaeological Interest 'Beaghmore'
- 25 Areas of Archaeological Potential
- Approximately 1,234 statutorily protected buildings and structures
- 19 Registered Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes
- Over 900 Industrial Heritage structures
- 5 Conservation Areas

The Department of Communities, Historic Environment Division (HED) has the responsibility for the designation of archaeological sites, monuments, listed buildings, historic parks, gardens, demesnes and industrial heritage. The Council, as the responsible authority, must ensure the protection of these assets through the use of relevant planning policies currently set out in PPS 6 – Planning Archeology and the Built Heritage. In addition the Council has responsibility for the identification and designation of conservation areas, areas of townscape or village character, non-designated heritage assets and local landscape policy area through the LDP process

## Key Issues to Consider

**Development and Growth:** the unchecked growth of towns and villages may put increased pressure on the existing historic built fabric of settlements and also the outlying rural areas which may contain a variety of archaeological sites and monuments, and historic buildings with special architectural and historic merit.

**Loss of Archaeology:** State Care Monuments, Scheduled

Monuments and sites of archaeological interest could be damaged or lost through inappropriately sited or managed development.

**Loss of Buildings/ Structures:** the number of Listed Buildings at risk continues to rise. Listed Buildings could be damaged or lost completely to new development or their historic setting could be damaged as a result of inappropriately sited or designed development. Through continued protection and through a flexible approach such buildings may find an appropriate use or could suffer damage from arson or criminal damage.

**Contribution to Community and Health and Wellbeing:** Our archaeology and built heritage has the potential to make a significant positive impact to our health and wellbeing and sense of place if it is managed in a sustainable manner to ensure that it can be enjoyed by all while being protected and preserved as appropriate.

**Loss of Vernacular Rural Buildings:** a trend to replace historic rural buildings, many of which were very small, has developed over the last thirty years. The 1998 publication on rural buildings 'A Sense of Loss' noted that 49% of buildings indicated on the 1909 map had gone by that time.

**Climate Change:** A changing climate poses many challenges for this subject in relation to the potential impact. Such impacts include: increased extremes of wetting and drying that heighten the risk of ground subsidence and accelerated decay of stonework and thus pose a threat to many historic buildings; more frequent intense rainfall that causes increased erosion of archaeological sites and damaging flooding in historic settlements; overheating and moisture penetration impacts on the conservation of historic buildings.

**Link to Tourism:** One of the key objectives of the Council Draft Tourism Strategy is to focus on Mid Ulster's unique and distinctive historic environment and cultural heritage in the form of its archaeological sites and monuments and built heritage assets. The significance of the history and built heritage of Mid Ulster is recognised in the Heritage Lottery Fund approved Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership Project and the planned joint project between Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh Councils for the Sperrin's AONB. Government and Council investment in improvements at Tullyaghoge Fort highlights the strategic role that our local archaeology and built heritage assets have with regard to Mid Ulster's Tourism Strategy and economic growth of the sector and regeneration of local economies. An the important role of our cultural heritage is demonstrated in recent development of the Seamus Heaney Centre in the District.

## Regional Strategic Objectives



## Regional Strategic Policy

The SPPS states that the planning system has a key role in the stewardship of our archaeological and built heritage. The aim of the SPPS is to manage change in a positive way so as to safeguard that which society regards as significant whilst facilitating development that will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of these assets. Strategic policy states that the local development plan should identify the main built and archaeological heritage features, where they exist within the plan area, and bring forward appropriate policies or proposals for their protection, conservation and enhancement. (The Environmental Assets preparatory position paper compiled by the Council identifies such features within the district as they are currently listed). The SPPS also states that the Plan should also take into account the implications of its other local policies or proposals on all features of the archaeological and built heritage and their settings.

The SPPS sets out the policy approach for the various aspects of our historic environment.

## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

At this time there is one development plan working objective relevant to this subject:

- The need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and wellbeing.

An identified outcome of our emerging Community Plan is that we will increasingly value our environment and enhance it for our children.

## Existing Area Plans

The Area Plans for Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt designate **Areas of Townscape (ATC's)** **Village Character and Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)**.

ATCs are designated by the Council through the local development plan with accompanying local policies for the control of development within these areas. There are currently 27 ATCs within the Mid Ulster Council area. A review of the ATCs will be undertaken to inform the Local Policies Plan.

LLPAs consist of those features and areas within and adjoining settlements considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance and therefore worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development.

There are 118 Local Landscape Policy Areas currently within Mid Ulster. A review of the Local Landscape Policy area will be undertaken to inform the Local Policies Plan.

## Built Heritage Strategy

Mid Ulster Council wishes to ensure development takes place in a manner which will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of archaeological and built heritage assets and their settings. The key actions to achieving this are:



*Are you aware of any ATC's or LLPA's within Mid Ulster District that are not currently identified and protected but that merit some level of protection?*



*Do you agree with the Key actions for protection of archaeology and the historic built environment in Mid Ulster?*





## Policy Approach to Archaeology and Built Environment

In order to take forward the Local Development Plan Objectives for Mid Ulster and to address the key actions there are a number of Policy Approach Options available in relation to archaeology and built heritage as set out below.

### World Heritage Sites (WHS)

There are currently no designated World Heritage Sites (WHS) within Mid Ulster District Council. If a WHS is designated within Mid Ulster during the timeframe of the LDP then a bespoke policy shall be adopted. Until such times as Mid Ulster has a WHS the SPPS Regional Strategic Policy for WHS shall be in place.

### Archaeology: Preservation of Remains of Regional Importance and their settings and Protection of Remains of Local Importance and their settings

The SPPS states that archaeological remains of regional importance include monuments in state care, scheduled monuments and Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI). Such sites (or constituent parts of them) benefit from statutory protection. The SPPS states that development which would adversely affect such sites or the integrity of their settings must only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Importantly the SPPS states that in order to make sure that the most up to date information is taken into account when determining applications, this policy approach should also apply to such sites which, whilst not scheduled presently, would otherwise merit such statutory protection. Development which would adversely affect such sites or the integrity of their settings must only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

## Policy Approach Options

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach.

This approach adopts the current archaeological and built heritage Policies BH1 (regional) and BH2 (local) as set out in PPS 6. Under the current policy approach each development proposal is assessed on its own merits, and requires consultation with the statutory body (namely HED). Where a monument is scheduled, proposed works must have scheduled monument consent. Where the remains are of regional importance the existing policy places presumption in favour of physical preservation in situ of the monument and the integrity of its setting. In the case of locally important monuments the policy states that development which would adversely affect such sites or monuments (or their settings) will only be permitted where the development outweighs the value of the remains.

## Option 2: Adopt a Spatial Constraint Approach

An alternative policy approach is to introduce Special Countryside Areas or a constraint designation within which all types of development can be restricted. The benefit of applying such an approach is that it would prevent all development within a defined area thereby protecting and conserving any regionally or locally significant archaeological remains in situ. This could be regarded as a blanket ban on all development similar to countryside policy areas. The issue with this approach is that all types of development would be banned regardless of whether or not the development proposal would have an adverse impact on the archaeological site or monument of regional importance. It would severely limit the economic and social development of such a site, monument or area and place undue hardship on existing residents and businesses and could potentially suppress development.

## Option 3: Adopt existing policy with specific Areas of constraint

Another alternative approach would be to introduce specific Areas of Constraint within Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) for Regional Remains where certain types of development may be constrained, for example tall/high structures and minerals development. The benefit of applying such an approach would be that specific types of development which adversely impact upon the ASAI would be resisted so as to protect our most important remains and setting. This policy approach would protect and conserve ASAI and their settings from inappropriate development that would detrimentally impact on the value of the statutorily protected assets. (See proposed policy for areas of constraint wind turbines and tall structures.)

For Local Remains this approach would strengthen the approach to the case by case assessment however the problem for local remains is the number of identified unscheduled sites and their settings within Mid Ulster (over 1000) and the practicalities of this approach and the impact of adopting it for all local sites.

In the case of the preservation of Remains of Regional Importance and their settings and Protection of Remains of Local Importance and their settings this approach will also include operational policy on this issues.

## Preferred Approach

It is considered that the preferred approach for the Regional Remains is Option 3 given that we currently have one confirmed and one candidate ASAI and that the use of case by case policy on its own is not sufficient to provide adequate protection. It is felt that an Area of Constraint combined with the existing policy approach is preferable for Mid Ulster due to the sensitivity of Beaghmore Stone Circle in relation to its immediate and wider settings which offers extensive open vistas to and from the Sperrins AONB and beyond. For the Local Remains Option 1 is the preferred option as there is no evidence to suggest that the current policy is not providing sufficient protection to such sites.

# Suggested Policy Wording

## POLICY BH1

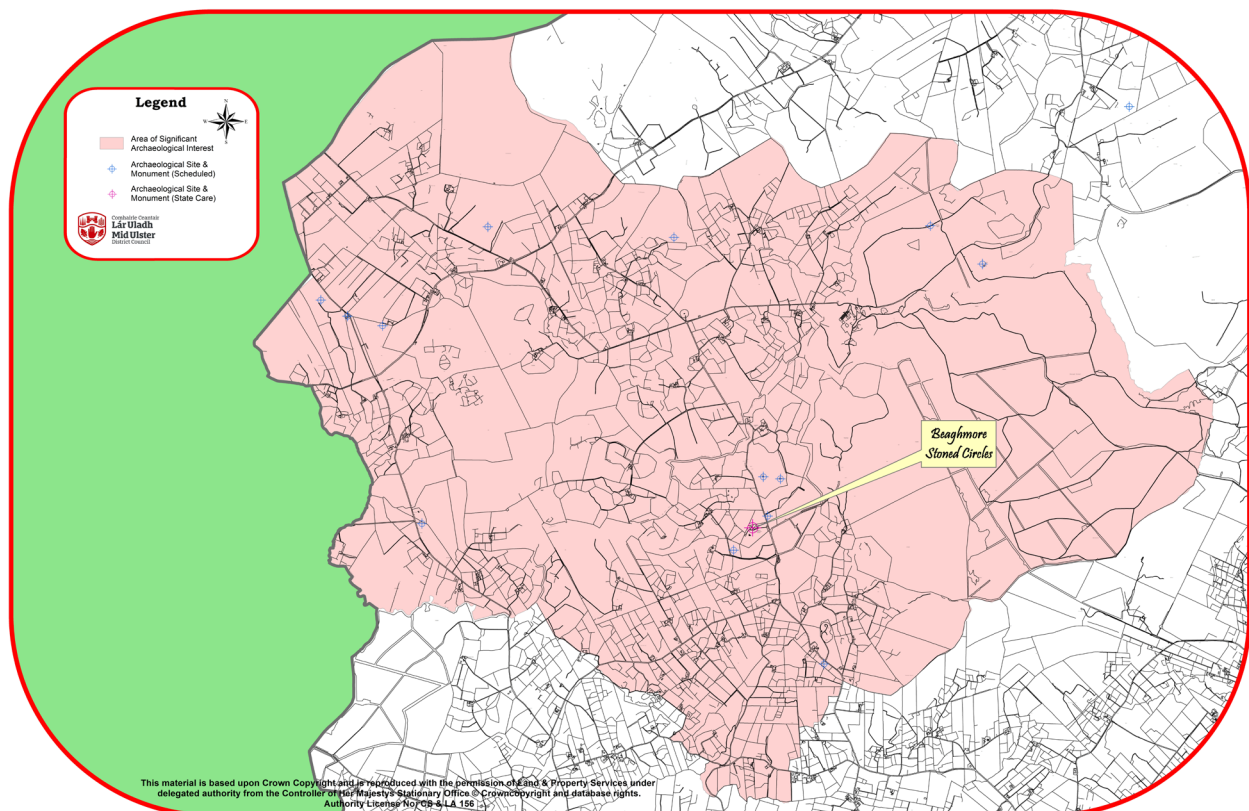
### Preservation of Regional Archaeological Remains and their settings

- Development proposals which would adversely impact upon archaeological remains of Regional Importance or the integrity of their settings will conflict with the Plan.
- Within ASAI's development proposals for large scale development and high structures including masts, pylons and wind turbines will be in conflict with the plan.
- For those archaeological monuments or sites of Regional Importance where the setting is particularly important such as 'Beaghmore', an Area of Constraint will be introduced within which a policy to protect the heritage asset against the adverse impact of over-dominant structures shall apply and where there is no area of constraint identified it will remain a material consideration.
- An exception may be made for an essential public utility to serve the local community which has minimal impact on the setting of the monument or site of archaeological Regional Importance.
- Elsewhere within the district development which would adversely affect such remains of regional importance or the integrity of their settings will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### Protection of Local Archaeological Remains and their settings

- Development proposals which adversely impact upon archaeological remains of Local Importance or their settings will conflict with the plan. An exception will only be permitted where the need for the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains and/or their settings.

## Beaghmore area of significant archaeological interest



*Is the extent of the mapped area of protection of Beaghmore correct or should it be adjusted, and if so where?*

*Is this the correct approach to the protection of Beaghmore Stone Circle?*

## Proposed Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI'S)

It is the role of the Local Development Plan to designate ASAI's where appropriate. The Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities (DFC) have suggested a number of additional candidates for designation as ASAI's within Mid Ulster District as follows:

- Tullaghogue Candidate ASAI
- Clogher Hillfort Candidate ASAI
- Creggandevsky Candidate ASAI (partially within Mid Ulster).



## Archaeology: Assessment, Evaluation and Mitigation Approach Options

The SPPS asserts that planning authorities should seek all necessary information from applicants in making a well informed planning judgement. In particular where the impact of a development may impact on archaeological remains is unclear or the relevant significance of such remains is uncertain. Should an applicant fail to provide a suitable assessment on request, the planning authority should adopt a precautionary approach and not grant planning permission. It goes on to state that where a planning authority is minded to grant such applications, it should ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development. Such measures may include the preservation of remains in situ, or a licenced excavation, recording examination and archiving of the archaeology by way of planning conditions.

### Policy Approach Options

#### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

In this approach of PPS6 each case is assessed on its merits taking advice from HED. Strategic policy states that planning authorities should seek all necessary information from applicants in making well informed planning judgements, particularly where the impact of a development proposal on archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative significance of such remains is uncertain. Should an applicant fail to

provide a suitable assessment or evaluation on request, the planning authority should adopt a precautionary approach and refuse planning permission.

Pps6 Policy BH3 states that where the impact of a development proposal on important archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative importance of such remains is uncertain, the Department will normally require developers to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment or an archaeological evaluation. Where such information is requested but not made available the Department will normally refuse planning permission. Prospective developers need to take into account archaeological considerations and should deal with them from the beginning of the process.

Where it is decided to grant planning permission for development which will affect sites known to contain archaeological remains Policy BH4 advises on the imposition of conditions to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development, including where appropriate the completion of a licensed excavation and recording of remains before development commences.

The preservation in situ of archaeological remains is always the preferred option. However, in some circumstances, it will be possible to permit development proposals which affect archaeological remains to proceed provided appropriate archaeological mitigation measures are in place which preserve the remains in the final development or ensure excavation recording prior to construction.

#### Option 2: Relaxation of existing policy

An option for the Council would be to consider removing the requirement to carry out archaeological assessments or evaluations and/or mitigation measures however this would result in the loss of regionally, locally and previously unidentified important archaeological sites and monuments within the Mid Ulster district and would not take into account regional planning policy including the SPPS, Sustainability Appraisal objectives or statutory legislation. It would also not comply with the Mid Ulster Council's own strategic objective to protect and enhance the built environment.

### Preferred Approach

Option 1 is the preferred approach at this time which ensures that where relevant protection is provided and assessing each case on its merits means that an appropriate information can be requested and mitigation and conditions applied depending on the remains and the details and potential impacts of the particular proposal. There is no evidence to suggest that the existing policy approach is not providing a sufficient degree of protection in Mid Ulster.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH2 - ARCHAEOLOGY: ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND MITIGATION ARCHAEOLOGY: ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND MITIGATION

Where the impact of a development proposal on important archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative importance of such remains is uncertain, further information will be required in the form of an archaeological assessment or an archaeological evaluation. Where such information is requested but not made available a precautionary approach will be adopted and permission will be refused.

Where planning permission is granted for development which will affect sites known to contain archaeological remains, conditions will be imposed to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development, including where appropriate the completion of a licensed excavation and recording of remains before development commences.

## Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes

DFC HED holds a Register of Parks, Gardens and Demesnes of special historic interest in Northern Ireland. These should be identified along with their settings by each Council for their own area and included in the LDP bringing forward policies for the overall protection of these distinctive areas.

Policy Approach Options

### Option 1: Adopt existing Policy Approach

SPPS regional policy states that planning permission should not be granted for development that would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, the overall character, principal components or setting of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes. The Adoption of the existing policy (Policy BH6) as set out in PPS6 involves each development proposal being assessed on its own merits and requires consultation with HED. The existing policy approach seeks to ensure that the integrity and overall quality and setting of the site including its original design concept and other associated features, including contribution to local landscape character, should where possible be maintained.

### Option 2: Introduce spatial constraints through Special Policy Areas

An alternative approach could be to introduce Special Policy Areas within which all types of development can be restricted. This approach would prevent all development within a defined area relating to the identified historic park, garden or demesnes. This could be regarded as a blanket ban on all development similar to countryside policy areas. The issue with this approach is that all types of development would be banned regardless of whether or not the development proposal would have a detrimental impact on the historic park, garden or demesnes. It would severely limit the economic and social development of such an area and place undue hardship on existing residents and businesses.

### Preferred Approach

Option 1 is the preferred approach at this time which ensures that where relevant protection is provided and assessing each case on its merits means that all appropriate information can be requested. There is no evidence to suggest that the existing policy approach is not providing a sufficient degree of protection in Mid Ulster.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH3 - HISTORIC PARKS, GARDENS AND DEMESNES

Development that does not harm the character, intrinsic value or conservation of a historic park, garden and demesnes will accord with the plan

Development which would adversely harm the historic character, principal components or setting of historic parks, gardens and demesnes will not be permitted.

### Listed Buildings

Listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest are key elements of our built heritage and are important for their intrinsic value and their contribution to the character and quality of settlements and the countryside. As such any development that impacts on the building or its settings including change of use, alterations extensions and demolition of listed buildings must be carefully considered and controlled.

### Policy Approach Options

#### Option 1: Adopt Existing Policy Approach

Existing policy operates a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings. Strategic policy states development involving a change of use may be permitted, particularly where this will secure the ongoing viability and upkeep of the building. Proposals should be based on a clear understanding of the importance of the building/ place/ heritage asset, and should support the best viable use that

is compatible with the fabric, setting and character of the building. Applicants should justify their proposals, and show why alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary. The strategic policy in the SPPS also states that proposals for total demolition of a listed building or any significant part of it must not be permitted unless there are exceptional reasons why it cannot be retained in its original or a reasonably modified form. Where consent to demolish a listed building is granted, this should normally be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site and appropriate arrangements for recording the building prior to its demolition.

The current operational policies contained in Policies BH7, BH8, BH10 and BH11 for Listed Buildings largely reflect the strategic policy approach of the SPPS and there is no evidence to suggest this approach is not sufficient. It is therefore considered that there is no reasonable alternative approach to that set out within existing policy.



# Suggested Policy Wording

## POLICY BH4 - LISTED BUILDINGS

There is an overarching presumption to protect Listed Buildings and their settings.

Demolition of a listed building will conflict with the Plan unless there are exceptional reasons why the building cannot be retained.

Development involving a change of use and / or works of extension / alteration will accord with the Plan where this will secure the ongoing viability and upkeep of the building and its setting. It is important that such a development proposal:

- Respects the essential character and architectural or historic interest of the building and its setting;
- That features of special interest remain intact and unimpaired;
- Proposals should be based on a clear understanding of the importance of the building/ place/ heritage asset; and
- Should support the best viable use that is compatible with the fabric, setting and character of the building.

Development which effects the setting of a Listed Building will be permissible providing:

- The detailed design respects the Listed Building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment;
- The works proposed make use of traditional or sympathetic building materials and techniques which respect those found on the building; and
- The nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building.

Applicants should justify their proposals, and show why alteration or demolition of a Listed Building is granted, this should normally be conditional on prior agreement for the site and appropriate arrangements for recording the building prior to its demolition.

### Advertisement on Built Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, buildings in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character)

New signs or advertisements can have a major impact on the appearance, and thus the character of a listed building. Similarly they can also have a major impact on buildings in a Conservation Area or ATC if not appropriately sited and designed.

Strategic policy for advertisement consent on a Listed Building states that consent should only be forthcoming where these are carefully designed and located to respect the architectural form and detailing of the building, and meet the requirements of strategic policy on the Control of Outdoor Advertisements. Strategic policy for consent for the display of advertisements in or close to a Conservation Area should only be granted where they would not adversely affect the overall character, appearance or setting of the area. Regional policy also states that consent for the display of an advertisement in an ATC should only be granted where the overall character and appearance of the area will be maintained, and the proposal meets the requirements of strategic policy on the Control of Outdoor Advertisements.

### Policy Approach Options

#### Option 1: Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This approach would adopt the existing policies of PPS6 BH9, BH13 and ATC3 which relate to advertisements on Listed Buildings, within Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape/ Village Character. These policies state that advertisement

consent is required and will only be forthcoming where such signage has been carefully designed and located to respect the architectural form and detailing of the building. Under the current policy approach each development proposal is assessed on its own merits and requires consultation with the statutory body. Strategic policy within the SPPS relating to built heritage requires that such adverts also comply with overarching strategic policy on advertisements which state that proposals should not prejudice amenity or public safety (including road safety).

#### Option 2: Combine policy for all built heritage assets

An alternative approach may be to simplify and integrate the three existing PPS6 policies relating to advertisements on built heritage assets. The benefit of this approach would be the reduction in number of policies related to advertisements on and within built heritage assets whilst also ensuring the protection, conservation and enhancement of such heritage assets.

#### Preferred Approach

The preferred approach in this case is Option 2 which is to amalgamate the various policies relating to advertisement on built heritage into one overall policy. The approach of the policy remains largely in line with the existing policy approach within PPS6. There is no evidence that it is not providing sufficient protection within Mid Ulster.

*Do you agree with the approach to amalgamate and simplify policy?*





## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH5 - ADVERTISEMENT ON BUILT HERITAGE ASSETS

Permission for the display of an advertisement on a Listed Building, within a Conservation Area and within an Area of Townscape Character will accord with the Plan where:

- It is carefully designed and located to respect the architectural form and detailing of the building;
- It maintains the overall character and appearance of the area; and
- It does not prejudice public safety.

#### Conservation Areas

Existing Conservation Areas have been designated by the Department under the Planning (NI) Order 1991. These are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Proposed new Conservation Areas or alterations to existing designations may also be brought forward by the Council or the Department, where appropriate. It is a statutory requirement to consult both the Department and the Historic Buildings Council of any new Conservation Areas are to be created within Mid Ulster.

#### Policy Approach Options

##### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This approach would adopt the approach of PPS6 Policies BH12 and BH14 which relate to new development within designated conservation areas, together with alterations, extensions and changes of use, or impact on the setting of a conservation area and demolition proposals within a conservation area. The existing policies set out a number of criteria which must be met. Under the current policy approach for BH12 and BH14 each development proposal is assessed on its own merits. Strategic policy within the SPPS goes further than the policy within PPS6 and outlines the guiding principle in a Conservation Area which is to afford

special regard to the desirability of enhancing its character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists, or to preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise. Under the 2011 Planning Act and the SPPS there is a need to place more policy emphasis on enhancement i.e. where possible enhance the designated conservation area and if this is not possible you must at least protect and conserve.

##### Option 2: Adopt Strategic Policy approach

An alternative approach is to integrate existing PPS6 policies BH12 and BH14 and adopt wording contained in the SPPS which states that for all development proposals within conservation areas special regard must be given to the enhancement of its character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists, or to preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise.

##### Preferred Approach

The preferred approach in this case is Option 2 which is to adopt the approach of the current policy together with that of the SPPS as it offers the opportunity to introduce the requirement to enhance as well as protect the preserve the character of Conservation Areas.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH6 - CONSERVATION AREAS

- There will be a presumption in favour of retaining unlisted buildings within a designated conservation area which make a material contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- Demolition of an unlisted building can accord with the Plan where it makes no material contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area or where there are exceptional reasons why the unlisted building cannot be retained. Where Conservation Area Consent for demolition is granted this will normally be subject to appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site.
- When assessing development proposals for change of use, alterations or extensions and/or new development in the Conservation Area the guiding principle will be to afford special regard to the desirability of enhancing the character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists, or to preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise. There will be a presumption against the grant of planning permission for development or conservation area consent for demolition of unlisted buildings, where proposals would conflict with this principle.
- Development proposals for change of use, alteration or extension and/or new development will be required to demonstrate that it either preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a conservation area. Design and Access Statements will be required to accompany such proposals.
- Design and Access Statements will be required to demonstrate how consideration of the character or appearance of the conservation area has been taken into account and where appropriate the architectural detail of the conservation area in order for the proposal to preserve or enhance the existing character or appearance of the conservation area.

## Non-Listed Vernacular Buildings and Industrial Heritage

The vernacular buildings of Northern Ireland have developed as a response to local economic and social circumstances, using simple styles and largely local materials. They have a natural place in towns and villages and smaller settlements and help give the countryside its personality. There is a general presumption in favor of the preservation of buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest and there is growing concern about the continuing loss of those traditional buildings with historical associations and local character, which are not listed, particularly in rural areas. Buildings of character which display local traditions of architecture and design are an important part of our heritage and regional identity.

In relation to industrial heritage the SPPS Regional Policy on Open Space, Sport and Recreation refers to the need to take into account the importance of protecting linear open space such as pedestrian and cycle routes, community greenways, former railway lines and river and canal corridors many of which are valuable in linking larger areas of open space (connectivity) and providing important wildlife corridors/ ecological networks (biodiversity). There are more than 900 industrial heritage entries for Mid Ulster consisting of mills, mines, canals and railways. The Dungannon and South Tyrone

Area Plan contains a policy specific to Historic Waterways (Plan Policy CON6) in the form of Coalisland Canal. This existing local policy provides protection to the historic waterway to prevent development proposals that would prejudice the future restoration and re-use of the Coalisland Canal.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH7 - NON-LISTED VERNACULAR BUILDINGS AND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Proposals which will deliver the preservation of non-listed vernacular buildings and industrial heritage will accord with the Plan.

Alterations and extensions to such buildings should have regard to the scale and massing of the original buildings.

## Areas of Townscape (ATC's)/ Village Character

Many areas within settlements do not have the distinctive character to warrant conservation area designation. However, because of their own unique identity, it may be appropriate to identify and define these as areas of townscape or village character. ATCs are identified in the three existing area plans which cover Mid Ulster District. Within each area plan is guidance specific to the identified ATC. These designated ATCs and their guidance shall be retained until such time as they are replaced by the Local Policies Plan.

