

Local Development Plan – Draft Plan Strategy (LDP PS)

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA or AA)

December 2019

**Prepared for
Derry City & Strabane District Council
by
Shared Environmental Services.**

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Consultation Arrangements

The LDP draft Plan Strategy (dPS) is a consultation document, to which representations can be made during a formal consultation period from **Monday 2nd December 2019 to Monday 27th January 2020**. **Representations received after this date will not be considered.**

The dPS document is available, together with the associated documents, at <http://www.derrystrabane.com/Subsites/LDP/Local-Development-Plan>

These documents are also available to view, during normal opening hours, at:

- Council Offices, 98 Strand Road, Derry, BT48 7NN
- Council Offices, 47 Derry Road, Strabane, BT82 8DY
- Public Libraries and Council Leisure Centres throughout the District.

Public Meetings and Workshops will be held throughout the District during December 2019 / January 2020; see the Council's website and local press advertisements for details: <http://www.derrystrabane.com/Subsites/LDP/Local-Development-Plan>

The LDP draft Plan Strategy is considered by the Council to be 'sound'; if you have any comments or objections to make, it is necessary to demonstrate why you consider that the Plan is not 'sound' and / or why you consider your proposal to be 'sound'. Comments, or representations made in writing, will be considered at an Independent Examination (IE) conducted by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) or other independent body that will be appointed by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). The IE will determine whether the dPS satisfies statutory requirements and also consider the 'soundness' of the LDP dPS – against the Procedural Tests, Consistency Tests and the Coherence & Effectiveness Tests.

Before submitting a representation, you are strongly advised to read DfI's guidance on soundness in Development Plan Practice Note (DPPN) 06 (See <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practice-notes/common-newpage-9.htm>). It is also recommended that you read the PAC's guidance entitled 'Procedures for Independent Examination of Local Development Plans' available on their website www.pacni.gov.uk.

Representations can also be submitted during the consultation period regarding the associated appraisal documents, namely the draft Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment, SEA), the draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA or AA), draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and draft Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA).

Your comments may be submitted by e-mail to: LDP@DerryStrabane.com preferably by using the online questionnaire at the above website. Alternatively, you can write to the **Planning LDP Team, 98 Strand Road, Derry BT48 7NN**. (Please note that, under Freedom of Information and Council's policy of Transparency, all representations will normally be made publicly available. Any requests otherwise should be clearly stated and the request will be considered by the Council.)

The LDP draft Plan Strategy (dPS) and supporting documents can be supplied in alternative formats; please submit your request and requirements to the above address. Our other contacts are: Telephone - 028 71 253 253 Ext. 7014, Textphone – 028 71 376 646.

The Closing Date for Representations is Monday 27th January 2020

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Non-Technical Summary

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Regulation 43 of the Habitats Regulations, which implements a requirement of the Habitats and Birds Directives, requires an appropriate assessment to be undertaken of plans and projects which are likely to have a significant effect on an international site in Northern Ireland or Ireland, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and provides for assessment of the implications of a land use plan for international sites in view of their conservation objectives. For this report international sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites.

This draft HRA Report is prepared in support of the draft Plan Strategy for Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan (LDP). It records the assessment of the draft Plan Strategy and its potential impacts on international sites.

Overview of draft Plan Strategy

The draft Plan Strategy provides a plan-led policy framework for making day-to-day decisions to help Derry City and Strabane District Council (the Council) deliver sustainable development for employment, homes and infrastructure in a high quality environment across the Council area. It sets out how the area will change and grow until 2032. The nature of the draft Plan Strategy is that it has the potential to have a significant effect on some international sites, therefore we are undertaking a HRA in our role as a competent authority to ensure the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations are fully met.

International Sites Overview

A total of 23 international sites that have a confirmed or theoretical connection to the plan area were identified. On further review it was found that 22 of these sites might be affected by the draft Plan Strategy. Eleven sites are partly or wholly within the plan area or immediately adjacent to the plan area boundary. On a precautionary basis, all sites within 10km of the plan area were considered. Appendix 4, Maps 3 to 5 illustrate these sites in relation to the Council area.