## Policy Approach Options

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This approach would adopt the existing planning policies ATC 1 and ATC 2 within PPS6 relate to demolition and new development in an ATC. There is a presumption in favour of retaining any building which makes a positive contribution to the character of an ATC. Current policies allows for each development proposal to be assessed on its own merits based on a set of planning criteria. Where the demolition of an unlisted building in an ATC is proposed the current PPS6 policy considers: the contribution of the building to

## Policy Approach Options

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This options would adopt the existing PPS6 policy (BH15) which relates to the re-use of non-listed vernacular buildings sets out a number of criteria all of which must be met. The issue with the existing policy is that it is very ridged and restrictive in terms of the adaptability of smaller vernacular buildings that may not easily be converted to accommodate modern living standards. Amongst other things the policy states that normally no new extensions are permitted. There is therefore often a lack of flexibility that would encourage the retention and reuse of these buildings as they do not allow for modern living.

### Option 2: Introduce a more flexible approach

An alternative policy approach may be to consider introducing more flexibility by retaining the presumption for the preservation and retention of non-listed vernacular buildings and, where appropriate, industrial heritage, allowing for conversion where it is practical and would secure its upkeep and retention. This approach would recognise that extensions may be key to facilitating future re-sue and thereby securing their retention. As part of this approach and in line with the SPPS the Departmental guidance 'Building on Tradition – A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside' would be retained as a material consideration until such times as the LDP as a whole is adopted (i.e. Strategic Plan and Local Policies Plan).

## Preferred Approach

The preferred approach in this case is Option 2 which is to introduce more flexibility which will encourage the re-use of these buildings by recognising that appropriate alterations and extensions are necessary to address modern living needs.

the ATC and the effect of its demolition on the distinctive character of the area; and whether the quality of proposals for the redevelopment of the site will maintain or enhance the distinctive character of the area. The policy also directs that where permission for demolition is granted this will normally be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site.

### Option 2: Adopt a stricter approach to re-development following demolition

An alternative policy approach may be to consider that in addition to retaining the existing approach of PPS6 a requirement that all demolition proposals within an ATC must include appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site. It is felt that this approach will ensure that the impact of demolition on the ATC is limited.

## Preferred Approach

The preferred approach in this case is Option 2 which is to adopt the current policy approach but in addition require all demolition proposals to include appropriate arrangements for the re-development of the site.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH8 - AREAS OF TOWNSCAPE (ATC'S)/ VILLAGE CHARACTER

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining an unlisted building within an ATC which makes a material contribution to the overall character or appearance of the ATC.

Permission may be granted for demolition of an unlisted building where it does not make a material contribution to the distinctive character or appearance of the ATC. Where permission for demolition is granted this will normally be subject to appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site.

Development proposals for the change of use, alteration, extension or new development will accord with the plan where they maintain or enhance the overall character or appearance of the ATC.

### Enabling Development for the Conservation of Significant Places

The purpose of enabling development is to provide the flexibility to accommodate unforeseen imaginative proposals for the maintenance, major repair or conversion to the viable use of a significant place where this is greater than its value to its owner or market value. A significant place means any part of the historic environment that has heritage value including scheduled monuments, archaeological remains, historic buildings (both statutorily listed or of more local significance) together with any historically related contents, industrial heritage, conservation areas or a historic park, garden or demesnes.

#### Policy Approach Options

##### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This option would adopt the approach of the existing policy within PPS23 Policy ED1 which states that any proposal involving the concept of enabling development must relate to the re-use, restoration or refurbishment of a significant place. All planning applications involving this type of development proposal must be accompanied by a Statement of Justification. This statement should include sufficient, detailed financial information as is necessary to make an informed decision upon the application. In particular, the information provided on the enabling development component must be sufficiently detailed to validate the need for, and assess the scale of the enabling development; and consider the impact on private concerns where this coincides with the public interest. This policy approach is designed to only be used as a last resort where the long-term public benefit of securing a significant place decisively outweighs the disadvantages of departing from normal policy presumptions. Enabling

development must always be justified by the inherent lack of viability of the heritage asset, not an owner's inability to fund a commercially viable scheme.

Some may see an issue with the existing policy in that it allows for certain proposed developments to contravene existing planning policy which may result in the loss of or detrimental impact on Regionally Important Significant Places within the historic built environment.

##### Option 2: Remove enabling Development Policy

An alternative approach could be to consider not having an Enabling Development policy within the Plan. The SPPS contains strategic policy against which planning applications could be determined. The purpose of the existing policy within PPS23 is to act as an 'enabler' to identify a viable long-term use for a significant place. There are existing constraints on financial assistance from public bodies in terms of funding avenues for renovating and regenerating these identified historic built heritage assets. Therefore the ability to 'enable' a viable re-use of the asset, while protecting and conserving it, may be the only option to preventing such important built heritage assets falling into disrepair, dilapidation and deterioration.

#### Preferred Approach

The preferred approach in this case is Option 1 which ensures that within Mid Ulster relevant protection is provided where such proposals come forward.

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH9 - ENABLING DEVELOPMENT FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Enabling development will accord with the Plan where it secures the long term future of a significant place of heritage value providing it does not materially harm the heritage value or setting and is of a scale proportionate to the resources necessary to secure the long term future.

The proposal must be accompanied by a Statement of Justification.

## Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) or more commonly known as 'local listing'. Strategic policy within the SPPS states the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset such as an unlisted vernacular building, or historic building of local importance should be taken into account in determining the planning application. In determining applications that impact directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm of loss and the significance of the heritage asset. The SPPS indicated that councils may wish to bring forward bespoke local policies for such buildings.

The identification of non-designated heritage assets can be used to recognise local distinctiveness and character to ensure these values are taken into account when changes affecting the historic environment are proposed. These lists can play an important role in celebrating heritage that is valued by the community. The preparation of a 'local list' would provide an opportunity for Mid Ulster Council and the community to work in partnership.

Creation of a 'local list' of heritage assets is an effective way of providing additional protection for buildings and structures that are valued by the local community. Importantly, any such list should be supported by a specific development plan policy that commits the Council to resist demolition or damaging alteration unless it can be demonstrated that retention is not feasible. The preparation of a list of non-designated heritage assets is an option however the method regarding the

identification of such assets would need further investigation and consideration as clear selection criteria is required which justifies the identification of such heritage assets i.e. a robust evidence base would be necessary.

## Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPAs)

Strategic Policy within the SPPS states that these designations consist of those features and areas within and adjoining settlements considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance and therefore are worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development. They may include:

- Archaeological sites and monuments and their surroundings;
- Listed and other locally important buildings and their surroundings;
- River banks and shore lines and associated public access;
- Attractive vistas, localized hills and other areas of local amenity importance; and
- Areas of local nature conservation interest, including areas of woodland and important tree groups.

There are a number of designated LLPAs within each of the three existing area plans which cover Mid Ulster District. Within each area plan is guidance specific to the identified LLPA. These designated LLPAs and their guidance shall be retained until such times as they are replaced by the Local Policies Plan. So as to ensure that these areas continue to be protected it is considered that a strategic policy should be included in the Plan Strategy along the following lines:



## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY BH10 - LOCAL LANDSCAPE POLICY AREA (LLPAS)

Development within LLPAs will accord with the Plan providing it does not harm the intrinsic character or assets within it and adheres to local policy guidance.

#### Key Questions

- Q. Does the policy in relation regional and local archaeological remains and their settings go far enough to ensure their preservation or protection?
- Q. Is the preferred approach taken in relation to Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes sufficient to ensure that their character is not harmed?
- Q. Should policy allow for the alteration or extension of non-listed vernacular and industrial heritage buildings to address the needs of modern living as a means of ensuring their retention?
- Q. Where demolition consent is granted in an ATC should it always be subject to appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site?

# Natural Heritage

Mid Ulster District is endowed with a rich and diverse range of species, habitats, landscapes and earth science features which make up its natural heritage and add to distinguishing its special character and identity. These include sites recognised as being of local, national and international importance.

MUDC Environmental Assets

## Mid Ulster contains:

International

- 4 RAMSAR sites
- 10 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- 2 Special Protected Areas (SPAs)

National

- 48 Areas of Special Scientific interest (ASSI's)
- 1 National Nature Reserve
- 2 Nature Reserve
- A significant part of the Sperrins AONB

Local

- 3 Local Nature Reserves
- Numerous Sites of Local Nature

Paper 2015 listed the following sites:

The RDS recognises that effective care of the environment provides very real benefits in terms of improving health and well-being, promoting economic development and addressing social problems which result from a poor quality environment, furthermore such assets can be used to generate and promote recreation and tourism, and generate employment.

The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 places a statutory duty on every public body to further the conservation of biodiversity. However, we share the collective responsibility to preserve and improve the natural environment and halt the loss of biodiversity for present and future generations.

## Key Issues

In Mid Ulster we are the custodians of some of the best nature conservation sites in the world at International, National and local level. The key question is are we providing these sites adequate protection from a range of types of development? The issue we must address is the balance between how best to meet or development needs, whilst protecting, conserving and enhancing our environment.

## Regional Strategic Objectives

The SPPS sets out the strategic objectives and policy that must be taken into account in the preparation of the Plan:

- protect, conserve, enhance and restore the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the region's natural heritage;
- further sustainable development by ensuring that natural heritage and associated diversity is conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, economic and environmental development;
- assist in meeting international (including European), national and local responsibilities and obligations in the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage;
- contribute to rural renewal and urban regeneration by ensuring developments take account of the role and value of natural heritage in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment; and
- take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change.

Strategic advises that the precautionary principle should be applied when considering the impacts of a proposed

development on a national or international significant landscape or natural heritage interests.

In addition to the strategic objectives the Mid Ulster LDP objective is:

- to protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and well-being.

## Natural Heritage Strategy

We must pursue our economic and social priorities while simultaneously protecting our environmental assets. This is achieved in part by designating the best sites of local, national and international conservation importance.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has principal responsibility for the designation of a hierarchy of sites of international and national nature conservation importance. The Council's role is to protect these sites and their settings from inappropriate development.

The Council may also identify and designate Sites of Local Conservation Importance (SLNCI) through the LDP process, and protect trees of special value in terms of amenity, history or variety, through the use of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). MUDC's strategy for the protection of our natural heritage is as follows:

Identify natural heritage features and designated sites

Provide policy for their protection and / or enhancement.

Take account of the implications of proposed land use zonings, locations for development and settlement limits on natural heritage features within or adjoining the plan area.

Protect and integrate certain features of the natural heritage when zoning sites for development through 'key site requirements'.

Identify and promote green and blue infrastructure where this will add value to the provision, enhancement and connection of open space and habitats in and around settlements.

Consider the natural and cultural components of the landscape and promote opportunities for the enhancement or restoration of degraded landscapes, particularly those affecting communities.

Ensure potential effects on landscape and natural heritage, including the cumulative effect of development are considered when preparing LDPs and policies.

Does the strategy provide sufficient protection, enhancement and conservation of our Natural Heritage?





## Strategic Policy Approach

To address the Local Development Plan objectives and to implement the strategy for the protection of our Natural Heritage there are a number of policy approach options for consideration in respect of: International Designations; Protected Species; National Designations; Local Designations; Other Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Importance; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and Areas of High Scenic Value. Strategic policy within the SPPS directs that we should apply the precautionary principle when considering the impacts of a proposed development on such sites. The precautionary principle exists in order to protect the environment, where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage. In considering the most appropriate approach for Mid Ulster to ensure protection of these various sites and natural heritage resources we will operate within the precautionary principle.

## International Designations

International designations are Special Protection Areas (SPA's), proposed SPA's, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), candidate SAC's, Sites of Community Importance, and listed or proposed Ramsar Sites.

In Mid Ulster they include Lough Neagh & Lough Beg, Slieve Beagh, Ballynahone Bog, and Black Bog.

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), (Habitats Regulations) places a statutory duty upon MUDC to ensure development proposals are restricted where they are likely to impact upon the integrity of European or Ramsar Sites, as these are afforded the highest form of statutory protection.

## Option 1 - Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This option would adopt the existing policy approach which will only grant permission for development that is not likely to have a significant effect on an International Site. Where a development is likely to have a significant effect or doubt remains an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of its conservation objectives would have to be carried out. Only after ascertaining that it would not affect the integrity of the site could it gain planning approval. A development which could adversely affect the integrity of an International Site will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and subject to criteria.

## Option 2 - Adopt a Designation Approach

This approach will strengthen the desire to protect, conserve and enhance these sites and their settings which are of International importance through the designation of Special Countryside Area's around all International / European designated sites.

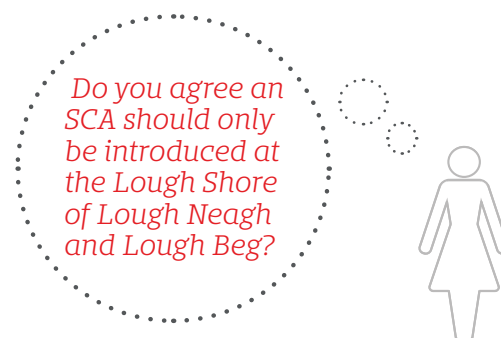
This could be considered an overly restrictive option as it would effectively ban all types of development over a considerable area. Lough Neagh and Lough Beg are both designated Ramsar Sites, which extend beyond the waters edge. To ban all development within these Ramsar Sites would be too restrictive; but equally to allow land along the waters edge to be developed for development such as renewable, industrial or residential could have an adverse impact on these environmental assets. It would also inevitably destroy the amenities of the designations which should be able to be enjoyed by both residents and visitors to the area.

## Option 3 - Combination of Option 1 and Option 2

This option would adopt an approach combining option 1 and 2 which would utilise the existing policy approach in combination with the introduction of a limited number of Special Countryside Areas to restrict all types of new development, focusing on the most sensitive and most at risk designated areas e.g. Lough Neagh and Lough Beg. (See Proposed Special Countryside Area at Map)

## Preferred Option

Option 3 is the preferred option to provide balance of protection for International Sites. There is no evidence to suggest that the existing operational policy is not providing effective protection and introducing a limited SCA will provide an added layer of protection at one of our most important sites at the Lough Shore where there is already a degree of development pressure which we would wish to address.



## Suggested policy wording for International Designations could be as follows:

### POLICY NH 1– INTERNATIONAL DESIGNATION

The Plan introduces Special Countryside Areas around Lough Neagh and Lough Beg where there will be a presumption against new development other than for tourism at designated nodes. New development at tourism nodes will be required to demonstrate that they are not likely to impact on the integrity of the designation.

Outside of the Special Countryside Areas planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on a European Site or a listed or proposed Ramsar site.

Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect (either alone or in combination) or reasonable scientific doubt remains, the planning authority is required by law to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, can the planning authority agree to the development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions.

## Protected Species

Protected species include European animal and plants species listed under Annex IV of the Habitats Directive and National animal and plants species listed under the Wildlife Order under Schedules (1), (5) & (8).

Mid Ulster has a wealth of protected species, both European and National. European species include species of bat and otters and National species include the common newt, red squirrel, parsley fern and cowslip. These are just a few of the many animal and plant species with records in the District or immediate area.

Protected species are protected in law and it is a criminal offence to harm them. It is therefore essential that the land use plan provides for their protection when considering development proposals. In considering the options open to us to address this the fact protected species by their very nature move around limits the options available.

### Option 1 - Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This option would adopt the approach of existing policy which will only grant development that is not likely to harm a European protected species. A development which is likely to harm these species is only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, subject to criteria.

Existing policy will also only grant development that is not likely to harm any other statutorily protected species (includes

National protected species) and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against.

Development proposals are required to be sensitive to all protected species, and sited and designed to protect them, their habitats and prevent deterioration and destruction of their breeding sites or resting places. Seasonal factors will also be taken into account.

### Option 2 – Adopt a Designation Approach

This approach strengthens the desire to protect, conserve and enhance National and European species by designating areas of the protected species through Special Areas of Constraint. Drawbacks to this approach are that unique areas would have to be identified for each species protected by law within Mid Ulster. This is an onerous task and when coupled with the migratory nature of species and the ongoing monitoring and updating it would require to ensure accuracy, it is not considered to be a feasible option.

### Preferred Option

Option 1 is the preferred option. There is no evidence to suggest that the current policy is not providing sufficient protection. Issues relating to Protected Species can be addressed on a case by case basis utilising the existing control mechanisms of consultation with NIEA and use of screening mechanisms when assessing each case.

## Suggested policy wording for protected species could be as follows:

### POLICY NH 2 – PROTECTED SPECIES

- Proposals for development likely to impact on protected species must be fully considered prior to any determination. Proposals shall not accord with the LDP if:
1. there is any likely to harm a European protected species, unless there are no alternative solutions; and it is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and there is no detriment to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status; and compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured. Or
  2. It is likely to harm any other statutorily protected species which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated against.



## National Designations

National designations include Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI's); Nature Reserves; National Nature Reserves; or Marine Nature Reserves. Examples of National designations in Mid Ulster are the Upper Ballinderry River ASSI, a fast-flowing mesotrophic river, notable for the diversity and richness of the associated plant and animal communities; Ballynahone Bog National Nature Reserve, one of the most important lowland raised bogs in Northern Ireland; and Brookend Nature Reserve. Fields at Brookend were once part of the lake bed but have since been exposed by successive water level lowering since the 1840's. The site is now partially flooded in winter but drier in summer – ideal conditions for many rare and special plants.

Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are declared under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (as amended). Nature Reserves including National Nature Reserves are declared under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and Marine Nature Reserves are designated under this Order.

### Option 1- Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This options would adopt the approach of existing policy which will only grant permission that is not likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity, including the value of the site to the habitat network, or special interest of a site of National importance.

## Suggested policy wording for National Designations could be as follows:

### POLICY NH 3 – NATIONAL DESIGNATIONS

Proposals for development which would affect national designations, shall not accord with the LDP unless:

- (a) the objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or
- (b) any unacceptable impacts on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of regional importance.

In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.

## Local Designations

Local sites are Local Nature Reserves, Wildlife Refuges and Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI's).

Local Nature Reserves are established by a District Council under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. Wildlife Refuges are provided for under the Wildlife Order. SLNCI's are identified within the process of preparing a development plan with policies provided in the plan for their protection and /or enhancement.

Mid Ulster contains three Local Nature Reserves at Ballyronan, Traad Point and Washing Bay. It also contains a large number of SLNCI's such as the Torrent River, Lissan Wood and Carndaisy Glen.

SLNCI's are features in the landscape of value to wildlife and include earth science features. They can contain priority habitat though this is not always the case especially in urban areas. SLNCI's are currently identified in the three Area Plans covering the District.

### Option 1 - Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This option would adopt the approach of the exiting policy which will only grant permission for development that is not likely to have a significant adverse impact on a site of local importance.

A development proposal which could adversely affect a site of National Importance is only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development clearly outweigh the value of the site. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.

### Option 2 - Use of Special Areas of Constraint

To afford additional protection of these sites we have the option of introducing Special Areas of Constraint around them within which development would be restricted. This raises the difficult question of just how far to define the Special Area of Constraint that they adequately protect the national site without being overly restrictive on areas in its vicinity.

### Preferred Option

Option 1 is the preferred option. There is no evidence to suggest that the current policy is not providing sufficient protection and the introduction of Special Areas of Constraint may unnecessarily restrict development outwith the site or indeed identification of the appropriate area may prove difficult in terms of drawing an appropriate boundary.

*Do you agree with the preferred approach to the protection of National Sites?*



Development which could have a significant adverse impact on such a site will only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the site. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.

### Option 2 - Adopt Existing Policy Approach and Augment with SLNCI's.

In addition to adopting the existing policy approach described in option 1, this can be augmented with the designation of SLNCI's. Much of this work has already been undertaken as SLNCI's have already been identified in the existing area plans. In order to bring them forward within the Mid Ulster Development Plan an extensive review of them will be carried out as part of this approach.

### Preferred Option

Option 2 is the preferred option. There is no evidence to suggest that the existing planning policy is not providing adequate protection to Local Designations and given that SLNCI's have already been identified in the current Area Plans these can be reviewed for the purpose of their continued designation within the new LDP.

## Suggested policy wording for Local Designations could be as follows:

### POLICY NH 4 – LOCAL DESIGNATIONS

Proposals for development which could affect a Local Nature Reserve or a Wildlife Refuge or other sites of local nature conservation importance will accord with the LDP where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the site.

#### Other Habitats, Species Or Features Of Natural Heritage Importance

Mid Ulster is home to a number of other habitats, species or features of natural heritage importance such as priority habitats; priority species; active peatland; ancient and long-established woodland; features of earth science conservation importance; features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna; rare or threatened native species; wetlands (includes river corridors); or other natural heritage features worthy of protection including trees and woodland.

Priority habitats and species may fall within and beyond designated sites. They include both European and Northern Ireland priority habitats and species. Other natural heritage features worthy of importance are most likely to include trees and woodland which do not fall under the priority habitat or long established woodland categories but are in themselves important for local biodiversity.

#### Option 1: Adopt the Existing Policy

This option would adopt the approach of the existing policy which will only grant permission for development that is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to other Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance.

A development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features is only permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.

#### Option 2: Introduction of Spatial Constraint Designations

This approach would strengthen the desire to protect and conserve habitats, species or features of natural heritage importance through the introduction of individual designations, each with its own unique policy.

Not all Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage importance have been identified or recorded and therefore it would be unfeasible to attempt to introduce Spatial Constraints as this would involve a significant piece of work and we may overlook many unidentified Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance in this approach.

#### Preferred Option

Option 1 is the preferred option. There is no evidence to suggest that the existing policy is not providing adequate protection to our Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance and we do not hold sufficient detailed information to adopt the approach of option 2.

*Do you agree with the preferred approach to the protection of Local Sites?*



## Suggested policy wording for Other Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage importance could be as follows:

### POLICY NH 5 – OTHER HABITATS, SPECIES OR FEATURES OF NATURAL IMPORTANCE

Proposals for development which are likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to Other Habitats, Landscape Features, Species or Features of Natural Heritage importance, shall not accord with the LDP unless the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining trees where they make a valuable contribution to the wider environment and local amenity.

## Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated primarily for their high landscape quality, wildlife importance and rich cultural and architectural heritage under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985 (NCALO). In Mid Ulster the Sperrin's are currently protected by this designation.

### Option 1: Adopt Existing Policy Approach

Existing policy will only grant permission for development within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where it is of an appropriate design, size and scale for the locality and subject to other detailed design/locational criteria.

### Option 2: Adopt Strategic Policy supported with Spatial Constraints

This approach would adopt the policy wording of the SPPS and supported by the introduction of Areas of Constraint on high structures and minerals development in the most vulnerable areas within our AONB.

### Option 3: Develop a New Special Countryside Area

This option would introduce a Special Countryside Area to protect the Sperrins AONB from all forms of development. This option would however be a very restrictive approach.

It is considered that there is no requirement at present for a Special Countryside Area across the AONB, such an approach would be overly restrictive and not recognise the unique capacity of certain landscapes to accommodate development better than others. There may be a need for additional controls for minerals extraction and high structures, including wind turbines and telecommunications and overhead cables, within the AONB however these will be brought forward under separate policy in relation the subjects within this paper.

## Preferred Option

Option 2 is the preferred option as the introduction of a new approach which seeks to protect the parts of the AONB from insensitive development, including high structures will address the fact that it may be difficult within parts of the Sperrins AONB to accommodate high structures, wind energy in particular, without detriment to the areas cultural and natural heritage assets. This policy would also introduce the additional element of assessing the cumulative impact of proposals in line with the SPPS.



*Do you agree with the preferred approach to the protection of Other Habitats, Species and Features of Natural Importance?*



*Do you agree with the preferred approach to the protection of areas of outstanding natural beauty?*

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## POLICY NH 6 – AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

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Development will be required to be sensitive to the distinctive special character and landscape quality of the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in order to conform with the Local Development Plan.

Specific policies, such as for high structures and mineral development, will be dealt with under separate policy considerations. Where appropriate, the council will provide local policies and guidance in order to assist in the design of housing within settlements.



## Areas of High Scenic Value (AOHSV)

Areas of High Scenic Value are areas recognised for the significance of the environmental assets, primarily the landscape quality.

The Magherafelt Area Plan designated Areas of High Scenic Value on the West Lough Neagh Shores and the Slieve Gallion Slopes to protect the quality and character of the landscape. The West Lough Neagh Shores designation area extends along the western shoreline of Lough Neagh from Traad Point, through the flat pastures, bog and wet woodland on the fringes of Lough Neagh and Lough Beg to the woodlands of Portglenone Forest. The Slieve Gallion slopes area forms a distinctive landscape of scenic farmland and deep wooded glens along the western fringes of Slieve Gallion.

### Option 1: Adopt Current Approach

This option would adopt the existing approach which means that only the former Magherafelt District would contain such designations. The issue with this is the inconsistency across wider Mid Ulster District simply because Cookstown and Dungannon Area Plans do not contain such designations.

### Option 2: Retain Existing AOHSV and Designate Additional AOHSV

This option would retain the existing and designate new AOHSV's across all of the District. This is a sound approach however it is felt that the use of AOHSV to protect our most vulnerable landscapes is not appropriate to Mid Ulster as the policy associated with such designations is too general to afford our most vulnerable landscapes a sufficient degree of protection from particularly obtrusive development e.g. our Lough Shore and higher slopes of the Sperrins where we would wish to protect them from development of high structures and mineral development.

### Option 3: Use Alternative Designations

Adopt an approach of utilising alternative designations to protect our most vulnerable landscapes through the use of Special Countryside Areas for the Loughshore, and Areas of Constraint in relation to high structure and minerals development, for areas such as Slieve Gallion and Clogher Valley.

### Preferred Option

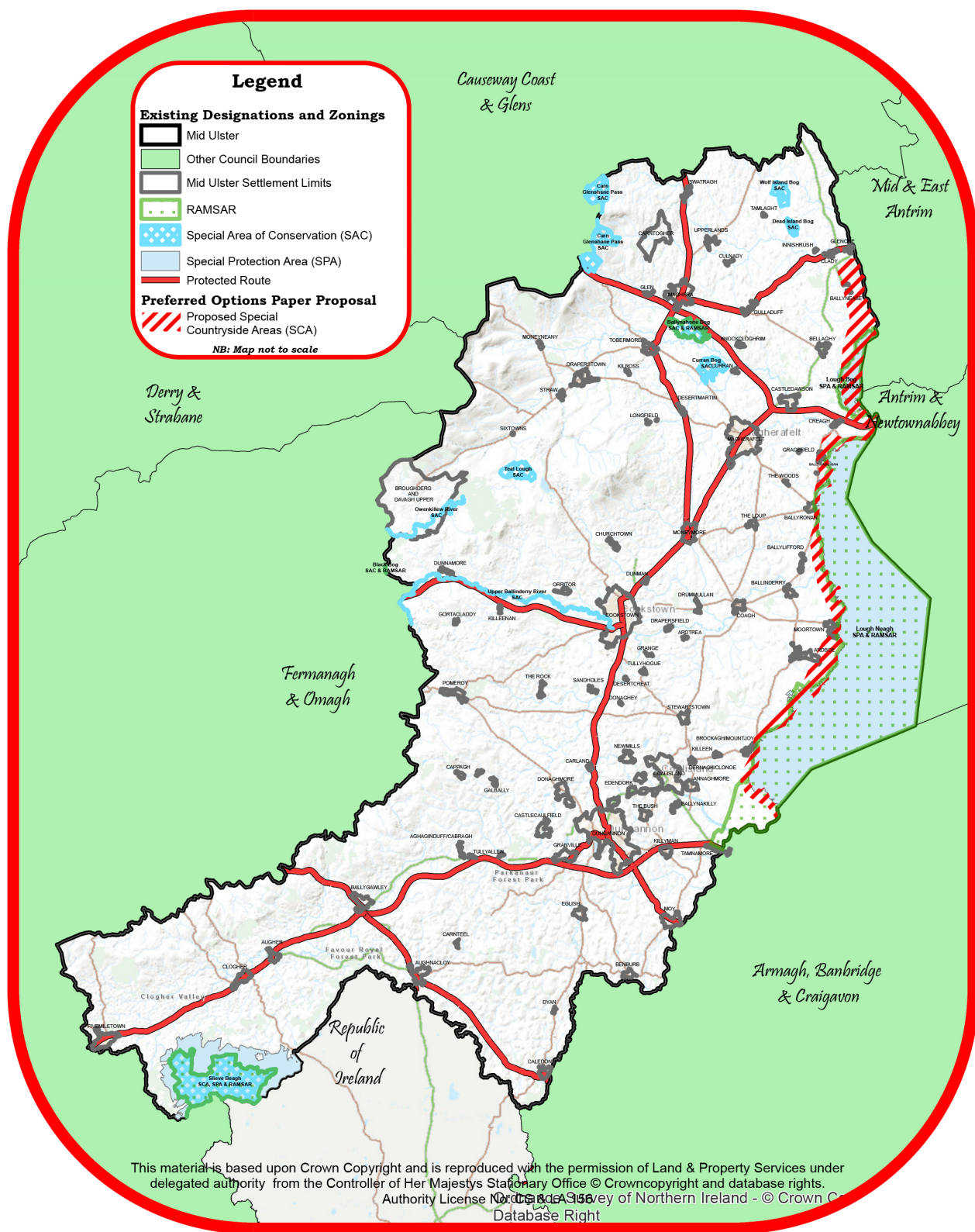
Option 3 is the preferred option. It is considered that the use of Areas of Constraint in relation to our most vulnerable landscapes and the adoption of a Special Countryside Area at our Lough shores is the appropriate approach for Mid Ulster as it is tailored to address those areas most vulnerable to certain types of development.

This option would adopt the existing approach which means that only the former Magherafelt District would contain such designations. The issue with this is the inconsistency across wider Mid Ulster District simply because



### Key Questions

- Q. Do you agree that a Special Countryside Area (SCA) should be introduced along our Loughshore (See Map Below) to restrict all forms of development (apart from new development within Tourism Nodes) to protect one of our most important and sensitive environmental assets?
- Q. Do you agree that the use of an SCA and Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development and on High Structures is the correct approach to protecting our most vulnerable landscapes?



# Flood Risk

Flooding is a natural process that cannot be entirely prevented. Some areas are already susceptible to intermittent flood from various sources, principally from rivers, the sea or surface water runoff.

Climate change is generally expected to increase flood risk, there remains much uncertainty as to the degree of climate change that will occur and the implications for particular areas of Northern Ireland.

The effects of flooding on human activity are wide ranging. Floods have the potential to cause fatalities and injury, displacement of people, pollution and health risk, loss of drinking water, damage to buildings and the environment and to severely compromise economic activities. If not properly managed, flooding to property will also impact on property prices, the ability to get a mortgage agreement and the availability of affordable property insurance.

The term 'flooding' means the temporary covering by water of land not normally covered by water. This shall include floods from rivers, mountain torrents, Mediterranean ephemeral water courses, and may exclude floods from sewerage systems. The term 'flood risk' means the combination of the probability of a flood event and of the potential adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with a flood event.

It is important to note that there are three key themes with regard to Flood Risk Management. These themes are:

**Prevention:** the avoidance of, where possible, new development in areas of flood risk; Promoting appropriate land use, agricultural and forestry practices.

**Protection:** Structural and non-structural measures to reduce the likelihood and impact of floods.

**Preparedness:** Flood warning; flood emergency planning; informing the public about flood risk and what to do in the event of a flood to their property; Adapting existing property to the risk of flooding.

## Key Issues to Consider

**Climate Change:** predictions indicate that it is likely that there will be more high intensity rainfall events which will overwhelm the urban drainage systems and overtop existing flood defences more regularly. New and existing infrastructure must be as resilient as possible to all potential impacts including the increased risk of extreme weather events.

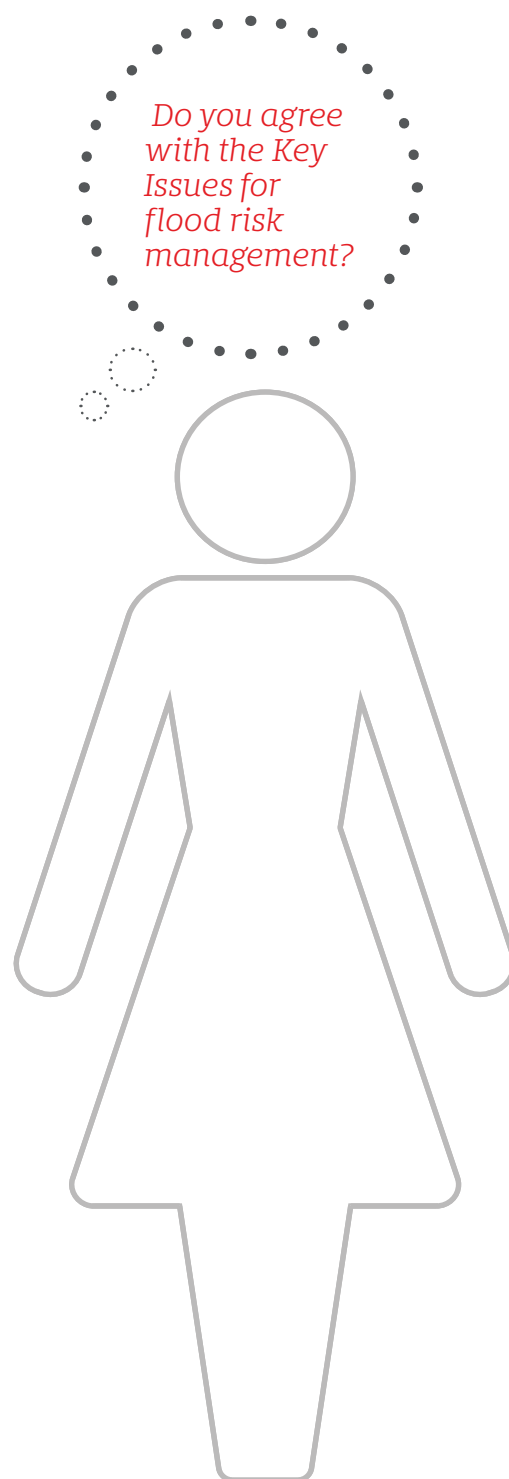
**Development and Growth:** development and growth in green (and brown) spaces places more pressure on our sewerage and drainage systems leading to increased flood risk particularly from surface water.

**Environmental Protection and Improvement:** the need to reduce pollution from run-off and from sewerage overflows during rainfall events to meet EU/UK standards will place further pressures on our sewers and drainage systems.

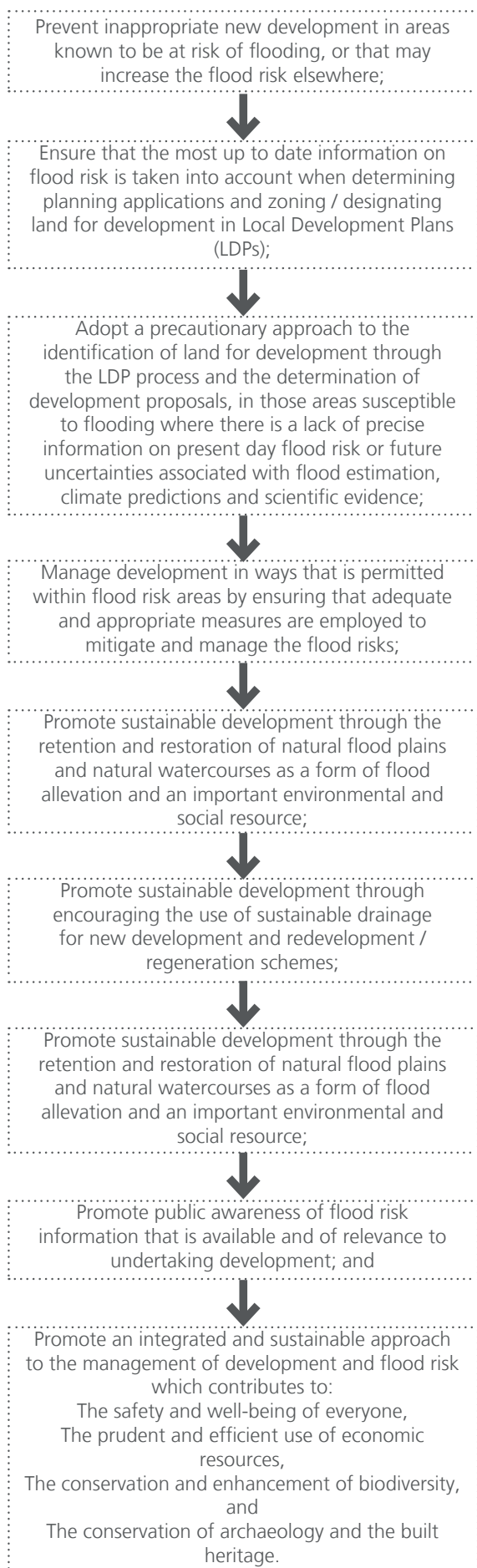
**Poor Land Management Practices:** the way we manage land across the catchment influences the volume and speed of rainwater entering rivers and drainage systems. In addition the movement of sediment within rivers can cause changes over time which can reduce flow capacity.

**Effective Surface Water Management:** the identification of surface water as a significant flood risk may require a new approach to drainage provision, including better coordination between drainage providers.

**Funding:** in the current economic climate, it is unlikely that we can afford to increase the level of investment in heavily engineered drainage and flood protection measures. Building such defences may not always be a sustainable approach to flood management therefore more sustainable practices need to be considered.



## Regional Strategic Objectives and Aims Flood Risk Management



## Strategic Policy Approach

The SPPS make its clear that we must take account of the aims above and be mindful of the risks from flooding over the plan period and beyond. The issue of flooding will be a key determining factor in the designation of land or the designation of potential new settlement limits. We must avoid development in areas with increased vulnerability to the effects of climate change, particularly areas at significant risk from flooding and highly exposed sites at significant risk from the impacts of storms; and work with natural environmental processes, for example through the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) to reduce flood risk and improve water quality. In addition the LDP will take account of the most up to date information on flood risk. There is EU/UK legislation in place in relation to floodrisk and its implementation in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of Rivers Agency (DEARA). To date they have prepared and implemented a Strategic Flood Map and Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) for NI (Flood Maps NI). The LDP will follow the precautionary approach to development in areas that may be subject to flood risk presently or in the future as a result of climate change predictions.

## Mid Ulster Objectives

These objectives include the following:

- To reduce contributions and vulnerability to climate change;
- To reduce floodrisk and the adverse consequences of flooding;
- Ensure the LDP is compatible with and complements the Flood Risk Management Plans as adopted in December 2015;
- Avoid zoning land for habitable development which has been identified as being at risk of flooding, either on the Strategic/ Hazard /Climate Change Flood Maps.





## Flood Risk Strategy

Mid Ulster Council wishes to manage development so as to reduce the risks and impacts of flooding. The Key actions to achieving this are:

- Take account of the most up to date information on flood risk, particularly the Strategic Flood Map, when designating land use zonings;
- Take account of the most up to date information on flood risk when defining the settlement limits of towns / villages and the designation of new settlements;
- Promote sustainable drainage within the plan area, for example by requiring such solutions where appropriate to individual zonings as a key site requirement;
- Consultation with Rivers Agency (DEARA) and other relevant will take place in relation to detailed plan proposals where flood risk is identified as a potential issue;
- Apply a precautionary approach to development in areas that may be subject to flood risk presently or in the future as a result of climate change predictions;
- LDPs should not bring forward sites or zone land that may be susceptible to flooding, now or in the future, unless in exceptional circumstances. Exceptionally, where the LDP brings forward such a site, it needs to explain the rationale and set out the measures necessary to manage or mitigate the risk.



## Strategic Approach Options

In considering the policy approach to this subject the Council are mindful of the precautionary approach and will continue to take account of it. This approach should be used in the assessment of flood risk which requires that lack of full scientific certainty, shall not be used to assume flood hazard or risk does not exist, or as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to avoid or manage flood risk. This must be the hallmark against which the proposed three approaches to flood risk and management are assessed.

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This option would adopt the approach of the current flooding policies as set out in PPS15 Planning and Flood Risk. It is acknowledged that these policies are the most prescriptive and restrictive within the UK and Ireland in terms of controlling where development can or cannot take place. The burden of justifying the need for a development proposal within a floodplain or inundation area is on the developer as a Flood Risk Assessment and/or Drainage Assessment is required. However given that the topology of Mid Ulster district the geographical area consisting of floodplains and inundation areas is limited and therefore there is greater scope and sufficient land available for the projected need for developable land over the plan period.

### Option 2: Adopt a more restrictive approach

An alternative approach may be to adopt a more restrictive flood risk policy by implementing a complete and binding ban on all development within existing defined flood plains and inundation areas. These areas are defined by the Strategic Flood Maps and Flood Hazard Maps produced and updated by Rivers Agency on behalf of DAERA. In essence this would mean no development in any instance including minor development. Although such a policy would relieve the need for the submission of Assessment Reports for developers it would also mean all identified land subject to flooding would be deemed undevelopable.

### Option 3: Adopt a developer led approach

A further alternative approach is to state that flood risk is the full responsibility of the developer and it is the developers responsibility to firstly identify if the proposed development is located in a flood risk area (Historic Flood Maps, Strategic Flood Map and Flood Hazard Map) and secondly, to fully assess and justify the need for the proposed development within the at risk location. This approach would not follow the precautionary approach as required by Rivers Agency but it would place all liability on the developer.

### Preferred Option

The preferred policy approach is Option 1 as there is no evidence to suggest that the existing policy is not providing sufficient protection and it has been developed in the context of the precautionary approach principal.



# Planning Policy Approach Options

## Development in River (Fluvial) Flood Plains

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This option would adopt the approach of current policy FLD1 which states that development will not be permitted within the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain (AEP of 1%) unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal constitutes an exception to the policy.

Under this approach each development proposal is assessed on its own merits taking account of the scope for mitigation of the residual flood risk. A further control mechanism within this policy is that all development proposals that would impact on existing river flood plains will require consultation with Rivers Agency and any proposed development located within a known flood plain will require a Flood Risk Assessment. The thrust of Policy FLD1 takes account of the Council's own strategic objectives regarding planning and flood risk.

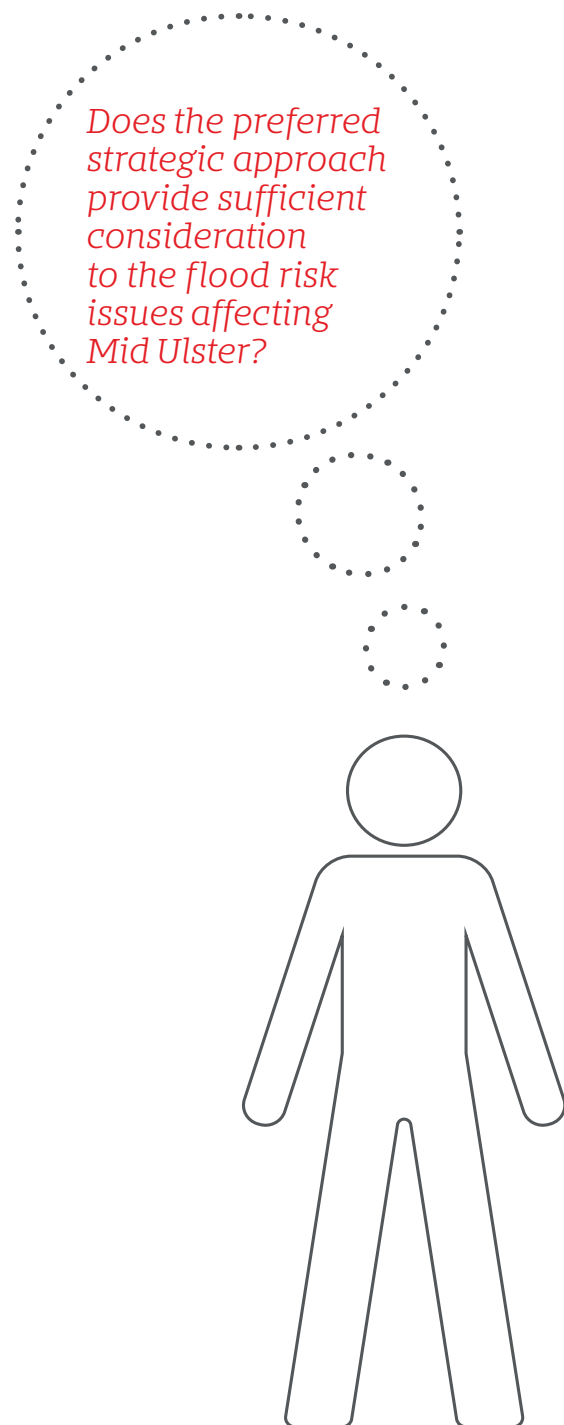
### Option 2: Stricter Policy Approach

An alternative policy approach is to develop new policy by introducing Special Countryside Areas, within which all types of development will not be permitted within River Flood Plains i.e. a blanket ban on new development within identified river flood plains.

This is a much more restrictive policy approach in that no type of development would be allowed within the river flood plain regardless of size or use. It would severely limit the economic and social development of such an area and place undue hardship on existing residents and businesses.

### Preferred Option

Option 1 is the preferred approach at this time. This approach will ensure sufficient protection is provided and through consultation with Rivers Agency, appropriate mitigation may be sought and where development is located within a known flood plain, a Flood Risk Assessment will be required.



# Suggested Policy Wording

## POLICY FLD 1 – FLUVIAL FLOODPLAINS

Development within fluvial floodplains identified as subject to an 1 in 100 year fluvial flood risk (AEP of 1%) will not accord with the plan unless the following circumstances apply:

- the development proposal constitutes a valid exception (as set out below under Exceptions heading) to the presumption against development in flood plains;
- the development proposal is of overriding regional economic importance;
- the development proposal is comprised of a minor non-residential development of less than 150 square metres or is a minor extension or alteration or ancillary householder development associated with an existing residential development

### Exceptions

#### Defended Areas

Previously developed land protected by flood defences, as identified by Rivers Agency on their Strategic Flood Map.

All other Undefended Areas

- replacement of an existing building;
- development for agricultural use, transport and utilities infrastructure which for operational reasons has to be located in the flood plain.

The following types of development will not be allowed in an identified fluvial flood plain under any circumstances:

- Essential infrastructure such as power supply and emergency services;
- Storage of Hazardous Substances
- Bespoke accommodation for Vulnerable Groups such as schools, residential/ nursing homes, sheltered housing; or
- Development located close to flood defences

Land infilling, which involves permanently elevating a site to an acceptable level above the flood plain in order to facilitate development will not be acceptable within the fluvial flood plain, where displacement of flood water would be likely to cause flooding elsewhere.

Where flood Protection and/ or management measures are required in order to facilitate development within flood plains, the following will not be acceptable:

- New hard engineered or earthen bank flood defences;
- Flood compensation storage works;
- Land rising (infilling) to elevate a site above the flood level within the undefined fluvial flood plain.

*Do you agree with the wording of the potential policy for development in river flood plains?*



*Do you agree with the preferred option to development in river flood plains?*



## Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This option would adopt the approach of current Policy FLD2 which states that permission will not be granted for development that would impede the operational effectiveness of flood defence and drainage infrastructure or hinder access to enable their maintenance. Such flood defences and drainage infrastructure are critical in providing a level of flood protection to people and property and adequate land drainage. It is essential that a working strip is retained to facilitate future maintenance by Rivers Agency, other statutory undertaker or the riparian landowners. The working strip should have minimum width of 5 metres, and up to 10 metres where considered necessary, and be provided with clear access and egress at all times.

The retention of a working strip along watercourses will have added benefits, including general amenity, enhanced biodiversity and increased control over water pollution, the latter assisting in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive. In addition there is a presumption against the erection of buildings or other structures over the line of a culverted watercourse in order to facilitate replacement, maintenance or other necessary operations. It is also proposed that this policy should be combined with Policy FLD4.

There is no alternative option for this existing policy. It should be noted that Rivers Agency are content with the policy as it stands and suggest that it should be retained in its current form. Based on information provided by Rivers Agency this existing policy takes account of and has regard to legislative requirements, regional planning policy and sustainability appraisal objectives at the strategic level. This policy as it stands complies with statutory requirements. The thrust of the existing planning policy also takes account of the Council's own strategic objective regarding planning and flood risk.

The existing policy reflects the precautionary approach to flooding and flood risk management. It helps to ensure that new and existing development is as resilient as possible to all potential impacts.

*Do you agree with the wording of the potential policy for development in river flood plains?*



## Suggested Policy Wording

It is considered that the wording of the planning policy could be along the following lines:

### POLICY FLD2

The council will not permit development that would impede the operational effectiveness of flood defence and drainage infrastructure.

## Development at Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This option would adopt the approach of existing policy FLD3 which states that a Drainage Assessment will be required for all development proposals that exceed any of the following thresholds:

- A residential development comprising of 10 or more dwelling units;
- A development site in excess of 1 hectare;
- A change of use involving new buildings and/ or hard surfacing exceeding 1000 square metres in area.

Rivers Agency are content with the Policy as it stands and suggest that it should be retained in its current form. Based on information provided by Rivers Agency this existing policy takes account of and has regard to legislative requirements and sustainability appraisal objectives at the strategic level. The policy as it stands complies with statutory requirements. The thrust of the existing planning policy also takes account of the Council's own strategic objective regarding planning and flood risk.

### Option 2: Adopt a more restrictive approach

An alternative policy approach may be to consider developing a new policy which states that a Drainage Assessment is required for all development proposals located within areas of Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk, no exceptions.

This is a much more restrictive policy approach and may be inappropriate proportionally with regard to the need for a drainage assessment for minor development may be an issue.

### Preferred Option

Option 1 is the preferred approach at this time which ensures that where relevant, protection is provided, whilst still allowing flexibility for those development proposals that fall below the suggested threshold.

*Do you agree with the preferred approach to surface water flood risk areas and proposed development?*



## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY FLD 3- DEVELOPMENT AND SURFACE WATER (PLUVIAL) FLOOD RISK OUTSIDE FLOOD PLAINS

New development will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate drainage to accord with the plan. A drainage assessment will be required for all development proposals that exceed any of the following thresholds

- A residential development comprising of 10 or more dwelling units;
- A development site in excess of 1 hectare;
- A change of use involving new buildings and/ or hard surfacing exceeding 1000 square metres in area

A drainage assessment will be required for any development proposal where:

- The proposed development is located in an area where there is evidence of a history of surface water flooding; and
- Surface water run-off from the development may adversely impact upon other development or features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or the built heritage.

Such development will be permitted where it is demonstrated through the Drainage Assessment that adequate measures will be put in place so as to effectively mitigate the flood risk to the proposed development and from the development elsewhere

Where a drainage assessment is not required but there is potential for surface water flooding as indicated by the surface water layer of the Strategic Flood Map, it is the developer's responsibility to assess the flood risk and drainage impact and to mitigate the risk to the development and any impacts beyond the site.

## Artificial Modification of Watercourses

The existing planning Policy FLD4 states that permission will only be granted for artificial modification of a watercourse, including culverting or canalization operations, in either of the following exceptional circumstances such as:

- Where the culverting of short length of a watercourse is necessary to provide access of a development site or part thereof;
- Where it can be demonstrated that a specific length of watercourse needs to be culverted for engineering reasons and that there are no reasonable or practicable alternative courses of action.

There is scope to shorten and combine this existing policy with Policy FLD2. There is no alternative option for this existing policy. Rivers Agency are content with the policy as it stands and suggest that it should be retained in its current form.

### Suggested Policy Wording

In order to translate the preferred approach of into planning policy that can then be applied in the determination of planning applications it is considered that the wording of the planning policy could be along the following lines:

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY FLD 4- ARTIFICIAL MODIFICATION OF WATERCOURSES

Development proposals which require the artificial modification of a watercourse will not accord with the plan. Exceptions are where:

- Culverting of a short length of a watercourse less than 10 metres is necessary to provide access of a development site (or part thereof);
- Such operations are necessary for engineering reasons, as accepted by Rivers Agency, unconnected with any development proposal and that there are no reasonable or practicable alternative courses of action.

*Do you agree with the proposal to combine Policies FLD2 and FLD4?*



*Do you agree with the wording of the potential Artificial Modification of Watercourses policy approach?*

*Do you agree with the wording of the potential policy approach?*



## Development in Proximity to Reservoirs

### Option 1: Adopt existing policy approach

This option would adopt the approach of policy FLD5. Rivers Agency are of the opinion that the Policy is needed as the flood risk from reservoirs was not adequately addressed in the original version of PPS15, as highlighted during the redrafting of PPS15 for the revised version dated September 2014. Rivers Agency considers that the revised Policy FLD5 dated September 2014 is robust. Rivers Agency advise that they are working to provide Reservoir Development Management maps which will be made available to both the Council and the public by the Autumn of 2016. They advise that these maps shall clearly indicate the inundation areas of each controlled reservoir.

### Option 2: Adopt a more restrictive approach

An alternative policy approach for development located within identified inundation areas may be to implement a blanket ban similar to Special Countryside Areas within which no new development shall be permitted.

It is noted that this is a very restrictive approach and would require the inundation areas for each controlled reservoir within Mid Ulster to be made available to both the Council and to the wider public. Such maps would need to clearly illustrate the inundation areas

### Option 3: Adopt no policy in proximity to reservoirs

A further alternative approach for tMid Ulster could be to have no policy for development in proximity to reservoirs.

There is currently no available evidence in the form of maps or data related to the reservoir inundation areas for the controlled reservoirs within the Mid Ulster area. Therefore it is not feasible for the council to implement any policy without the required evidence and information. It is the competent body Rivers Agency who provides such evidence.

Under this option Mid Ulster would not provide operational planning policy on development in proximity to reservoirs. Currently there is an absence of maps or data relating to reservoirs within Mid Ulster. Such information is not readily available to planning officers nor indeed the public. Therefore a member of the public in making an application would not be aware that they were proposing to locate in such an area. It is the view of Mid Ulster that this is an untenable situation and that until such times as this information is available to the planning officer and the public then an operational policy should not be provided.

The SPPS contains a policy for development within reservoir flood inundation areas which puts the onus on the applicant to get a suitably qualified engineer to comment on the safety

of a reservoir. Mid Ulster Council is of the opinion that this is unduly onerous on the applicant and the focus should be on a regulatory system to ensure reservoir infrastructure is safe.

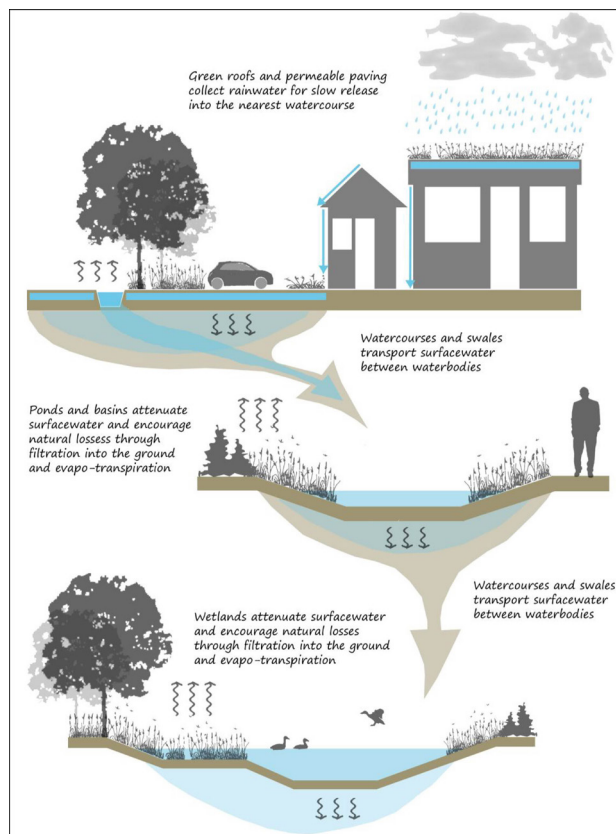
### Preferred Option

Option 3 is the preferred approach at this time which ensures that where relevant protection is provided. Mid Ulster District Council will continue to liaise with Rivers Agency and the Department to find a satisfactory planning control for areas where there is a serious risk. It is hoped that this matter will have been progressed further with the Rivers Agency by the time that the Plan Strategy is published and that an agreed and workable solution will have been arrived at.

### Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)

The SPPS refers to the potential use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) as a possible option for a drainage issue for a proposed development.

If it becomes a statutory requirement, through the NI Climate Change legislation to implement Sustainable Drainage Systems during the timeframe of the Local Development Plan 2030 then a bespoke policy for SuDs shall be adopted. Until such times as there is a legislative requirement to implement SuDs, the SPPS regional strategic policy for Flood Risk shall be in place.



Extract : SuDS Design Guidance for Hertfordshire March 2015

### Key Questions

- Q. Do you agree that the current policy approach of PPS15 provides sufficient protection in relation to flood risk and management in Mid Ulster?
- Q. Do you agree that the option to have no policy in relation to proximity to reservoirs is the correct approach for Mid Ulster?

Do you agree with the policy approach to SuDs?





# Waste Management

Waste management makes an important contribution towards sustainable development in the Mid Ulster District. The aim of sustainable development is supported by government policy such as The Waste Framework Directive and the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy.

The EU Waste Framework Directive has a target to increase recycling rates to 50% of household waste by 2020. In NI the amount of household waste recycled has doubled from 18.2% in 2004/2005 to 40.6% in 2013/2014. In Mid Ulster District, recycling rate of household waste has roughly matched the NI figure, with 23.9% in 2004/2005 and 46.1% in 2013/2014 (DOE Stats).

The EU Landfill Directive set a target to reduce municipal waste going to landfill to 50% of 1995 production levels by 2013. Mid Ulster District achieved the 2013 target with 48.6% in 2013/2014. The focus for the District therefore is to maintain this decrease and meet the target of 35% of 1995 production levels by 2020.

There are 3 landfill sites within Mid Ulster District at Ballymacombs Road, Bellaghy, Tullyvar and Magheraglass Cookstown. Magheraglass is intended for closure during 2017/2018, Tullyvar in 2018/2019 and Ballymacombs in 2019/2020. There are also 12 recycling centres within Mid Ulster. (The Joint Waste Management Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge And Craigavon Borough Council; Fermanagh And Omagh District Council; And Mid Ulster District Council February 2016.)

## Regional Strategic Objectives

The Regional Development Strategy 2035 and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) both promote waste management in conformity with the 5 step waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover residual energy, landfill) as laid down in the WFD.

### The Waste Hierarchy

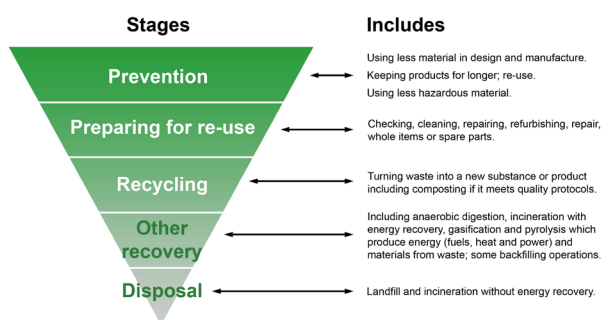
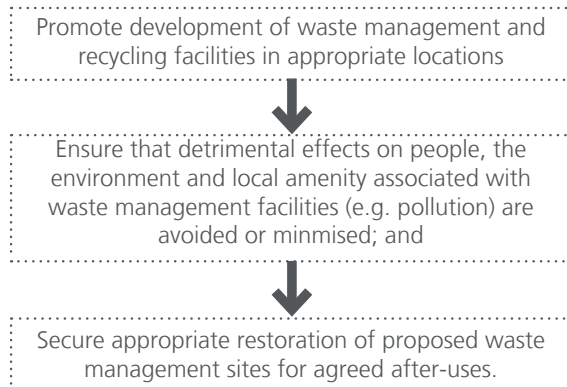
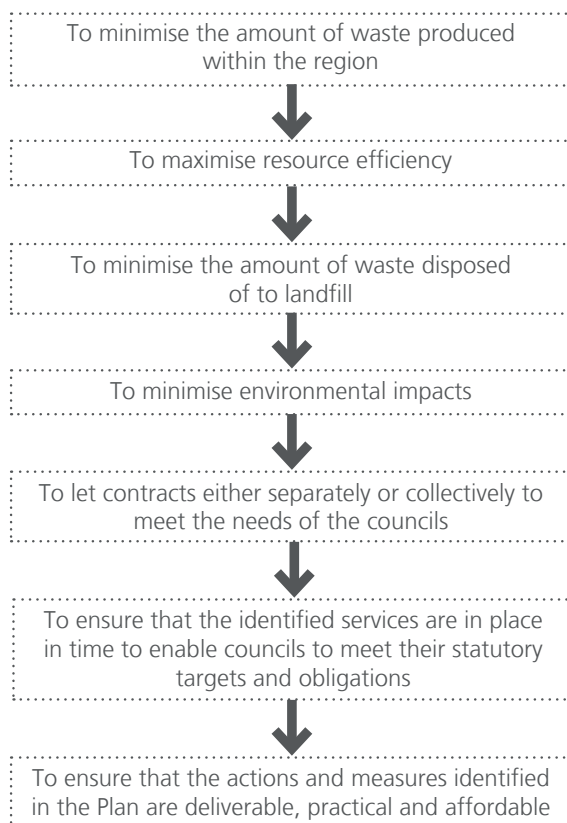


Figure 1 – RDS 2035 Waste Hierarchy  
The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) objectives are as follows -



## Joint Waste Management Plan

In February 2016, a Joint Waste Management Plan was prepared by Mid Ulster District Council, Omagh and Fermanagh Council and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. The plan sets out joint arrangements for the management of controlled waste arising within the Joint Councils over the period 2016 to 2020. The objectives of the Joint Waste Management



## Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

In addition to the regional strategic objectives and the objectives of the Joint Waste Plan, the objective of the Mid Ulster Local Development Plan (LDP) is to promote waste as a positive resource. Hence aiming to increase investment in the sector, create jobs and improve the health and well-being of the Mid Ulster District population.

## Strategic Policy Approach

### Option 1 – Adopt Existing Policy Approach

This option would see each proposal considered on its merits against defined criteria as set out within Planning Policy Statement 11, regardless of site location. In the current policy the onus is on the developer to meet this criteria. The policy promotes the development, in appropriate locations, of waste management facilities that meet need as identified by the relevant Waste Management Plan, or as demonstrated to the planning department's satisfaction in the case of waste water treatment works (WWTWs). It also seeks to ensure that detrimental effects on people, the environment, and local amenity associated with waste management facilities are avoided or minimised and that proposals provide appropriate restoration of proposed waste management sites for agreed after-uses.

### Option 2 – Tailor existing policy

This option would also result in a criteria based approach. The current policy would be tailored to Mid Ulster and align with the strategic policy in the SPPS and would simplify the PPS11 policy to remove those general policy considerations that apply to all development and also remove the policy relating to Land Improvement thereby aligning with the SPPS.

### Preferred Option

Option 2 is the preferred option as this approach emphasises the positive role waste management can play in providing employment, investment and improving health and wellbeing. It is considered this option is more streamlined and makes no reference to the concept of Land Improvement currently within Policy WM4 of PPS 11. Also this option makes no reference to flooding, built and natural heritage and road safety as these criteria are considered within separate general policies in the general policy section of the Plan. The other key differences between option 1 (PPS 11) and the other option 2 (tailored policy aligned with the SPPS) is that waste management facilities are to be identified within the LDP.

## Suggested Policy Wording

If the preferred option 2 were to be adopted then the following suggested policy wording may be appropriate.

### POLICY WM1 – WASTE MANAGEMENT: GENERAL POLICY

Proposals for the development of a waste management facility shall accord with the plan providing;

- I. It will not cause demonstrable harm to human health or result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment that cannot be controlled by mitigating measures.
- II. It is designed to be compatible with the character of the surrounding area and adjacent land uses;
- III. The visual impact of the waste management facility is acceptable in the landscape and the development will not have an unacceptable visual impact on any area designated for its landscape quality;
- IV. The types of waste to be deposited or treated and the proposed method of disposal or treatment will not pose a serious environmental risk to air, water or soil resources that cannot be prevented or appropriately controlled by mitigating measures;
- V. The proposal avoids (as far as is practicable) the permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- VI. In the case of waste disposal the proposal includes suitable, detailed and practical restoration and aftercare proposals for the site.

In the case of waste collection and treatment facilities and waste disposal (landfill and land raising) there must be a need for the facility as established through the Joint Waste Management Plan 2016, and any subsequent plan, except in the case of WWTW's where the need must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of Mid Ulster Council.

## POLICY WM2 – WASTE COLLECTION AND TREATMENT FACILITIES

### POLICY WM2 – WASTE COLLECTION AND TREATMENT FACILITIES

Proposals for the development of a waste collection and treatment facility shall accord with the plan providing it complies with one or more of the following locational criteria:

- I. It is located within an industrial area of a character appropriate to the development; or
- II. It is suitably located within an active or worked out hard rock quarry or on the site of an existing or former waste management facility including a landfill site; or
- III. It brings previously developed, derelict or contaminated land back into productive use or makes use of existing or redundant buildings; or
- IV. In the case of a civic amenity and similar neighbourhood facilities the site is conveniently located in terms of access to service a neighbourhood or settlement whilst avoiding unacceptable adverse impact on the character, environmental quality and amenities of the local area; or
- V. It is suitably located in the countryside, it involves the reuse of existing buildings or is on land within or adjacent to existing building groups. Exceptionally, where it is demonstrated that new buildings/plant are needed these must have an acceptable visual and environmental impact.

In the case of a regional scale waste collection and treatment/waste management facility, its location relates closely to and benefits from easy access to key transport corridors and, where practicable makes use of the alternative transport modes of rail and water.

## POLICY WM3 – WASTE DISPOSAL

Proposals for the development of landfill or land raising facilities for the disposal of waste shall accord with plan providing;

It is suitably located within an active or worked out hard rock quarry or it brings land that is despoiled, derelict or contaminated back into productive use.

In the case of regional scale landfill or land raising facilities, its location relates closely to and benefits from easy access to key transport corridors and, where practicable makes use of the alternative transport modes of rail and water.

## POLICY WM4 – DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES

Development in the vicinity of waste management facilities shall accord with the plan providing;

- I. It will not prejudice the operation of such facilities,
- II. It will not give rise to unacceptable impact on people, transport, or the environment.

### Key Questions

- Q- Do you agree with the preferred approach to the subject of waste management?
- Q- Do you agree that the concept of 'Land Improvement' should be removed from policy within the Mid Ulster LDP? If not please explain why.
- Q- Do you agree that the suggested policy wording addresses the waste management hierarchy laid down in the Waste Framework Directive? If not how should it be amended?

# Telecommunications, Overhead Cables and High Structures

Telecommunications provision in Mid Ulster District is relatively poor. Mobile broadband provision in Northern Ireland as a whole is among the poorest in the UK and at a local level, the former Magherafelt District suffers some of the poorest provision in Northern Ireland. Strong connectivity to data services is vital to help keep businesses competitive and to ensure that rural communities do not feel cut off or isolated.

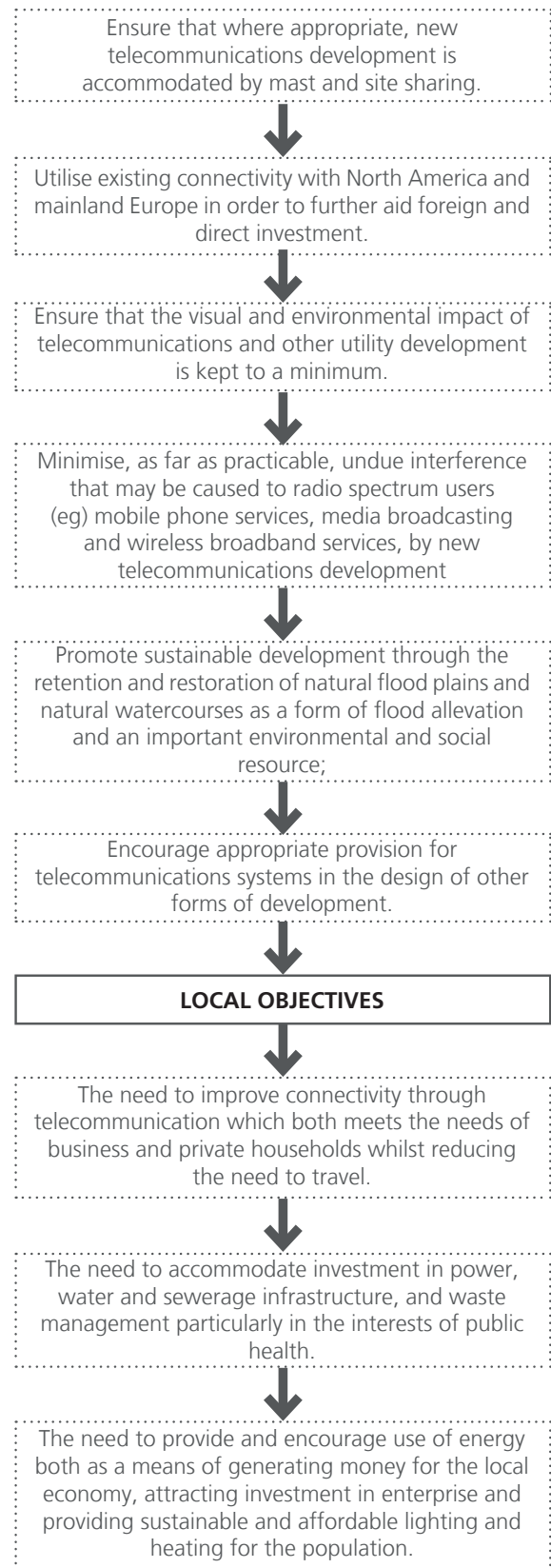
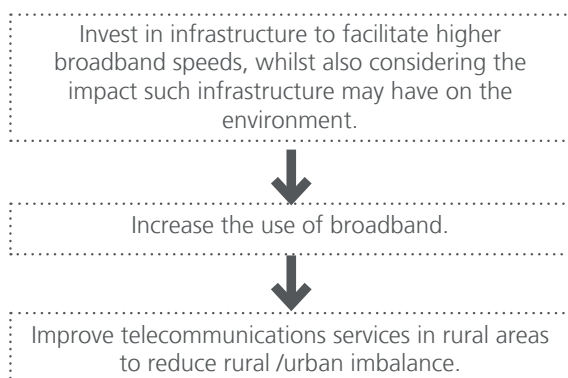
Community consultation undertaken as part of the emerging Community Plan has found that residents wish to see attention given to improved broadband. Access to broadband is a vital component of infrastructure in today's world. It is vital in growing a sustainable local economy, vital for education and home working and an important service rural communities.

Overhead power cables are important in a rural district like Mid Ulster because they allow us to have a good electricity distribution network to serve both existing and new rural homes. Indeed there are a number of significant projects envisaged during the Plan period which will seek to improve the transmission system in and around Mid Ulster. These include: the proposed North-South Interconnector; Installation of voltage support at Omagh South or Omagh Main, Coolkeeragh or Coleraine and Tamnamore; Turleenan to Tamnamore upgrading; and Magherafelt to Coolkeeragh Reinforcement.

It is therefore important to facilitate the development of overhead power cables and telecommunications development although this should not be pursued at the expense of the environment. In sensitive areas such development which often involves the erection of high structures can have a negative impact on the landscape and character of the area as well as sites of natural or built heritage and nearby residential amenity. Appropriate development management policies must be put in place to protect such assets from these potential impacts.

## Objectives

Mid Ulster Strategy in relation to telecommunications and overhead cables incorporates regional and strategic objectives.



## Policy Approach Options

In seeking to address the issues and to meet the various objectives it is considered that there are two options to the policy approach in relation to this subject

### Option 1 Adopt current policy

This option would adopt a policy approach in line with current policy in relation to telecommunication development and overhead powerlines. It is envisaged that this approach will not fit with the approach that Mid Ulster wishes to take in relation to protection of sensitive landscapes.

### Option 2 Tailor current policy

Tailor the current policy approach to recognise our most sensitive landscapes where telecommunications and overhead cables would have a significant adverse impact. This approach means that certain areas will be designated as

Areas of Constraint in the context of high structures wherein development above 15m would conflict with the Plan e.g. telecommunications masts and overhead cables, so as to protect these sensitive landscapes and designations in Mid Ulster. This policy approach will also reflect the approach of the SPPS and in relation to telecommunications will encourage site sharing of masts where possible. Within this approach the policy will require new housing developments to demonstrate that they have given consideration to the installation of direct fibre access within the development so as to address this connectivity issue in Mid Ulster.

### Preferred Option

Option 2 is the preferred option. This approach means that we will be able to afford better protection to our most sensitive landscapes which tend to be more at risk from renewable energy development.

## Suggested Policy Wording

If this option were to be adopted, then potential policy wording could be;

### POLICY TOHS 1 - OUTSIDE OF "AREAS OF CONSTRAINT ON WIND TURBINES AND HIGH STRUCTURES"

Telecommunications development (including necessary enabling works) and overhead cable development will conform with the Plan where;

- Siting and design of the development, including any necessary enabling works will not result in an unacceptable impact on visual amenity and environmentally sensitive features and locations
- Operators demonstrate the need for new telecommunication development, existing network constraints, potential effects of such development and measures to mitigate visual and environmental impacts.
- Applications for the development of telecommunications equipment should be accompanied by a statement declaring compliance with ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to electromagnetic fields.
- Operators demonstrate that the development shall not cause undue interference to radio spectrum users.
- In the case of overhead cables the chosen route follows the natural features of the environment and in urban areas wirescape is kept to a minimum with preference being given to undergrounding.

In the case of telecommunications new masts should only be considered where site sharing is not feasible or where it offers an improved environmental solution.

Subject to the above considerations, telecommunications development and overhead cables will normally be restricted to 15m in height in "Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures". Exceptions will only be considered where it has been demonstrated that the proposal is of regional importance, or in the case of telecommunications a 'not spot' is identified.

In new housing developments applicants are required to demonstrate that they have given consideration to the laying of fibre optic cables within the scheme.

### Key Questions

- Q- Do you agree with the imposition of "Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures" (See Proposed Area of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures Map at Appendix 3) ?
- Q - Should telecommunications development and overhead cable development be permitted up to 15m in "Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures" ?
- Q - Do you agree with the potential policy wording? If not tell us what you would change?



## Renewable Energy

Mid Ulster's Community Plan identifies a number of strategic infrastructure issues which need to be addressed, in joined-up, integrated ways. These include energy, including renewables and new options such as gas. This will be achieved by encouraging alternative forms of energy including linking homes to gas and encouraging renewable energy where it can be achieved in a manner sensitive to amenity and our environment.

The SPPS asserts that Northern Ireland has significant renewable energy resources and a vibrant renewable energy industry that makes an important contribution towards achieving sustainable development, and is a significant provider of jobs and investment across the region. The European Commission's Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) establishes overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU and specifies national renewable energy targets for each country. The Strategic Energy Framework (DETI 2010) states that Northern Ireland will seek to achieve 40% of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020.

## Mid Ulster Trends

The pie graph at Figure 2 illustrates the breakdown in the types of renewable planning applications received and processed within the Mid Ulster area over a four year period 2010-2014.

The main source of renewable energy in Northern Ireland and Mid Ulster is from wind. In 2015, 91% of renewable electricity generated in Northern Ireland came from wind energy (DETI). Due to its nature, and its overall contribution to renewable energy generation, wind energy development has the greatest potential for creating adverse impacts on our built, natural and landscape heritage.

The latest annual DETI report on performance against these targets shows that for the 12 month period January 2015 to December 2015, 25.4% of total electricity consumption in Northern Ireland was generated from renewable sources located in Northern Ireland. This represents an increase of 6.4 % on the previous 12 month period (January 2014 to December 2014) (See figure 1 below). In December 2015 alone, 38.2% of total electricity consumption in Northern Ireland was generated from renewable sources.

In the first nine months of 2015/16 Mid Ulster Council received the second largest number of renewable energy applications in Northern Ireland(42), behind Fermanagh and Omagh Council (46). (DOE Stats)

In line with this, the Northern Ireland Executive in their programme for Government, set a target that by 2015 20% of all electricity will be generated from renewable sources.

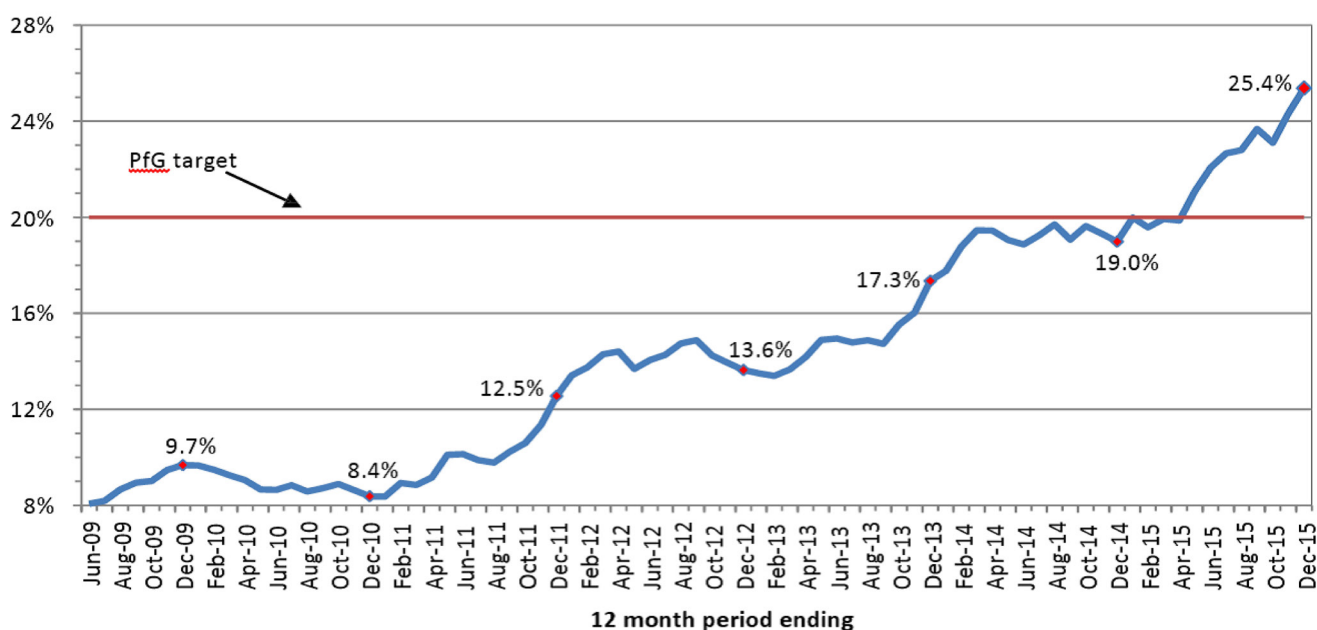


Figure 1: Rolling 12 month Average % Electricity Consumption from Renewable Sources. Source: DETI.

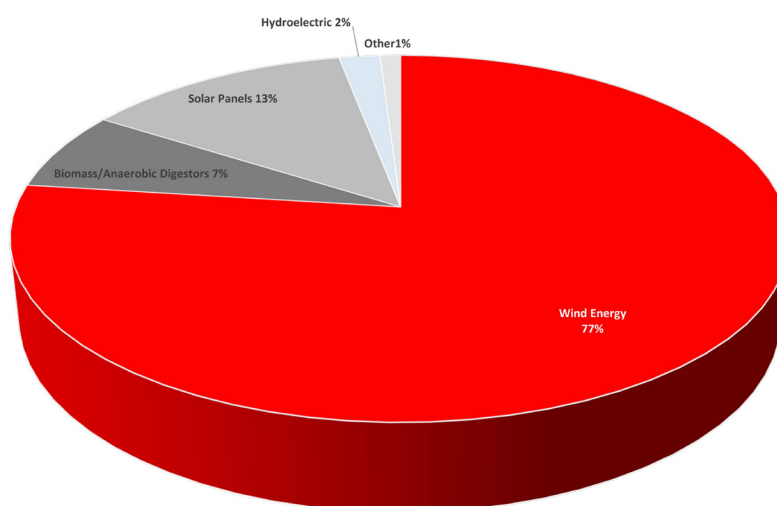


Figure 2: Breakdown of renewable applications received and processed in Mid Ulster over period 2012-2014

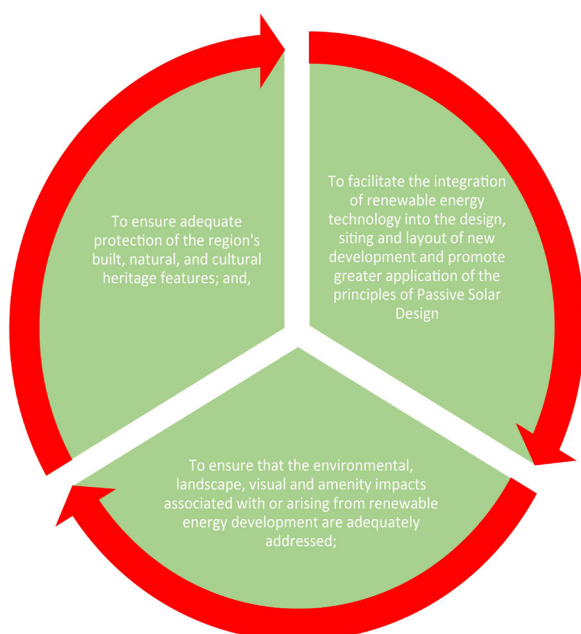
## Renewable Energy

Key Issues that have emerged locally from the processing of renewable energy applications include:

- The potential adverse impact of wind energy development on residential amenity in terms of dominance and the proximity of single turbines to dwellings;
- The potential adverse impact of wind energy development on sensitive landscapes, including the potential impact on single wind turbines on our vulnerable landscapes in Mid Ulster.

## Regional Strategic Objectives

Mid Ulster's strategy in relation to renewable energy incorporates the regional strategic objectives:



In addition, Mid Ulster Council also wishes to encourage energy efficiencies and promote use of renewable energy.

## Policy Approach Options

To meet our objectives and address the issues outlined it is considered that there are two options to the policy approach to renewable energy development.

### Option 1 - Adopt existing policy

This option would adopt a permissive criteria based approach that is in line with existing planning policy (contained within Planning Policy Statement 18 (PPS18) Renewable Energy) which seeks to facilitate the siting of renewable energy generating facilities in appropriate locations within the built and natural environment.

The current policy favours facilities to be located close to the energy source, but also recognises that care needs to be taken in relation to impacts on landscapes and public amenity. Wind farm development is required to be located a minimum separation distance from residential property, however this does not apply to single turbines.

### Option 2 - A more sensitive Approach

This options would adopt a planning policy approach that recognises the value of renewable energy development but gives greater weight to environmentally sensitive areas, affords greater protection to neighbouring amenity and has greater regard for the tourism industry through the introduction of constraint areas.

This policy would facilitate renewable development but would be more sensitive to the impacts of wind energy development and would result in a stricter policy approach to development of wind energy development within areas considered to be sensitive either due to their landscape value, built heritage and nature conservation assets. Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures would be introduced.

## Preferred Option

Option 2 is considered to be the preferred option. It is considered that the current policy approach has assisted in the achievement of renewable energy targets for the Region.

The opportunity exists however to streamline and tailor existing policy to the specific circumstances of Mid Ulster in relation to environmentally sensitive areas and in particular our vulnerable landscapes and also to address issues regarding potential amenity impact.

It is considered that this option would provide the correct balance between development and protection of our most important landscapes and assets.

*Should an area of constraint on wind turbines and high structures be introduced in Mid Ulster District?*

*Are there other options than the two shown to be considered?*



## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY RNW1 - ALL RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for development that generate energy from renewable resources including wind, sun (solar energy), moving water (hydropower), heat extracted from air, ground and water (including geothermal energy), and biomass (wood, biodegradable waste and energy crops such as for use in an Anaerobic digester) shall accord with the Plan.

The wider environmental, economic and social benefits of all proposals for renewable energy projects are material considerations that will be given appropriate weight in determining whether planning permission should be granted.

Where any project would result in unavoidable damage during its installation, operation or decommissioning, the application shall demonstrate how this will be minimised and mitigated, including details of any proposed compensatory measures, such as a habitat management plan or the creation of a new habitat. This matter will need to be agreed before planning permission is granted. In relation to developments such as wind farms and solar farms, applicants will be required to provide details on the decommissioning of structures remaining on the site beyond their operational life, including proposals for site restoration to an agreed standard appropriate to its location.

Any relevant supplementary regional guidance or practice notes should be taken into account in assessing renewable energy applications.

#### WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Outside of 'Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures' wind energy development shall accord with the Plan providing it will not result in:

- (i) an unacceptable impact on visual amenity or landscape character;
- (ii) a detrimental cumulative impact, taking into account existing permissions and undetermined applications;
- (iii) the creation of a significant risk of landslide or bog burst;
- (iv) any part of the development giving rise to unacceptable electromagnetic interference to communications installations; radar or air traffic control systems; emergency services communications; or other telecommunication systems;
- (v) an unacceptable impact on roads, rail or aviation safety;
- (vi) significant harm to the safety or amenity of any sensitive receptors (including future occupants of committed developments) arising from noise; shadow flicker; ice throw; and reflected light; and
- (vii) unacceptable adverse impacts on the operation of tourism or recreation interest

A separation distance of 10 times rotor diameter to occupied property, with a minimum distance of not less than 500m, will generally apply to any wind turbine exceeding 15 metres to hub height, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of Mid Ulster Council that the owners of properties within the stipulated separation distance are supportive of the development.

Subject to the above considerations, renewable energy development will normally be restricted to 15m in height within "Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures". Exceptions will only be considered where it has been demonstrated that the proposal is of regional importance.

In relation to Wind Energy Development specifically, the above policy refers to 'Areas of Constraint of Wind Turbines and High Structures'. These areas are identified as environmentally sensitive areas where it is proposed that a more restrictive policy should be applied in relation to wind turbines and other High Structures. In addition to the designation of a Special Countryside Area at the Shores of Lough Neagh and Lough Beg to protect our most environmental sensitive assets from all forms of inappropriate development, it is also proposed to introduce Areas of Constraint in the following locations:

- The High Sperrin's AONB.
- The escarpments and prominent ridges overlooking Clogher Valley.
- Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) such as Beaghmore.

Within the proposed 'Areas of Constraint of Wind Turbines and High Structures' wind turbine development will normally be restricted to 15m in height.

### Key Questions

- Q. If an Area of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures was introduced what area should it cover within Mid Ulster (See Proposed Area of Constraint on Wind Turbines and High Structures Map at Appendix 3)?
- Q. Should a minimum separation distance be introduced between a wind turbine and occupied property?
- Q. Should new development be encouraged or required to demonstrate passive solar design and include solar panels or other Passive Solar techniques to generate renewable energy?
- Q. Should policy encourage and/or facilitate the re-use, refurbishment, repair and repowering of existing renewable energy development, with decommissioning/recycling of structures seen as a last resort?

# Transportation

## Key Issues

Within Mid Ulster District there is a high reliance on the private car which is explained in part by the high proportion of rural dwellers within the district. Whilst there is a high reliance on the private car it is important to note that 75% of employed people living within Mid Ulster work in Mid Ulster (MUDC Position Paper Transport 2015) making connectivity an important consideration as well as promoting and encouraging the use of public transport and protecting and enhancing walking/cycling routes.

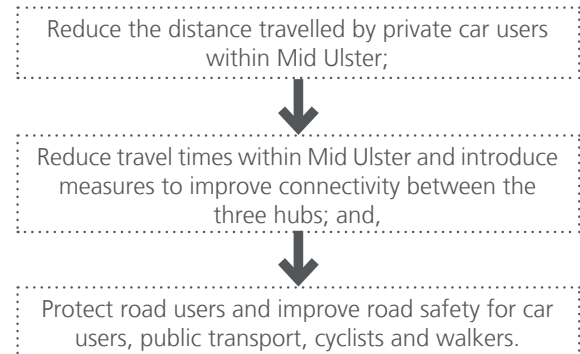
## Strategic Objectives

There are a number of Strategic Objectives within the SPPS relevant to this subject:



# Mid Ulster LDP Objectives

In addition to supporting the objectives of the SPPS there are also a number of Mid Ulster LDP objectives relevant to the issue of Transportation. Whilst the SPPS promotes the reduction in motorised transport and encourages active travel and public transport it is recognised that this may be less achievable in some rural areas in Mid Ulster:



## Plan Strategy

Mid Ulster council wishes to facilitate improvements to roads infrastructure whilst encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. This is reflected in the strategic planning guidelines (SPG's) set out within the Growth Strategy which encourages improvement to public and private transportation including provision of cycleways and walkways as well as improvements to the road network. It focuses on the need to upgrade the A29 as well as other trunk roads.

Transportation is addressed in the suggested general principals planning policy to ensure that in considering all development account is taken of road capacity, public safety, car parking provision, and accessibility for all including pedestrians, cyclist, those with impaired mobility and facilitating those reliant on public transport. This is also reflected in suggested urban design guidance which encourages permeability and ease of movement in new design and traffic calming measures.

Accordingly this section of the plan only needs to ensure protection is provided for new transportation schemes including new link roads, park and ride, walkways and cycle ways. The details of these proposals will be included in the Local Policies Plan.

The Local Policies Plan also needs to address transportation issues when zoning land. This will affect both the choice of site zoned for development and any key site requirements attached to each zoning.

The key policy areas which the plan strategy needs to address is as follows:

- Policy for protecting new transportation schemes.
- Protection of disused Transport Routes.
- Protection of Town Centre car parks
- Access to protected routes and other roads.



# Policy Approach Options

## New Transport Schemes, Walking and Cycling

The SPPS states that new transport schemes (including major road proposals, rail and public transport provision, park and ride proposals and cycle/pedestrian networks) should be identified in the LDP (See Mid Ulster By Passes and Transport Schemes Map). Any land required for these purposes should be protected.

This is reflected Policy AMP 4 of Planning Policy Statement 3 which affords protection for new transport schemes. It is proposed to retain this policy.

*Do you support the approach taken regarding New Transport Schemes, Walking & Cycling? Please explain your answer. You may also suggest any changes.*



## Disused Transport Routes

Strategic policy in the SPPS is to protect disused transport routes that have a reasonable prospect of re-use for future transport purposes should be identified and safeguarded in the LDP. Where there is no reasonable prospect of the re-use of such routes consideration should be given to protecting routes for alternative purposes such as recreational, nature conservation or tourism related use.

Policy AMP 5 of PPS 3 provides a strict test in that it does not allow permission to be granted for development that would prejudice future re-use of dis-used transport routes identified in Development Plans for transport or recreational use.

The prospect of disused transport routes including railways lines and canals within the council district becoming usable again will be explored during the creation of the Local Policies Plan and at that stage will be identified on maps.

### Option 1: Await the Local Policies Plan

Wait until a Local Policies Plan is adopted to give protection to these routes, however this poses the risk that development would take place on a piecemeal basis prejudicing the future reuse of such routes.

### Option 2: Blanket Ban

This option would adopt a blanket ban on development that would prejudice the future re-use of a disused Transport Routes. This approach fails to recognise that some railways would have no prospect of coming forward for reuse and have already been prejudiced by piecemeal development.

### Option 3: Blanket Ban with exceptions

This option would apply a blanket ban to development on these disused transport routes with exceptions until such times as the specific routes can be identified. The exceptions would relate to recreational, nature conservation or tourism use. This is the preferred option because it addresses the criticisms of the other two options.

*Do you agree with the preferred approach in relation to dis-used transport routes to apply a blanket ban until specific routes are identified?*



## Car Parking

Car parks within town centres should be identified within LDPs according to the SPPS. It also requires the council to provide local policies that ensure adequate provision for car parking within new developments (including spaces for people with disabilities, and parent and child parking spaces) with appropriate servicing arrangements. Park and ride/share sites should be identified and a range of initiatives such as designating areas of parking restraint, reducing the supply of long term parking spaces, pricing policies and land use measures and innovative work practices.

Policy AMP 7 of PPS3 is designed to ensure that development proposals provide adequate car parking and servicing arrangements depending on the characteristics of the site. PPS 13, General Principle 6 states that controls on parking should be employed to encourage more responsible use of the private car and to bring about a change in travel behaviour.

Car parking and servicing arrangements can be taken forward in the General Principles Planning Policy in the Plan similar to PPS 13. Mid Ulster would normally require car parking in line with established standards with the exception of town centres where consideration may be given to the operational needs of the business and where there are existing public transport and existing car parking. Presently car parks in town centres are identified for protection within the Dungannon and Cookstown Area Plans however the Magherafelt Area Plan does not include such protection.

### Option 1: Await the Local Policies Plan

This option would await the Local Policies Plan and leave the situation as it is at present, however this would result in inconsistency across the district since those located within the Magherafelt Area Plan are not afforded protection.

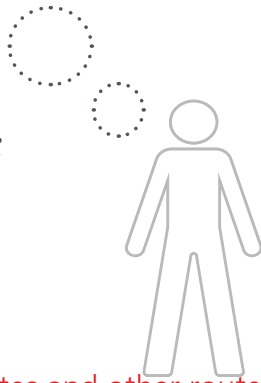
### Option 2: protection of existing car parks

Car parking is an important facility in towns in order to maintain a successful town centre. It is therefore important in Mid Ulster to protect our town centre car parks. The preferred option is Option 2 which means a presumption against the development of existing public car parks in Town centres unless it can be demonstrated that these can be replaced placed in a convenient location in terms of accessibility and of similar scale within the town centre.

*Do you agree with the preferred approach in relation to dis-used transport routes to apply a blanket ban until specific routes are identified?*



*Do you agree with the approach taken in relation to the protection of public Car Parks?*



## Access on to Protected Routes and other route ways

The SPPS states that the LDP will display on maps for information purposes protected routes which are within the plan area. It also states that access onto motorways or high standard dual carriageways as an exception may be considered for motorway service areas where there is a demonstrable need. For other dual carriageways, ring roads, through passes and by-passes direct access or intensification of existing access will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances of regional significance.

For protected routes outside settlements the SPPS covers 4 scenarios. It identifies replacement dwellings where there is an existing access onto a protected route as acceptable, and then goes on to mention farm dwellings or dwellings serving established commercial or industrial enterprises where access cannot reasonably be obtained from a minor road, then the use of an existing access will be required. It then goes on to say that approval may be justified for other types of developments that meet development in the countryside criteria, and where access cannot be reasonably obtained from a minor road access will be required from an existing access. The fact that the outcomes of the 3 scenarios are the same, suggests that the policy could be condensed further when going forward in the LDP.

Direct access or intensification of existing access onto protected routes within settlement limits will be acceptable in circumstances where access cannot be reasonably taken from a minor road. In the case of residential development only where this will significantly assist in the creation of a quality environment without compromising road safety or creating excessive number of access points.

Policy AMP 3 is designed to restrict accesses onto protected routes. It is set out like the SPPS in three sections dealing with protected routes, protected routes outside development limits and protected routes inside development limits. The publication of PPS 21 brought about a consequential revision to the section of policy that related to protected routes outside settlement limits. This policy ties in the SPPS and affords largely the same protection to protected routes. The policy however is quite lengthy and provides the same outcome for certain scenarios.

### Option 1: A more liberal protected Routes Policy

This option would adopt a more liberal policy approach. It could be feasible to lessen protected route policy allowing for more exceptions, however this runs a risk of resulting in less free flowing traffic and reduced traffic speeds. This in turn could make the towns of Mid Ulster less attractive for investment and result in longer journey times to vital services such as hospitals.

### Option 2: A stricter Protected Route Policy

This option would in theory increase traffic speeds by providing less exceptions. However this would make it more difficult for businesses and residents to get an access. There is no real evidence to suggest that there is a need to tighten the policy.

### Option 3: Existing Policy Tailored to Mid

This option is preferred and recognises that protected routes policy is essential for efficient movements in the interest of safety and the economy, but also recognises that in some cases a new access is unavoidable or desirable

## Suggested Policy Wording

### POLICY TRAN1 - DIS-USED TRANSPORT ROUTES

Until such time as the Local Policies Plan is adopted there will be a presumption against development on disused transport routes (railway line, canals etc.) for uses other than recreational, nature conservation or tourism use unless there is no reasonable prospect of reuse for future transport purposes.

### POLICY TRAN2 - CAR PARKING

There will be a presumption against the development of existing public car parks in town centres unless it can be demonstrated that these can be placed in a convenient location in terms of accessibility and of similar scale within the town centre.

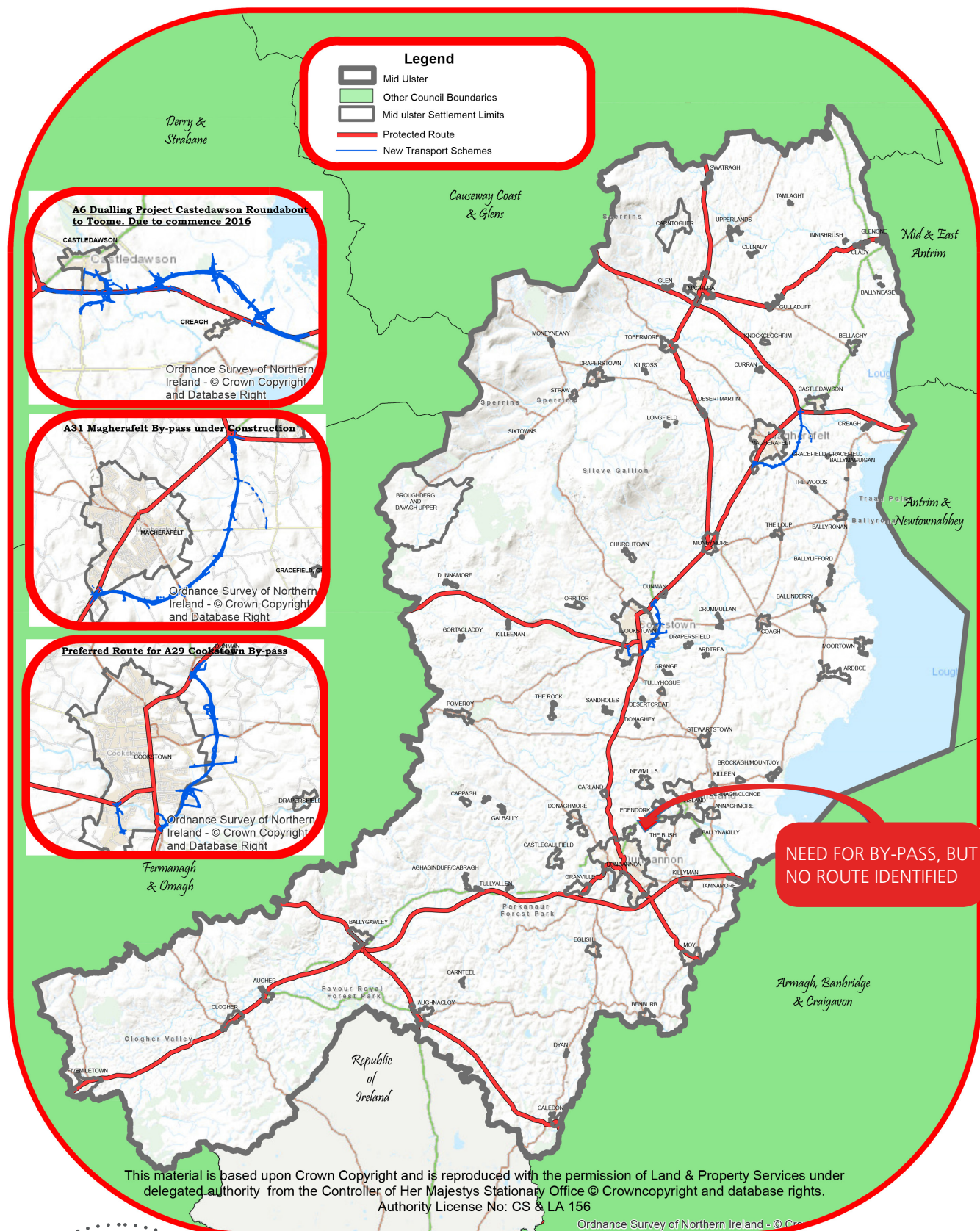
### POLICY TRAN3 - ACCESS ON TO PROTECTED ROUTES & OTHER ROUTE WAYS

The Plan promotes connectivity between towns, therefore the creation of a new access onto a protected route will be in conflict with the Plan, except where it includes:

- Provision of motorway service areas, where there is no existing or approved facilities for 12 miles along that road
- Development of regional significance, access from a non-motorway standard protected route.
- Intensification of an existing access where no other access is reasonably obtainable from an existing minor road.
- Residential development in order to create a quality residential environment within a settlement and does not result in an excessive number of access points.

Additional access onto other public roads or intensification of existing access will be permitted where it does not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience traffic flow. Account will be given to the views of Transport NI and any published government guidance.

## Mid Ulster By-Passes & New Transport Scheme



Do you support the approach taken in regard to access onto protected routes, which recognises the importance of efficient movement in the interests of road safety and the economy?





# Settlements - Towns

## Cookstown

Cookstown is the second largest town in the district and one of the most historic towns in Northern Ireland, being founded originally as a small settlement of 10 houses in the northern part of the settlement (Oldtown Area).

Cookstown has a strong and important retail base. Historically it was a centre for the linen industry but is now better renowned for its retail offer to the extent where it is known as the "Retail Capital of Mid Ulster." The proliferation of retail outlets is facilitated by the large linear main street which forms the spine of the town's grid like layout. The population of the town according to the last census is 11,620 (2011 census), a 10 % increase on the population at the 2001 census.

There are areas of open space designated throughout the town with the main sites being located at Fairhill, Beechway, and close to both secondary schools.

Protection is also afforded to areas of landscape importance by way of Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) designations at Coolnafranky Demesne (site of Cookstown High School), Killymoon Castle / Golf Club adjacent to the edge of the settlement, Westland Road Cemetery and Drumvale near the Greenvale Hotel.

There is a defined town centre stretching from Oldtown to Loy Street with a Primary Retail Core (PRC) being designated at William Street, James Street and Burn Road (More detail on this can be found in the Town Centres and Retailing section of this Paper and the related Map at Appendix 3). There is also an Area of Townscape Character (ATC) running from Milburn Street to Holy Trinity College. The ATC is designated to protect the individual buildings and their frontages as well as the historic street pattern which gives the town its distinctive character.

In terms of Waste Water Treatment Works, NI Water have advised that Cookstown has reasonable capacity to accommodate additional development but this position continues to be kept under review.

## Housing Growth

The settlement limit currently contains both phase 1 and phase 2 housing land zonings. No phase 2 land has been developed while approximately 74% of phase 1 land remains available (according to 2015 Housing Monitor reports). Figures in the Housing Allocation table at Appendix 2 (based on Option 1 – Equitable Split) indicate that Cookstown requires an additional 1,029 new houses over the incoming plan period. Calculations also show that there is potential for 1,445 houses still to be built in the form of unimplemented planning approvals. This would suggest that there is no need for additional housing land to be zoned within the settlement. Mid Ulster Council however wish to retain a phased approach to our housing land (See Growth Strategy and Spatial Framework section of the paper) and therefore wish to retain Phase 2 land to allow for long term expansion as it can be held in reserve or released in full or part if our housing needs change.

## Economic Development Growth

Calculations show that at least 8,500 new jobs are needed within the District over the Plan period and this will require 170 hectares of economic development land. There is industrial land in Cookstown to the south west at Kilcornagh, Derryloran and Blue Circle. There is also a large tranche of industrial land to the east, near the existing Karro food processing plant. As explained in the Spatial Framework section of this Paper, Cookstown still has approximately 68 hectares of zoned industrial land available (according to the DOE planning survey 2014) and it is deemed that this will be adequate to meet the industrial requirements of the town. The current location and need for further economic land zonings is something that the Council wish to investigate further and 3 Growth Direction Options for Cookstown are identified on the Cookstown settlement map as possible directions for growth. Other options may also exist and your suggestions on this is welcomed.

# Cookstown

## Legend

Existing Zonings as per Cookstown Area Plan 2010

- Development Limit
- Existing Industry
- Industry
- Existing Recreation and Open Space
- Recreation and Openspace
- Housing
- Housing Phase 2 (Not Developed)
- Development Opportunity Site
- Community Woodland
- Area of Archaeological Potential
- Area Of Townscape Character
- Local Landscape Character Area
- Historic Park, Garden and Demesne
- Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance
- Existing Minerals Reserve Policy Area
- Town Centre
- Safe Routes to School
- Walkways
- Protected Route

## Preferred Options Paper Proposals

- Proposed Minerals Reserve Policy Area
- Economic Development Growth Options

## For Information Only

- Q100 Area Benefiting
- Q100 FloodExtent
- Q100pd Strategic
- I200 FloodExtent (Surface Water)
- Archaeological Site & Monument (Scheduled)
- Archaeological Site & Monument (State Care)
- Archaeological Site & Monument (Unscheduled)
- Sewage Treatment Works
- Local Landmark

NB: Map not to scale

Phase 2 Land to be utilised  
Potential to expand



Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

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# Settlements - Towns

## Dungannon

Dungannon is the largest town in the District and like Cookstown, it is a town of great historical importance having been home to the O'Neill Clan, the most powerful Gaelic family in Ireland prior to the Plantation.

The seat of the O'Neill clan, the Hill of the O'Neill, is located at Castle Hill in the middle of the town, the feature around which the original town was built.

The population of the town is 14,322 (2011 census), a 29% increase since the last census (2001). This is by far the biggest rise in population of the three main towns and is undoubtedly linked to the increase in migrant labour into the town. The town has a strong industrial and engineering ethos, with the food manufacturing sector providing a significant amount of employment. In relation to retail, Dungannon is less attractive than both Magherafelt and Cookstown although the retail offer in the town centre is supplemented by the Oaks Centre on the Coalisland Road and the Linen Green in Moygashel.

Areas of open space are designated throughout the settlement with the most significant being located at Dungannon Park and Windmill Wood towards the south (More detail on this can be found in the Town Centres and Retailing section of this Paper and the related Map at Appendix 3). Protection is also afforded to areas of landscape importance by way of Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) designations in the south of the settlement (including Dungannon Park) and at various other locations throughout the settlement such as land south of Bushvale housing development, just off the Killyman Road.

There is a defined Town Centre with a Primary Retail Core at Market Street and Scotch Street. The Northland Conservation Area takes in Northland Row, Northland Place, Perry Street and Church Street and is designated primarily to protect the built heritage including the Georgian Terrace at Northland Row, but also the treescape in the area as well. There is an Area of Townscape Character concentrating on the southern facing side of Castle Hill all the way south to Scotch Street. Given the historical significance of the area, the area round Castle Hill and Market Square is designated as an area of archaeological potential.

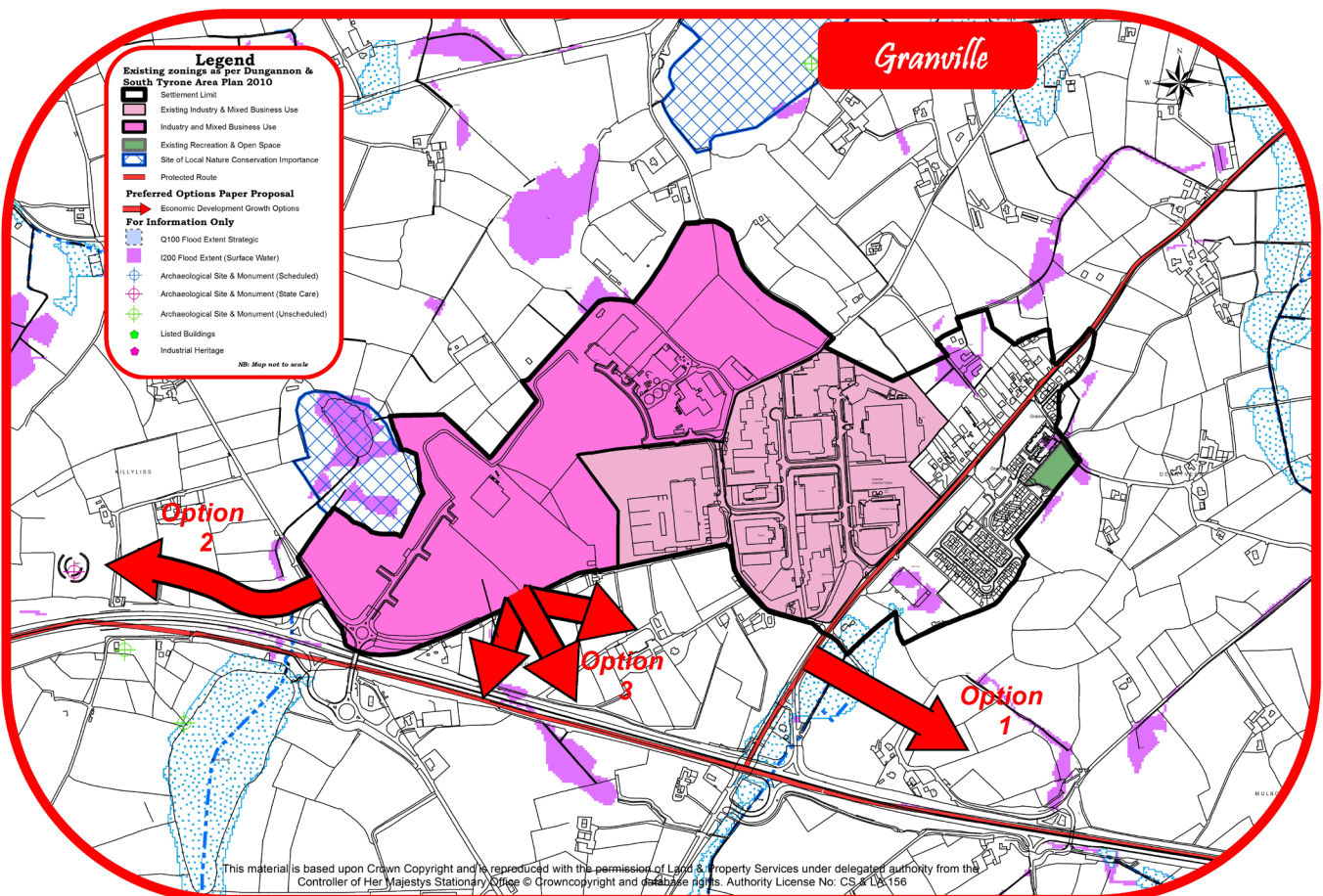
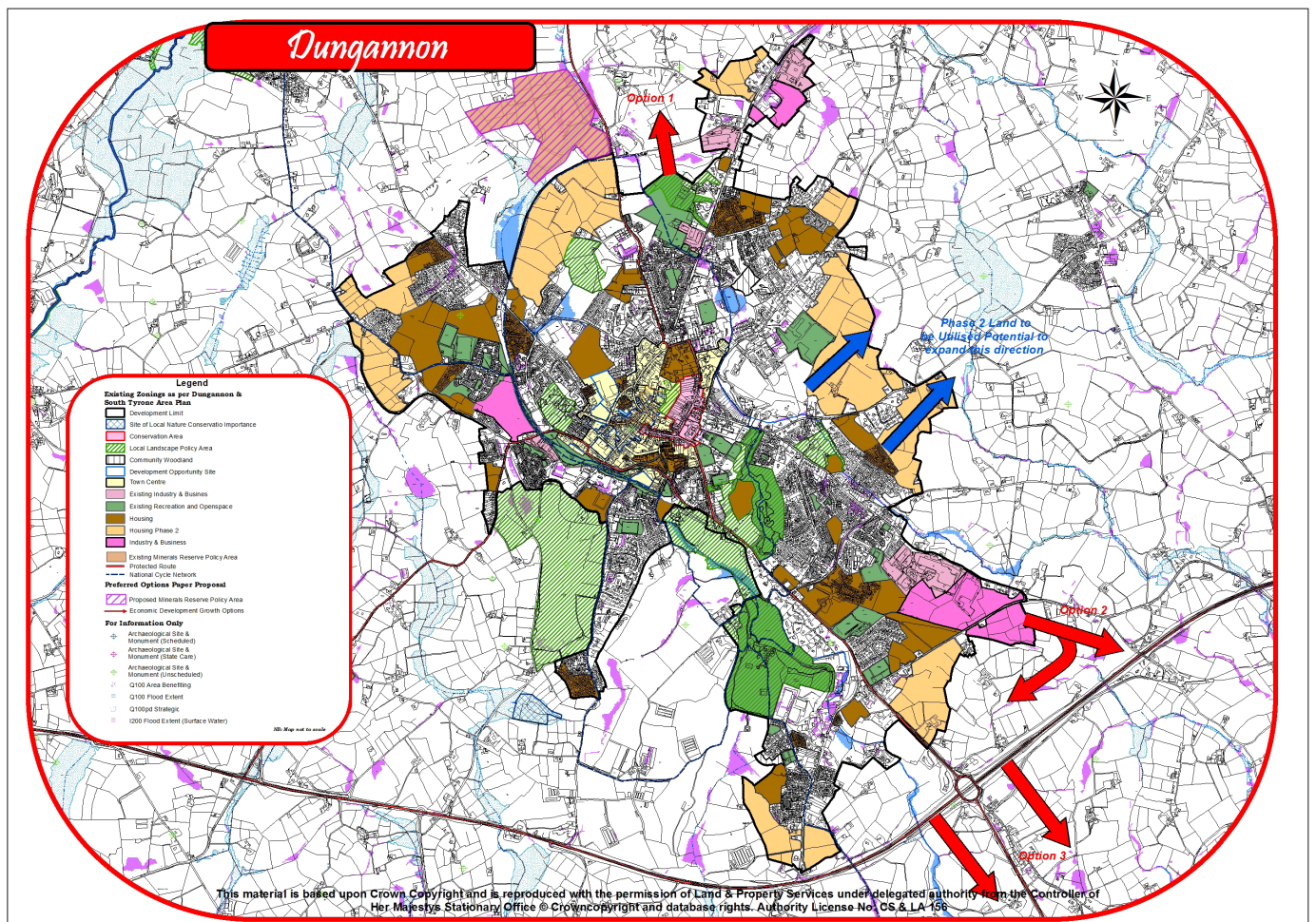
In terms of Waste Water Treatment Works, NI Water have advised that Dungannon has limited capacity to accommodate additional development but this position continues to be kept under review.

## Housing Growth

The settlement limit of Dungannon currently contains both phase 1 and phase 2 housing land zonings. No phase 2 land has been developed while approximately 69% of phase 1 land is still available (according to 2015 Housing Monitor reports). Figures in the housing allocation table at Appendix 2 (Based on Option 1 – Equitable Split) indicate that Dungannon requires an additional 1,226 new houses over the incoming plan period. Calculations also show that there is potential for 2,766 houses still to be built in the form of unimplemented planning approvals. This would suggest that there is no need for additional housing land to be zoned within the settlement. Mid Ulster Council however wish to retain a phased approach to our housing land (See Growth Strategy and Spatial Framework section of the paper) and therefore wish to retain Phase 2 land to allow for long term expansion as it can be held in reserve or released in full or part if our housing needs change.

## Economic Development Growth

There are three main sites of industrial land in Dungannon at Coolhill/Coolcush, Edendork and the Ballygawley Road. There is also industrial land available in nearby Granville and this will be vital in supplementing the availability of industrial land in Dungannon. As mentioned in the previous section about Cookstown, around 170 hectares of zoned industrial land is needed in Mid Ulster and this is to be spread out across the 3 main towns. The Spatial Framework section of this paper shows that there is still 77 hectares of industrial land available in Dungannon (according to the DOE planning survey 2014) and it is deemed that this will be adequate to meet the industrial requirements of the town and the wider district as a whole. The current location and need for further economic land zonings is something that the Council wish to investigate further and 4 Growth Direction Options are identified for Dungannon on the Dungannon settlement map with 3 Growth Direction Options also identified for Granville as possible directions for future growth. Other options may also exist at both settlements and your suggestions on this is welcomed.





# Settlements - Towns

## Magherafelt

Magherafelt is the third largest town in the District and its formation dates back to the Plantation, when the Salters Company established the town. The Plantation legacy is still evident through the wide Broad Street with the Market Square (The Diamond) immediately to the south on what would have been the site of the original plantation castle. The town has developed around 4 main arterial routes, namely Broad Street, Rainey Street, Queen Street and Market Street. Officially, the population of the town is 8,819 (2011 census), a 6.4 % increase on the population at the 2001 census. The town has strong links to the construction industry and also has a good retail base as well as a thriving hospitality sector.

Areas of Open Space are designated throughout the settlement with the main site being at Meadowbank on the Ballyronan Road. Other sites of open space are zoned near St Pius X Secondary School, Magherafelt High School near Leckagh and Parkmore, Rainey Endowed School and also St Marys Convent. Adjacent to the area of Open Space at Meadowbank is Ronan Valley Golf Course. At present, this lies outside the Settlement Limit on unzoned land but could potentially be afforded the protection of being zoned as open space and included within the Settlement Limit.

Protection is also afforded to areas of landscape character by way of Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) designations with the main sites being located outside the Settlement Limit, immediately to the north, where a large belt of mature trees and undulating land features are protected, as well as a designation at the western most edge of the settlement. Within the settlement, protection is afforded to landscape features north of the town centre and to the east of the town centre along the Aughrim Road towards Ashgrove.

Magherafelt has a defined town centre with quite a large Primary Retail Core (PRC) which extends along Broad Street to the Market Place but also takes in Union Road, Rainey Street and includes Meadowlane Shopping Centre as well (More detail on this can be found in the Town Centres and Retailing section of this Paper and the related Map at Appendix 3). Given the historic links to the Plantation and the Broad Street / Diamond area, this is zoned as an area of Archaeological Potential.

In terms of Waste Water Treatment Works, NI Water have advised that Magherafelt has reasonable capacity to accommodate additional development but this position continues to be kept under review

## Housing Growth

Housing land in Magherafelt is not defined as either phase 1 or phase 2 and the larger parcels are mainly located at the edge of the settlement although there are some smaller zonings located in and around the town centre as well. There is approximately 93% of the zoned housing land still available (according to 2015 Housing Monitor reports). Figures in the Housing Allocation table at Appendix 2 (based on Option 1 – Equitable Split) indicate that Magherafelt will require 745 new dwellings. Calculations also show that there is potential to develop 1,859 houses from unimplemented approvals. This shows that there is no need for additional housing land in Magherafelt. Mid Ulster Council wish to retain a phased approach to our housing land (See Growth Strategy and Spatial Framework section of the paper) and to ensure consistency between our towns the Council wish to put forward 4 growth direction Options for future housing growth land (Phase 2) as identified on the Magherafelt map to allow for long term expansion as it can be held in reserve or released in full or part if our housing needs change. Other options may also exist and your suggestions on this is welcomed.

## Economic Development Growth

There are four sites of existing industry and these are located at Henrys Yard, Station Road, Ballyronan Road (Acheson and Glover Yard) as well as at Aughrim Road. The Spatial Framework section of this paper shows that there is still 45 hectares of industrial land available in Magherafelt (according to the DOE planning survey 2014). Taken along with the available industrial land in Dungannon and Cookstown, this will be enough to provide adequate job creation for the district over the incoming plan period. The current location and need for further economic land zonings is something that the Council wish to investigate further and 2 Growth Direction Options are identified for Magherafelt on the Magherafelt settlement map. Other options may also exist and your suggestions on this is welcomed.

# Magherafelt

## Legend

### Existing Zonings as per Magherafelt Area Plan 2016

- Settlement Limit
- Development Opportunity Site
- Existing Industry
- Existing Recreation and Open Space
- Housing
- Industry
- Town Centre
- Area of Archaeological Potential
- Area of Townscape Character
- Local Landscape Policy Area
- Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance

### Preferred options Paper Proposal

- Economic Development Growth Options
- Housing Development Future Growth Options

### For Information Only

- Archaeological Site & Monument (Scheduled)
- Archaeological Site & Monument (State Care)
- Archaeological Site & Monument (Unscheduled)
- 1000 Flood Extent (Surface flooding)
- Q100 Flood Extent
- Q100 Flood Strategic
- Listed Building
- Industrial Heritage

ND: Map not to scale

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# Settlements - Towns

## Coalisland

Coalisland is the fourth largest town in the District and was established in the early 16th Century as a coal mining center because of the small coalfield nearby. The readily accessible coalfields meant that as well as mining, it became a thriving industrial town with particular reliance on the linen, iron and cotton industries. The current population of Coalisland is 5,700 (2011 census) which represents a growth of 16% since the previous census figures in 2001.

The industrial / mining legacy is still evident today by the fact that historic mine workings have resulted in a lot of land to the west of the Town Centre being unsuitable for building as well as the fact that a Mineral Reserve Policy Area (MRPA) has placed a constraint on growth to the west and this forces the settlement limit to be divided into two distinct portions. The viability of this MRPA is under review and should the resources in the mine prove to be exhausted it could potentially be developed as an area of recreation and / or economic development. More detail on this MPRA is available on the Minerals section of this paper.

Open Space designations are found at the main parks in Coalisland, namely at Brackaville and Gortgonis. Open space zonings are also placed on Coalisland GAA pitch and the community golf course near Derryvale as well as at smaller sites throughout the town. There are important landscape areas designated by way of Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) designations along Torrent River Basin running from Coalisland Canal all the way to Derryvale as well as at the watercourse and valley to the south of Crockawillian at the northern edge of the limits.

Coalisland has a defined town centre but unlike the other 5 main towns, it does not currently have a Primary Retail Core (PRC) although one is now proposed within the Town Centres and Retail section of this Paper (More detail on this can be found in the Town Centres and Retailing section of this Paper and the related Map at Appendix 3). There is a large Area of Townscape Character (ATC) designated within the town centre and this is to protect the organic, unplanned street pattern of the town centre as well as some important buildings such as the First Trust Bank and the old Corn Mill.

In terms of Waste Water Treatment Works, NI Water have advised that Coalisland has reasonable capacity to accommodate additional development but this position is continues to be kept under review.

## Housing Growth

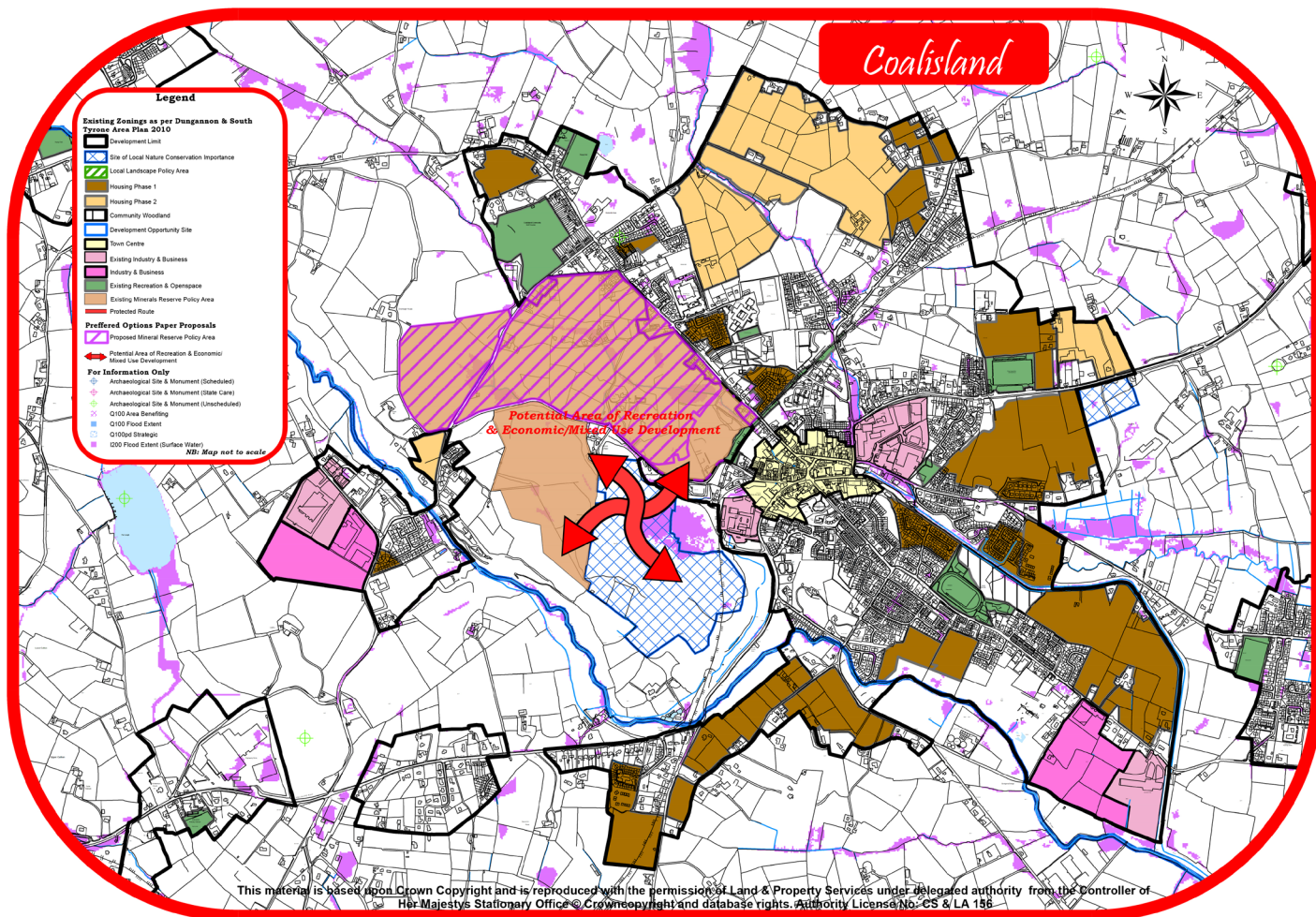
Housing land in Coalisland is zoned as both phase 1 and phase 2 land. The majority of phase 1 land is to the south and east of the settlement while the phase 2 land is located to the north with small pockets at the eastern and western edges of the settlement. There is still approximately 63 hectares of Phase 1 land available within the settlement limit (according to 2013 Housing Monitor reports). Figures in the housing allocation table (Appendix 2 – based on Option 1 – Equitable Split) indicate that Coalisland has an estimated housing need of approximately 470 new dwellings for the incoming Plan period and there are almost 1227 dwellings already committed by way of unimplemented planning approvals. It is therefore considered that there is no need for additional housing land in Coalisland at present. Mid Ulster Council however wish to retain our current Phase 2 land to allow for long term expansion as it can be held in reserve or released in full or part if our housing needs change.

## Economic Development Growth

The main sites of existing industry are located at Derryvale Industrial Estate, Coalisland Enterprise Centre on the Dungannon Road, the Washing Bay Road and the Gortgonis Road. In terms of proposed industrial land, there is land zoned for industry at Derryvale and Gortgonis Road. There is still approximately 13 hectares of available industrial land in Coalisland (according to the DOE planning survey 2014) and when this is taken in conjunction with the available hectares in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt and Maghera, then there is enough available industrial land to meet the needs of the District.

The Council also wish to obtain your views on the Option of a Special Policy Area for Recreation and Economic/Mixed Use Development (as shown on the Coalisland map). The land lies outwith the settlement limit of the town and is the subject of a proposal for development of this nature.





## Settlements - Towns

### Maghera

Maghera is the fifth largest town in the District and one of the oldest with its roots in the early Christian period. Historically it was a post and market town but is now a service centre for the local area with a busy retail and hospitality sector. The population of the town is 4,217 (2011 census), a 13.6% increase since the 2001 census.

There are two zoned areas of open space, with the main one being the playing fields to the north of O'Hara Drive as well as the old site of the Maghera High School, the latter of which is now overgrown and quite inaccessible to the public

An area of landscape character by way of a Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) designation is identified and protected immediately south of the settlement and also in the southern part of the settlement at the old High School site, in order to protect existing trees, green slopes, church buildings and rectory buildings. There is also an area of landscape protection within the town centre at St Lurachs Church. Along the Glen Road, an Area of Townscape Character (ATC) is zoned to protect the low density, large 2 story houses and the development pattern of the area i.e. large houses in large plots with mature vegetation being an important consideration.

Maghera has a defined town centre wherein there is a Primary Retail Core (PRC) containing most of Main Street as well as the row of shops which are set back from the Coleraine Road immediately to the north of Main Street. There are three opportunity sites designated and none of these are developed as yet. (More detail on this can be found in the Town Centres and Retailing section of this Paper and the related Map at Appendix 3). Given the ancient history of the town dating back to the 6th century, a large portion of the western half of the Town Centre is designated as an Area of Archaeological Potential.

In terms of Waste Water Treatment Works, NI Water have advised that Maghera has limited capacity to accommodate additional development but this position is currently under review.

### Housing Growth

Housing land in Maghera is not defined as either phase 1 or phase 2. The largest parcels of housing land are to the north east of the settlement with rest of the land being located throughout the settlement in smaller parcels. There is approximately 57% of zoned housing land remaining within the settlement limit (according to 2015 Housing Monitor reports). Figures in the Housing Allocation table at Appendix 2 (based on Option 1 – Equitable Split) show that Maghera has an estimated housing need of approximately 345 new dwellings for the incoming Plan period and there are approximately 581 units already committed by way of previous approvals. It is therefore considered that there is no need for additional housing in Maghera at present. Similar to the situation in Magherafelt, to ensure consistency between our towns the Council wish to explore options for future housing growth land to allow for long term expansion as it can be held in reserve or released in full or part if our housing needs change. Council therefore welcome your suggestions on where such future housing land could be located at Maghera.

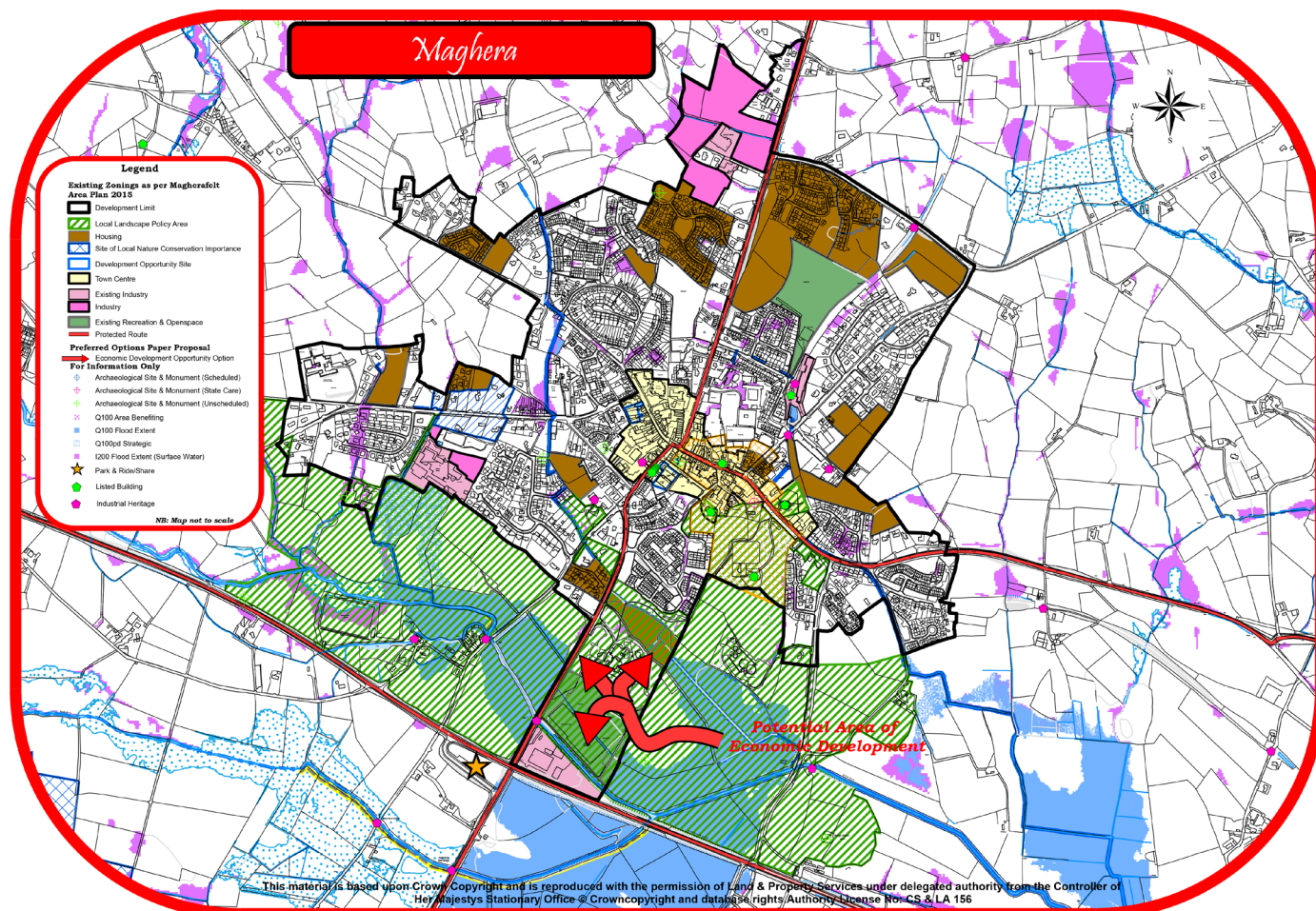
### Economic Development Growth

There are four sites of existing industry within the settlement limit; at Glenshane Industrial Park, also at Glen Road, Maghera Business Park on Station Road and at Coleraine Road on the northern edge of the town. There are areas of zoned proposed industrial land at Coleraine Road Site.

There is approximately 10 hectares of industrial land still available within the settlement limit (according to the DOE planning survey 2014). When this is considered in conjunction with the available hectares in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt and Coalisland, then there is enough available industrial land to meet the needs of the District.

In addition to this land, there is an Option of zoning economic development land at the former site of the Maghera High School (as identified on the following Maghera map). Part of this land is currently zoned as Open Space but is not in active use given that the site had been vacated by the School. The Council therefore wish to obtain your views on this zoning Option.





## Towns - Key Questions

- Q. What should be the directions for Economic Growth in the towns? Do you have land you wish to propose for this?
- Q. Should Housing Land in the towns be phased? Do any of the 5 towns require growth in a particular area beyond those suggested Housing? Should Magherafelt and Maghera benefit from the zoning of Phase 2 land in keeping with the other 3 towns in the District?
- Q. In addition to the Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPA's) identified on the maps of the 5 towns, are there any other areas that should be protected due to their landscape value?
- Q. Should existing Areas of Townscape Character (ATC's) be retained and should new areas be added?
- Q. Are there any areas where development should be discouraged? If so please explain why.

## Settlements - Villages

The current settlement hierarchy as laid out in the three existing Area Plans includes 60 villages in Mid Ulster. The former Dungannon District has the most with 31, while Cookstown has 25 and Magherafelt has 4.

Of the three existing plans, only Magherafelt has designated small settlements as well as villages. It is the intention of this Local Development Plan to introduce a settlement hierarchy which includes both villages and small settlements as set out in the Proposed Settlement Hierarchy in the Growth Strategy and Spatial Framework section of this Paper.

There are various designations in certain villages which are designed to protect the built heritage or the historical / cultural importance of the villages and many villages also contain Local Landscape Policy Areas.

### Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas are designated to offer a high level of protection to the appearance and character of certain areas within settlements which it is felt are areas of architectural or historic interest which have a particular character considered worthy of conservation. Anyone wishing to demolish a building must first apply for "conservation area consent" and it is a criminal offence to carry out such work without consent. There are 5 Conservation Areas in Mid Ulster. One is located in Dungannon town with the other 4 being located in the following villages;

- Caledon
- Draperstown
- Moneymore
- Moy

### Areas of Townscape Character (ATC)

Areas of Townscape (or village) Character are designated to protect features which give a town or village a unique sense of character but yet are not designated Conservation Areas. In the 60 villages in Mid Ulster, there are currently 20 designated ATC's and these are located at;

- Aughnacloy
- Augher
- Ballygawley
- Ballinderry
- Ballyronan
- Benburb
- Castlecaulfield
- Churchtown
- Clogher
- Coagh
- Desertcreat
- Donaghmore
- Drapersfield
- Fivemiletown
- Moy
- Pomeroy
- Stewartstown
- The Loup
- The Rock
- Tullyhogue

### Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP)

Areas of Archaeological Potential exist to advise developers of the likelihood that there may be important links to our past located beneath the ground which they may wish to develop. Therefore, before development is carried out, an Archaeological assessment may need to be carried out to establish exactly what (if anything) lies under the surface. AAP's are designated in 12 villages in the district;

- Augher
- Ballygawley
- Bellaghy
- Caledon
- Carnteel
- Castlecaulfield
- Castledawson
- Carnteel
- Clogher
- Donaghmore
- Moneymore
- Tobermore

### Listed Buildings

There are 35 villages in the District which contain Listed Buildings;

- Ardtrea
- Augher
- Aughnacloy
- Ballygawley
- Ballylifford
- Ballyronan
- Bellaghy
- Benburb
- Caledon
- Castlecaulfield
- Castledawson
- Churchtown
- Coagh
- Clogher
- Desertcreat
- Donaghmore
- Drapersfield
- Draperstown
- Dunamore
- Dyan
- Edendork
- Fivemiletown
- Grange
- Killyman
- Moneymore
- Moy
- Newmills
- Pomeroy
- Sandholes
- Stewartstown
- The Loup
- The Rock
- Tobermore
- Tullyhogue
- Tullyallen

## Housing

There are 4 villages which have land zoned for Housing (Land Use) Policy Areas, these are Castledawson, Bellaghy, Draperstown and Tobermore

Of the existing 60 villages, based on the Equitable Split Option detailed in the Growth Strategy section of this Paper it is calculated that there are 11 villages which will have a need for additional houses to be provided (See Housing Allocation

Table at Appendix 2). Of these 11 it is envisaged that there are 3 which may experience difficulty in accommodating the required housing units within the existing settlement limits. In addition, NI Water advise that 7 of those 11 villages may have difficulty in providing the required waste water treatment works (WWTW) capacity to accommodate new development, i.e. there are either no WWTW facilities or those which do exist are at or reaching capacity (shown in following table).

Settlement with housing need	Room for expansion within the existing settlements limits	WWTW capacity to accommodate development?
Againduff / Cabragh	● YES	● NO
Ballynakilly	● YES	● YES
Brockagh	● YES	● YES
Carnteel	● YES	● NO
Desertcreat	● YES	● NO
Dernagh / Clonoe	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● YES
Donaghey	● YES	● NO
Dunman	● YES	● YES
Gortacladdy	● YES	● NO
Granville	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● NO
Killeen	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● NO



## Settlements – Small Settlements

The current settlement hierarchy as laid out in the three existing Area Plans shows that there are 21 small settlements in Mid Ulster with all of them being located in the former Magherafelt District.

There are various designations to be found across the range of small settlements. Some of these designations are in place to protect the built heritage or the historical / cultural importance of the villages while a smaller amount are in place to protect natural heritage, scientific interest or landscape quality.

### Areas of Townscape Character (ATC)

There is one ATC in the 21 small settlements. It is designated around Boyne Row in Upperlands in recognition of the character and historic importance of the area.

### Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP)

AAP's are designated in the following small settlements:

- Culnady
- Curran
- Desertmartin
- Gulladuff.

### Listed Buildings

There are listed buildings in the following small settlements:

- Glen
- Gracefield
- Gulladuff
- Knockloughrim
- Moneyneaney
- Swatragh, Tamlaght O' Crilly
- Upperlands
- The Woods

### Housing

None of the existing small settlements have land zoned for Housing Land. Of the existing 21 small settlements, based on the Equitable Split Option detailed in the Growth Strategy section of this Paper, it is calculated that there are 9 which will have a need for additional houses to be provided. Of these 9 it is envisaged that there are 4 which may have difficulty in accommodating the required housing need within the existing settlement limits. In addition there are 5 which have been identified by NI Water as potentially having difficulty in providing the required waste water treatment works (WWTW) capacity to accommodate new development, i.e. there are either no WWTW facilities or those which do exist are at or reaching capacity (shown in following table).

The situation regarding housing need in the 9 small settlements is set out in the table below:

Settlement with housing need	Room for expansion within the existing settlement limits?	WWTW capacity to accommodate development?
Ballymaguigan	● YES	● YES
Clady	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● NO
Culnady	● YES	● NO
Creagh	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● YES
Glen	● YES	● YES
Inishrush	● YES	● NO
Longfield	● YES	● YES
Swatragh	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● NO
Tamlaght	● POTENTIALLY MORE LAND REQUIRED	● NO

### Villages and Small Settlements - Key Questions/Issues

\*\*In the case of villages and small settlements further detailed analysis is required before it can be confirmed whether their settlement limits require expansion to accommodate a housing need.

- Q. Where a housing need has been identified for a village or small settlement, resulting in a possible need to expand the settlement limits, where do you think that expansion could be accommodated?
- Q. Do any of the villages or small settlements require growth in a particular area beyond those identified in the tables for housing need?
- Q. In addition to the areas currently identified in the villages and small settlements as Conservation Areas, Areas of Townscape Character or as Areas of Archaeological Potential, Local Landscape Policy Areas, are there any additional areas which you feel should be afforded this level of protection but currently are not?
- Q. Are there any villages or small settlements which in your opinion require bespoke planning policies to address issues unique to them e.g. tourism, built heritage, economic development matters?

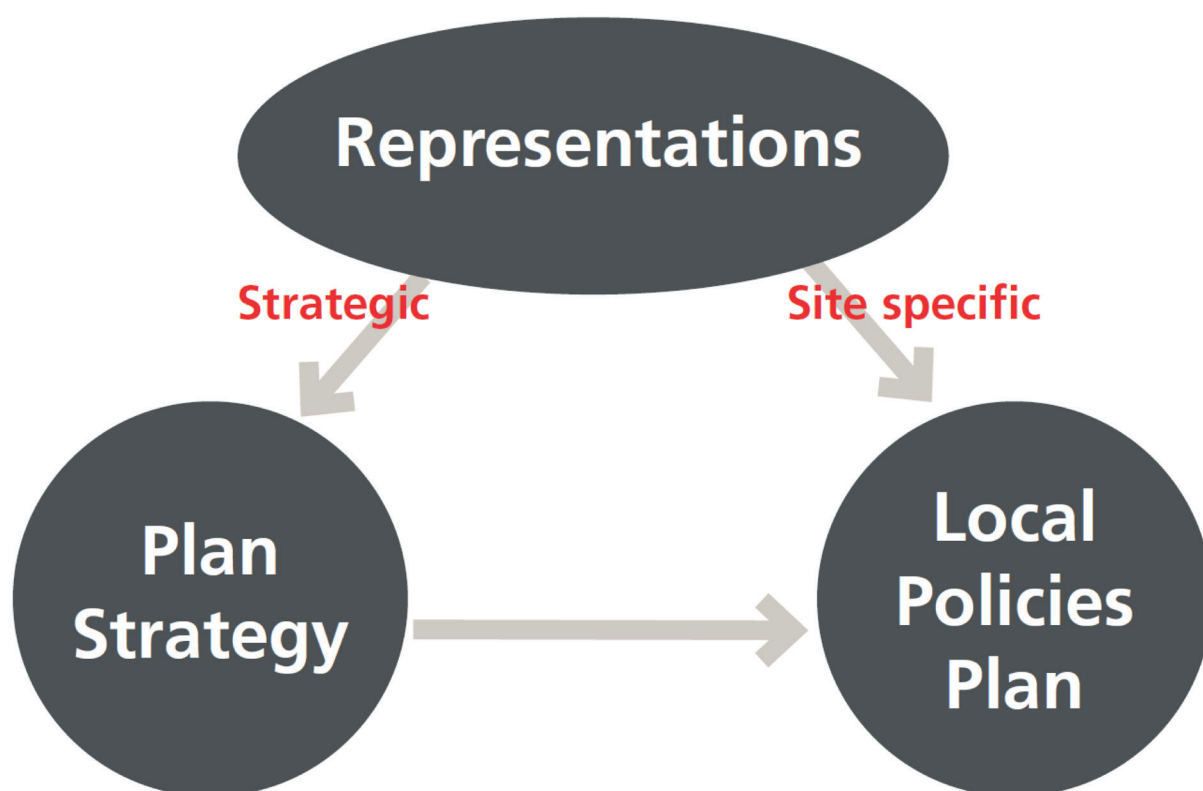
## NEXT STEPS

### HOW WILL THE COUNCIL DEAL WITH YOUR COMMENTS?

At the end of the 12 week consultation period the POP representations received will be divided into those relating to Plan Strategy matters and those relating to Local Policy Plan considerations and will then be presented to elected members in a Public Consultation Report.

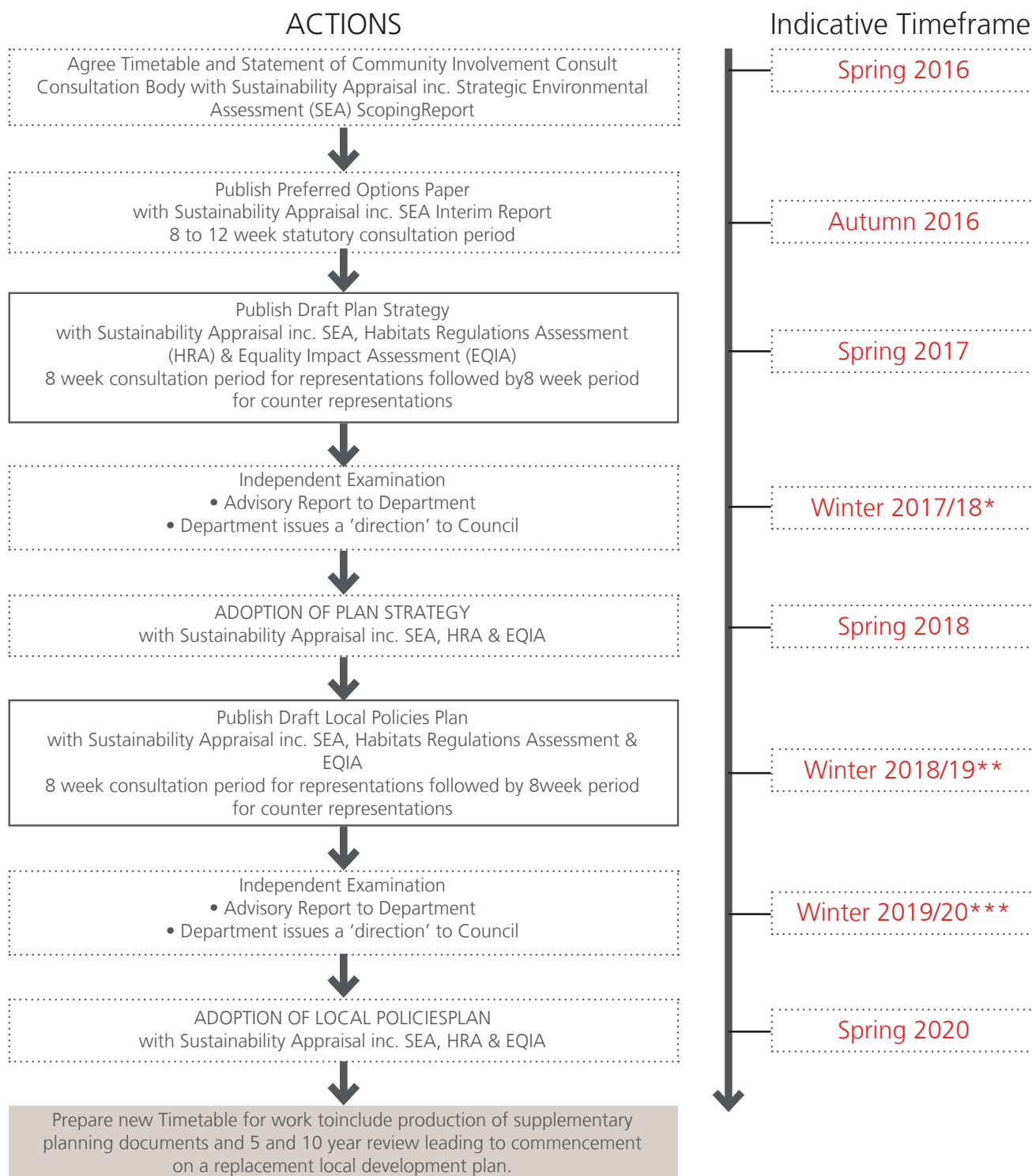
Those representations relating to Plan Strategy matters will then be used to inform its' preparation, which is the next stage of the process. The Plan Strategy will be published in line with our Local Development Plan Timetable.

Those representations which are essentially about inclusion of sites into settlement limits in the main will be held over and considered in the preparation of the Local Policy Plan. A Public Consultation Report will be published to accompany both the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan.



# APPENDIX 1

## Mid Ulster Council Local Development Plan Timetable



\*December 2017/January 2018/February 2018

\*\*December 2018/January 2019/February 2019

\*\*\*December 2019/January 2020/February 2020

## APPENDIX 2

Housing Allocation For Towns / Villages / Small Settlements and Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”

Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”

MAIN TOWNS	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS	% SHARE OF ALL HOUSEHOLDS (48,072)	% SHARE OF HGI (10,950)	NO. OF UNITS REQUIRED 2015 -2030	COMMITTED UNITS STILL TO BE DEVELOPED AND RESIDUAL ZONING (at 2015)	NEED FOR ADDITIONAL HOUSING
DUNGANNON	5,386	11.2%	11.2%	1,226	2,766	NO
COOKSTOWN	4,519	9.4%	9.4%	1,029	1,445	NO
MAGHERAFELT	3,245	6.8%	6.8%	745	1,859	NO
TOTALS	13,150	27.4%	27.4%	3,000	6,070	NO
AGHINDUFF / CABRAGH	129	0.27%	0.27%	30	15	YES – 15 ADDITIONAL UNITS
ANNAGHMORE	279	0.58%	0.58%	64	201	NO
ARDBOE	215	0.45%	0.45%	49	231	NO
ARDTREA	6	0.00%	0.00%	0	6	NO
AUGHER	132	0.27%	0.27%	30	100	NO
AUGHNACLOY	402	0.84%	0.84%	92	277	NO
BALLINDERRY	113	0.24%	0.24%	26	69	NO
BALLYGAWLEY	271	0.56%	0.56%	61	153	NO
BALLYLIFFORD	41	0.09%	0.09%	10	32	NO
BALLYNAKILLY	91	0.19%	0.19%	21	18	YES – 3 ADDITIONAL UNITS

## APPENDIX 2

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BALLYNEASE	20	0.04%	0.04%	4	13	NO
BALLYMAGUIGAN	69	0.14%	0.14%	15	10	YES – 5 ADDITIONAL UNITS
BALLYRONAN	204	0.42%	0.42%	46	175	NO
BELLAGHY	383	0.80%	0.80%	88	254	NO
BENBURB	91	0.19%	0.19%	21	54	NO
BROCKAGH / MOUNTJOY	144	0.30%	0.30%	33	19	YES – 14 ADDITIONAL UNITS
CALEDON	192	0.40%	0.40%	44	90	NO
CAPPAGH	25	0.05%	0.05%	5	22	NO
CARLAND	16	0.03%	0.03%	3	11	NO
CARNTIEL	10	0.02%	0.02%	2	0	YES – 2 ADDITIONAL UNITS
CASTLECAULFIED	258	0.53%	0.53%	58	256	NO
CASTLEDAWSON	853	1.77%	1.77%	194	265	NO
CHURCHTOWN	42	0.08%	0.08%	9	65	NO
CLADY	195	0.40%	0.40%	44	17	YES – ADDITIONAL 27 UNITS
CLOGHER	272	0.57%	0.57%	62	144	NO
COAGH	262	0.55%	0.55%	60	288	NO
COALISLAND	2,055	4.27%	4.27%	468	1,227	NO
CREAGH	95	0.20%	0.20%	22	0	YES – ADDITIONAL 22 UNITS



## APPENDIX 2

Housing Allocation For Towns / Villages / Small Settlements and Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”  
 Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”

CULNADY	60	0.12%	0.12%	13	7	YES – 6 ADDITIONAL UNITS
CURRAN	45	0.09%	0.09%	10	24	NO
DESERTCREAT	10	0.02%	0.02%	2	0	YES – 2 ADDITIONAL UNITS
DESERTMARTIN	102	0.21%	0.21%	23	24	NO
DERNAGH / CLONOE	109	0.23%	0.23%	25	4	YES - 21 ADDITIONAL
DONAGHEY	11	0.02%	0.02%	2	0	YES – 2 ADDITIONAL
DONAGHMORE	403	0.84%	0.84%	92	212	NO
DRAPERSFIELD	27	0.06	0.06	7	12	NO
DRAPERSTOWN	636	1.32%	1.32%	145	432	NO
DRUMMULLAN	63	0.13%	0.13%	14	64	YNO
DUNMAN	20	0.04%	0.04%	4	0	YES – 4 ADDITIONAL
DUNNAMORE	35	0.07%	0.07%	8	19	NO
DYAN	16	0.03%	0.03%	3	0	NO
EDENDORK	85	0.18%	0.18%	20	21	NO
EGLIS`	143	0.30%	0.30%	33	91	NO
FIVEMILETOWN	552	1.15%	1.15%	126	747	NO
GALBALLY	71	0.15%	0.15%	16	38	NO
GLEN	47	0.09%	0.09%	10	0	YES –10 ADDITIONAL

## APPENDIX 2

Housing Allocation For Towns / Villages / Small Settlements and Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”

Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”

GLENONE	153	0.32%	0.32%	35	99	NO
GORTACLADDY	21	0.04%	0.04%	4	0	YES – 4 ADDITIONAL UNITS
GRACEFIELD	19	0.04%	0.04%	4	4	NO
GRANGE	8	0.02%	0.02%	2	6	NO
GULLADUFF	194	0.40%	0.40%	44	72	NO
GRANVILLE	115	0.24%	0.24%	26	20	YES – 6 ADDITIONAL UNITS
INNISHRUSH	42	0.09%	0.09%	10	5	YES – ADDITIONAL 5 UNITS
KILLEEN	144	0.30%	0.30%	33	1	YES – ADDITIONAL 32 HOUSES
KILLEENAN	10	0.02%	0.02%	2	6	NO
KILROSS	20	0.04%	0.04%	4	14	NO
KILLYMAN	257	0.53%	0.53%	58	175	NO
KNOCKLOUGHRIM	70	0.15%	0.15%	16	46	NO
LONGFIELD	31	0.06%	0.06%	7	1	YES – ADDITIONAL 6 HOUSES
MAGHERA	1,514	3.15%	3.15%	345	581	NO
MONEYNEANEY	63	0.13%	0.13%	14	82	NO
MONEYMORE	730	1.52%	1.52%	166	362	NO
MOORTOWN	172	0.36%	0.36%	39	95	NO

## APPENDIX 2

Housing Allocation For Towns / Villages / Small Settlements and Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share” Need for Additional Housing Land – Based on the Option of all Settlements Receiving a Housing Allocation Derived From the Existing Share of Houses i.e. their “Fair Share”

MOY	591	1.2%	1.2%	131	251	NO
NEWMILLS	223	0.46%	0.46%	50	60	NO
ORRITOR	54	0.11%	0.11%	12	105	NO
POMEROY	306	0.63%	0.63%	69	171	NO
SANDHOLES	50	0.10%	0.10%	11	28	NO
STEWARTSTOWN	271	0.56%	0.56%	61	80	NO
STRAW	127	0.26%	0.26%	28	97	NO
SWATRAGH	145	0.30%	0.30%	33	0	YES – 33 ADDITIONAL UNITS
TAMNAMORE	55	0.22%	0.22%	24	51	NO
TAMLAGHT O’ CRILLY	66	0.14%	0.14%	15	0	YES – 15 ADDITIONAL UNITS
TOBERMORE	313	0.65%	0.65%	71	232	NO
THE BUSH	181	0.38%	0.38%	41	155	NO
THE LOUP	68	0.14%	0.14%	15	75	NO
THE ROCK	43	0.09%	0.09%	10	23	NO
THE WOODS	12	0.02%	0.02%	2	15	NO
TULLYALLEN	11	0.02%	0.02%	2	3	NO
TULLYHOGUE	81	0.17%	0.17%	19	34	NO
UPPERLANDS	221	0.46%	0.46%	50	52	NO

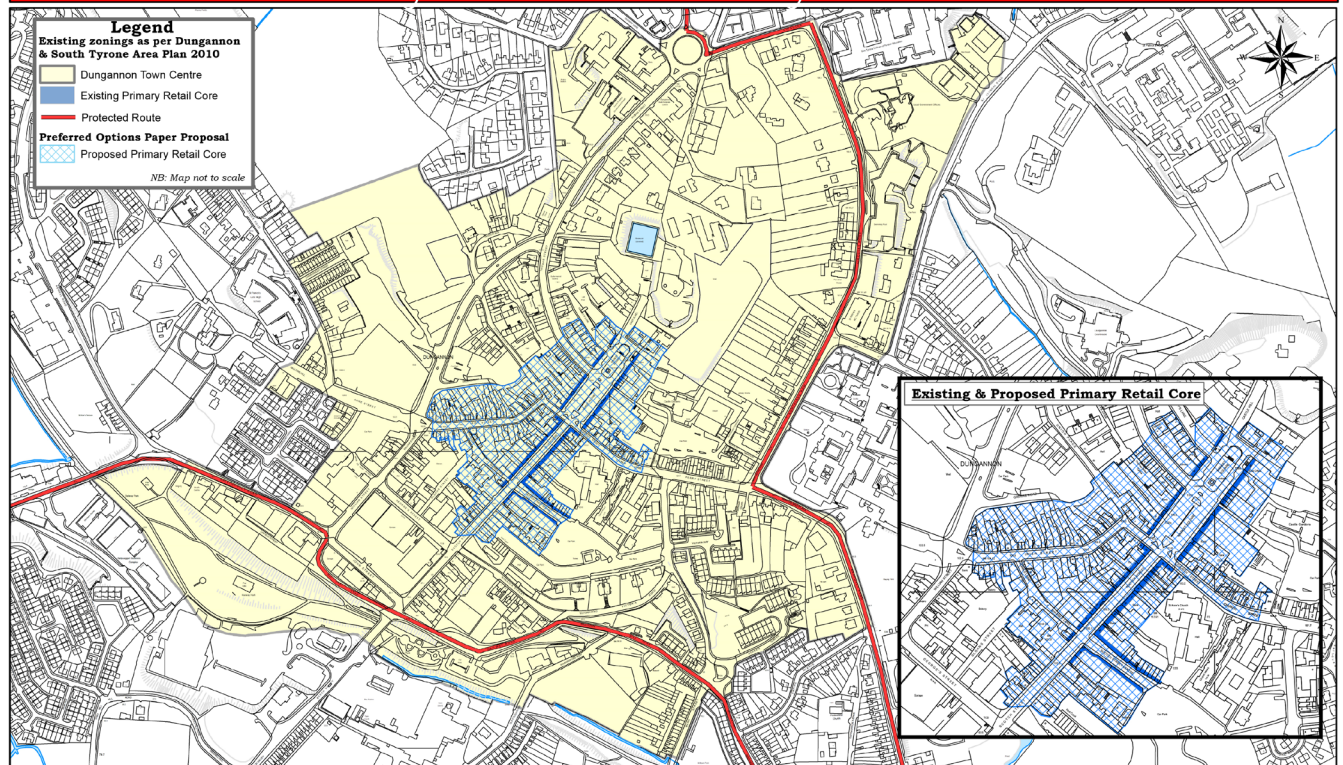
# HOUSING ALLOCATION FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 1) **HGI 2015-2030 – 10,950**  
(Current HGI is 730 per year –  $730 \times 15 = 10,950$ )
- 2) **Current Rural Housing** – 19,238 households  
$$\frac{19,238}{48,072} = 0.400 \text{ (x100)} = 40\%$$

(all households in MUDC)
- 3) **40% of the 2015-2030 HGI is;**  
$$\frac{10,950}{100} = 109.5 \text{ (x40)} = 4,380$$
- 4) **4,380 houses** needed in the countryside in the plan period until 2030

# APPENDIX 3

## Dungannon Town Centre & Primary Retail Core

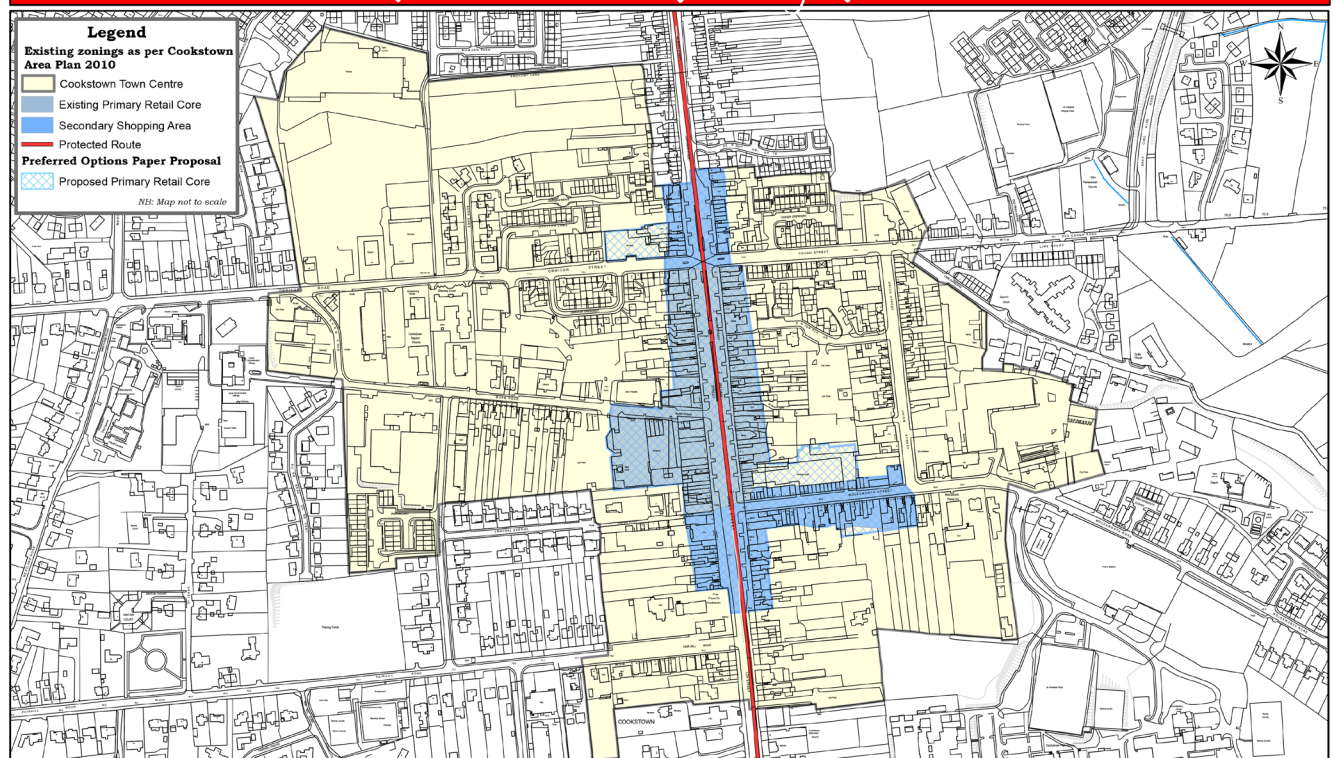


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## Cookstown Town Centre & Primary Retail Core



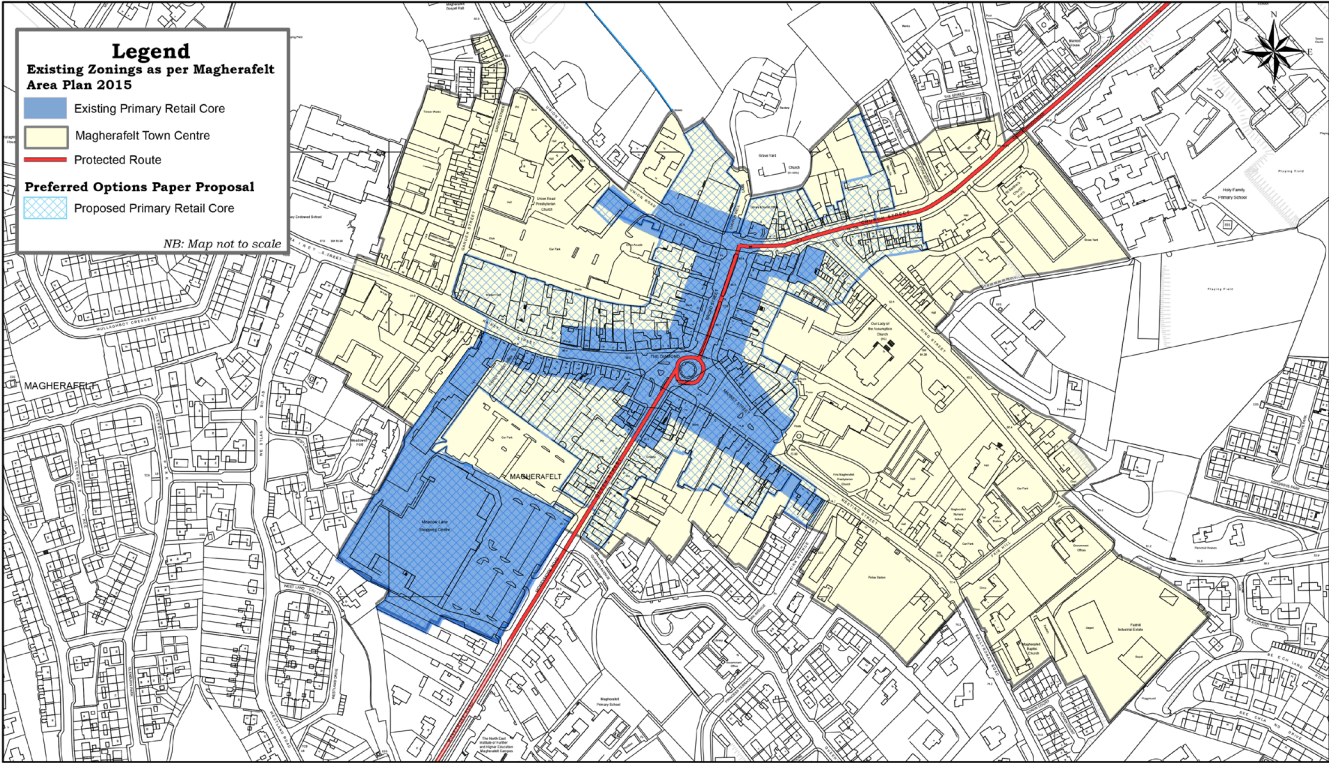
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Magherafelt Town Centre & Primary Retail Core

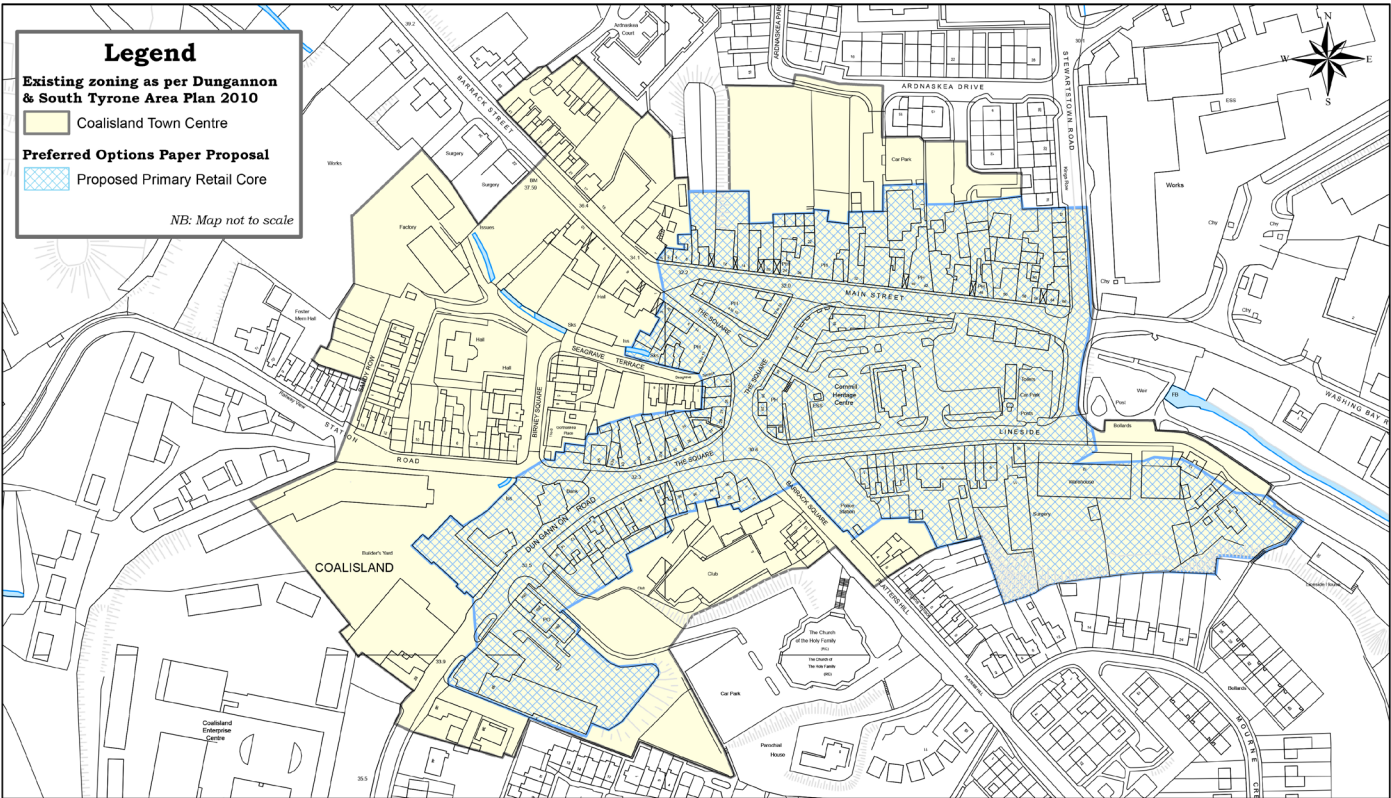


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Coalisland Town Centre & Primary Retail Core

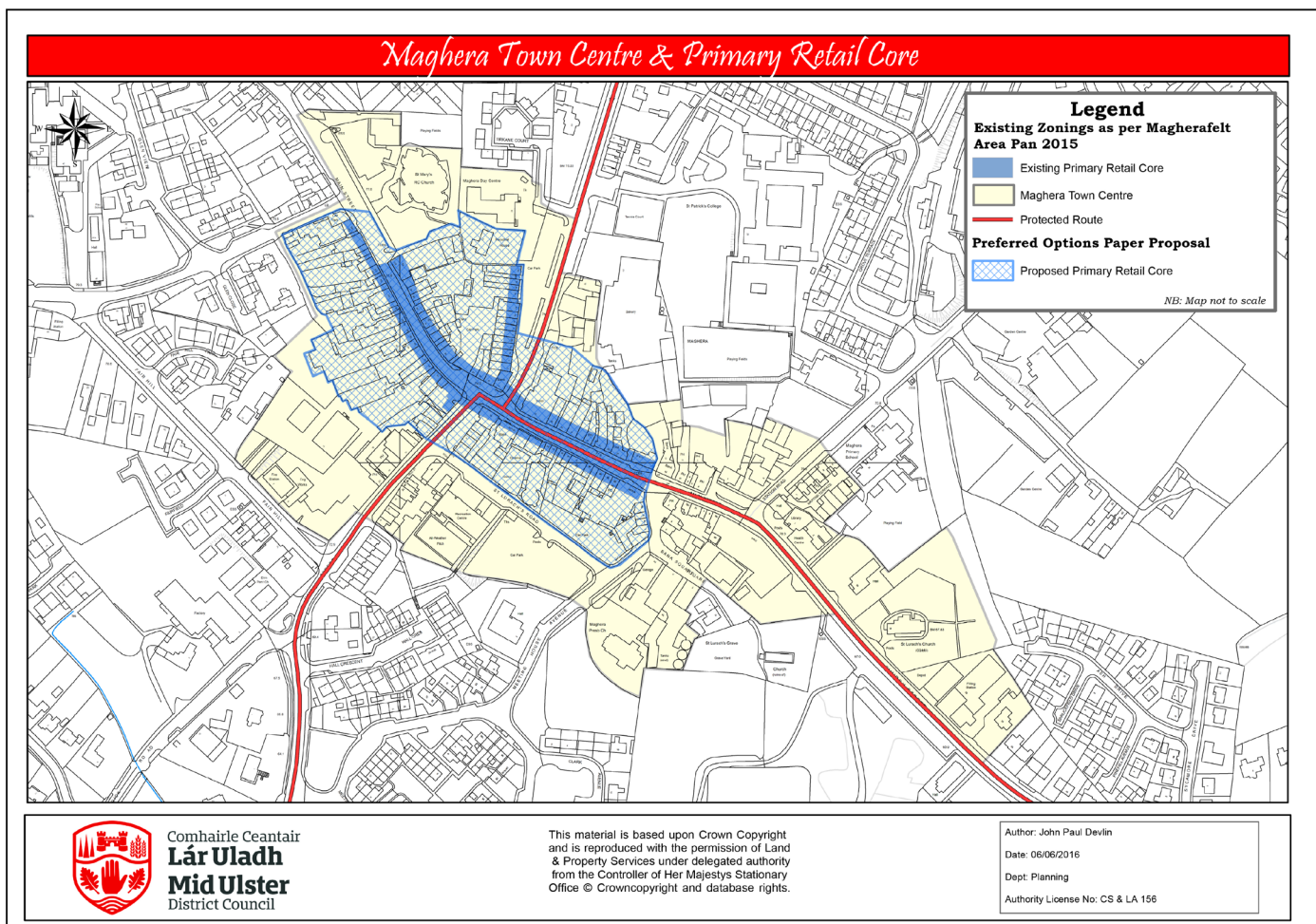


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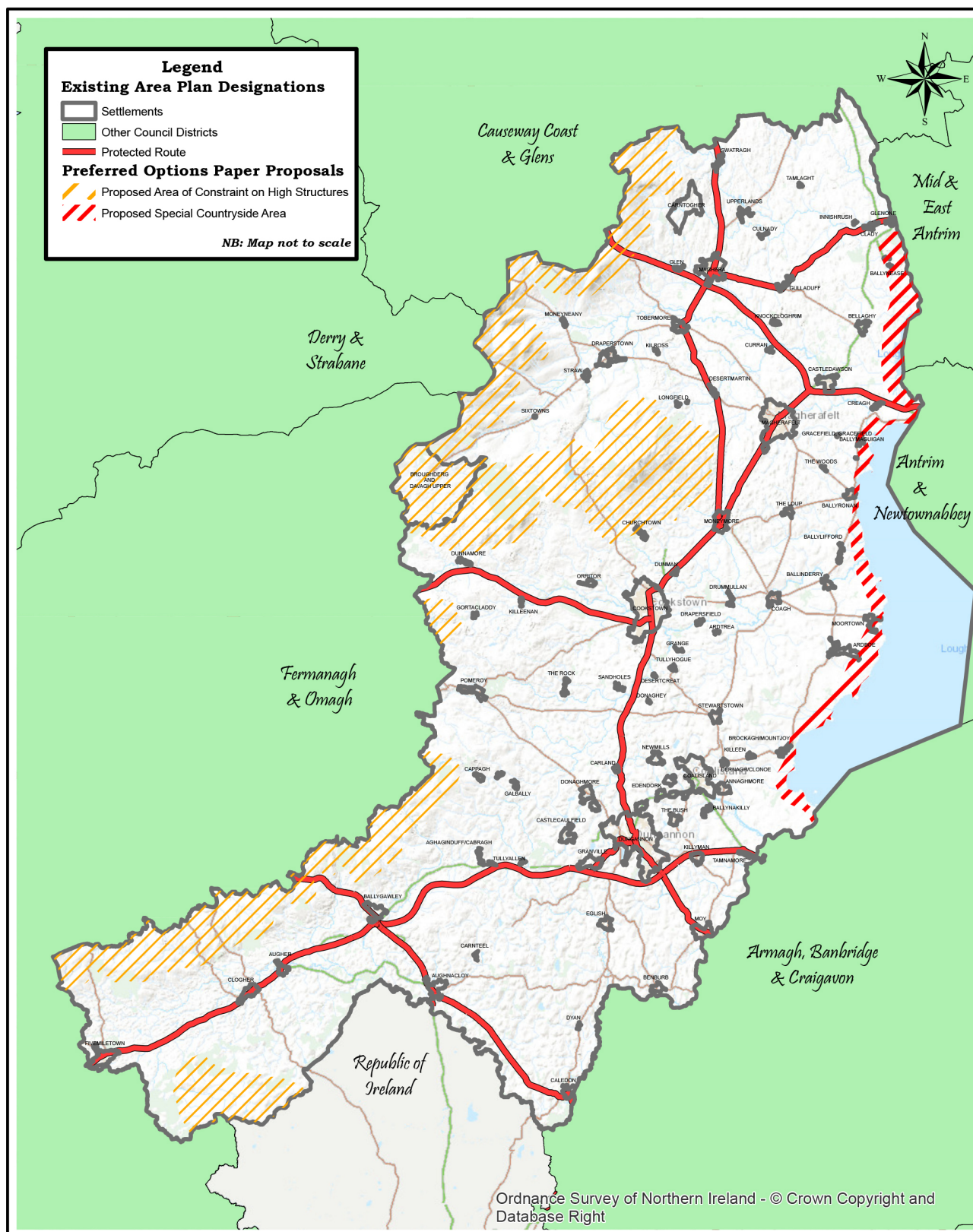
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### Proposed Areas of Constraint on Wind Turbines & High Structures & SCA



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**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

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# GLOSSARY

## Term / Abbreviation Definition

AAP	Areas of Archaeological Potential comprise those areas within historic settlements which may require mitigating measures (which may include excavation) in the context of redevelopment.
'Active' Housing Site	A housing site described as 'active' in that work has already commenced or a planning permission has been obtained or applied for on part or all of the land.
AOHSV	Areas of High Scenic Value are areas recognised for the significance of the environmental assets, primarily the landscape quality.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is an area of countryside which has been designated for conservation due to its significant landscape value.
Areas of Constraint on High Structures	Areas of Constraint on High Structure – These are areas which are designed to protect our most vulnerable and sensitive landscapes from the adverse visual impact of development involving high structures such as wind turbines and telecommunications development.
Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development	Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development protect the most valuable and vulnerable features of the natural environment and man-made heritage including areas of high scenic value from the adverse effects caused by the development of mineral resources.
ASAI	Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest – Areas designated in order to protect not just the individual sites and monuments but the overall landscape settings within which they are located.
ASSI's	Areas of Special Scientific Interest Designated by Natural Environment Division, these protected areas that represent the best of our wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of our most valuable natural places.
ATC	Areas of Townscape Character exhibit distinct character and intrinsic qualities, often based on the historic built form or layout in many of our cities, towns and villages.
Brownfield Sites	This is sometimes referred to as Previously Developed Land being land that is, or was occupied by a permanent structure within a defined settlement limit. The term may encompass vacant or derelict lands, infill sites, land occupied by redundant or underused buildings, a piece of industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underused and often environmentally contaminated.
Countryside Policy Area	Countryside Policy Areas are designated in the current Area Plans where there are areas of the countryside which are under significant development pressure and where further development would impact upon the landscape character of the area.
DRC's	Dispersed Rural Communities are identified in the Magherafelt and Cookstown Area Plans. They are recognised under provision in PPS 21 and are defined as rural areas that display symptoms of economic and social disadvantage that may contain dispersed communities with a strong sense of identity.
EQIA	An Equality Impact Assessment examines the likely effects of policies and proposals on the promotion of equality of opportunity.
HGIs	The RDS identifies regional housing needs as Housing Growth Indicators across Northern Ireland. These are used as a guide for estimating future housing need in each of the District Councils.
Housing Needs Assessment	Housing Needs Assessment is an assessment by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive of local housing needs primarily in relation to general needs social housing, supported housing, travellers and affordable housing.
HRA	Under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, plan-making authorities are required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (Habitats Regulations Assessment) for any development plan (or development proposal) which either individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to significantly affect a European Site such as a SPA or SAC.
IE	Independent Examination - The Department will appoint the Planning Appeals Commission or other independent examiners to hold an IE. The IE will examine the Draft Plan Strategy against soundness tests which will relate to how the Plan Strategy has been produced, and how it has taken account of central government plans, policy and guidance, and also its coherence, consistency and effectiveness.



Key Transport Corridor	Part of the Regional Strategic Transport Network as defined in the RDS. There are 5 Key Transport Corridors throughout Northern Ireland.
LDP	The Local Development Plan provides a broad land use policy framework for the physical development of the District. When adopted, the Mid Ulster Local Development Plan 2030 will become the statutory land use planning document for the area.
LLPAs	Local Landscape Policy Areas consist of those features and areas within and adjoining settlements considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance and therefore worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development.
Local Nature Reserves	Local Nature Reserves are areas of land, designated by a district council under Article 22 of the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, to conserve its nature conservation, earth science and recreational value, with the primary land use being for conservation purposes.
LPP	The Local Policies Plan will be prepared once the Plan Strategy is agreed. It will focus on each town and villages by defining settlement limits, land use zonings, environmental designations, and introducing bespoke policies as appropriate to individual places.
MRPA	Mineral Reserve Policy Areas identify important mineral resources and protect them from surface development which may sterilise their future exploitation.
Multi-Disciplinary Steering Group.	Comprised of representatives of the key stakeholders involved in the development plan process.
NIMDM	The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 is the official measure of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland.
NINIS 2014	Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service aim to make small area information held within Central Government and Non-Departmental Public Bodies available to as wide an audience as possible. NINIS is one function of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), an Agency of the Department of Finance and Personnel.
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency is an Agency of the Department of Finance. NISRA is the principal source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. These statistics and research inform public policy and associated debate in the wider society.
National Nature Reserve and Nature Reserve	Nature Reserves including National Nature Reserves are declared under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 – nature reserves can be of national (and sometimes international) importance. They are usually managed by the Department or by agreement with another Department, a District Council or a voluntary conservation body.
PAC	Planning Appeals Commission - The Planning Appeals Commission is an independent body which deals with a wide range of land use planning issues and related matters
Passive Solar Design	In passive solar design of buildings, windows, walls, and floors are made to collect, store, and distribute solar energy in the form of heat in the winter and reject solar heat in the summer.
Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland.	The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland sets out planning policy for Northern Ireland across a range of topics. Most of the topics within the Strategy have been superseded by the various PPS's or SPPS.
POP	The Preferred Option Paper is this consultation document, intended to promote focused debate on those issues that will need to be addressed when preparing the Draft Plan.
PPS	Planning Policy Statement - Planning Policy Statements set out the planning policies of central government on particular aspects of land-use planning and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. Their contents will be taken into account in preparing development plans and are also material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.
PRC	Primary Retail Core – Areas within town centres where the aim is to protect existing retail use and to promote the growth of retail.
PS	The Plan Strategy provides the framework for accommodating growth and managing sustainable development across the whole district.



Ramsar	A Ramsar Site is a wetland site designated of international importance under the Ramsar Convention of 1971 (in force since 1975).
RDS	The Regional Development Strategy 2035 is the spatial strategy of the NI Executive. Its purpose is to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government. It complements the Sustainable Development Strategy and informs the spatial aspects of the strategies of all Government Departments.
Rural Proofing	Rural Proofing is to consider rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services.
SACs	Special Areas of Conservation are strictly protected sites of European importance, recognised for the threatened habitats and species they support.
SA and SEA	The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of local development plans. It incorporates the more environmentally focused considerations of Strategic Environmental Assessment and is used to assess the POP against a set of objectives and criteria, to evaluate if it likely to have significant impacts on the environment.
SA Interim Report	Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report consists of SA Scoping Report, assessment of reasonable alternatives against agreed SA framework and undertaking public consultation along with the POP. This will facilitate a more meaningful public consultation process by enabling interested parties to make more informed judgements when submitting representations on the POP.
SCAs	Special Countryside Areas -an area of countryside where it is proposed to provide a stricter policy control for those sensitive landscapes which merit special protection.
SCI	The Statement of Community Involvement outlines how a Council proposes to engage the community and stakeholders in exercising its planning functions. The document allows everyone to know with whom, what, where and when participation will occur in the planning process.
Shared Environmental Services	Provide expert advice to all Northern Ireland councils on their legal obligations regarding their enhanced environmental responsibilities after the transfer of planning powers to local government. The primary role of the environmental responsibilities after the transfer of planning powers to local government. The primary role of the service is to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessments on planning applications and local development plans to assess their impact on European sites, mainly special areas of conservation and protection.
SLNCI	Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance are identified within the process of preparing a development plan with policies provided in the plan for their protection and /or enhancement.
SPAs	Special Protection Areas Strictly protected sites of European importance, classified for their rare and vulnerable birds and for regularly occurring migratory species.
SPPS	The Strategic Planning Policy Statement is a statement of central government's policy on important planning matters that should be addressed across the whole of Northern Ireland.
Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
The Geological Survey Northern Ireland	The Geological Survey Northern Ireland is part of the Department for the Economy Northern Ireland (DfE). It is staffed by scientists of the British Geological Survey (BGS) under contract to DfE, which allows GSNI to call upon expertise from within other parts of the BGS.
The Sustainable Development Strategy (2010)	The NI Executive launched its new Sustainable Development Strategy, 'Everyone's Involved', on 27 May. The strategy has been designed to provide a framework that can support and inform the decisions and actions taken by individuals, groups and organisations in progressing the sustainability agenda.
Urban Capacity Study	A study undertaken provide an initial understanding on the potential development land capacity of the District as part of the preparation of the local plan.
'Windfall' Development	Windfall development is potential future housing development on land not designated for housing within the urban footprint of towns.

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