Screening of the Plan

All of the Plan Strategy proposals were reviewed in Section 4, from the Overall Strategy containing the Vision and Plan Objectives, Growth and Spatial Strategy and General Development Principles and Policies, through the strategies and operational policies for Economy, Social Development and Environment, to the Place-Making and Design Vision Chapters and appendices. Following the screening of the complete draft Plan Strategy it was found that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for likely significant effects to arise from ten operational policies and one appendix. These were all screened in for appropriate assessment.

Appropriate Assessment

Those policies screened in were assessed in Section 5. In most cases measures were already incorporated which can be considered to be mitigation to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of international sites. In a few cases recommendations were made to strengthen the protection afforded to international sites by these policies through amendments.

Conclusions of the HRA

Assuming that the recommended mitigation measures are all retained or accepted, and the plan amended accordingly, it is possible to ascertain that the draft Plan Strategy will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international sites. Following public consultation and independent examination of the draft Plan Strategy the HRA will be finalised and adopted by the Council and published alongside the adopted Plan Strategy.

List of Abbreviations

ACMD	Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development
AD	Anaerobic Digesters
AHLI	Areas of High Landscape Importance
AoHSV	Areas of High Scenic Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
CMS	Construction Method Statement
COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards
CPA	Countryside Policy Area
CSM	Common Standards Monitoring
DAERA	The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DAP 2011	Derry Area Plan 2011
DC&SDC	Derry City & Strabane District Council
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DFI	Department for Infrastructure
DPAs	Development Pressure Areas
DPS	Draft Plan Strategy
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FCS	Favourable Conservation Status
GB	Green Belt
GEDA	General Economic Development Area
HMO	Houses in Multiple Occupation
HNA	Housing Needs Assessment
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
J&A	Justification and Amplification
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LDP	Local Development Plan
LLPA	Local Landscape Policy Areas
LPP	Local Policies Plan
LUPAs	Land Use Policy Areas
MRAs	Minerals Reserve Areas
NA	Not Applicable
NEDA	New Economic Development Area
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NIW	Northern Ireland Water
POP	Preferred Options Paper
ROI	Republic of Ireland
SA	Sustainability Appraisal

SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAP 2001	Strabane Area Plan 2001
SCA	Special Countryside Area
SEA	Strategic Environmental assessment
SEDA	Special Economic Development Areas
SES	Shared Environmental Service
SGP	Strategic Growth Plan
SME	Small & Medium Enterprises
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SPPS	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
SRA	Strategic Redevelopment Areas
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
WECA	Wind Energy Capacity Area
WR&SR	Water Resource & Supply Resilience Plan

1 Introduction

Local Development Plan 2032

The draft Plan Strategy is the first document in a two-stage process, the second being the Local Policies Plan. Together these will constitute the Council's new Local Development Plan (LDP). The purpose of the LDP is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide development decisions within the District.

The draft Plan Strategy follows the publication of the Preferred Options Paper (POP) in May 2017. In preparing it the Council has taken account of the representations received on the POP, further inputs from key consultees, stakeholders and, in particular, the elected Councillors through Member Workshops and Planning Committee meetings.

The LDP will provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic, social and environmental needs of the District in line with regional strategies and policies, providing for the delivery of sustainable development. It is intended to provide a 'plan-led' framework for rational and consistent decision-making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals; in particular, it will be the primary document against which the Council will assess and decide on planning applications. It will also deliver the spatial aspects of the Council's Community Plan.

The draft Plan Strategy is presented in eight parts in one volume as follows:

- Part A - Contextual Chapters
- Part B - Overall Strategy
- Part C - Economy – Strategy, Designations & Policies
- Part D - Social Development – Strategy, Designations & Policies
- Part E - Environment – Strategy, Designations & Policies
- Part F - Place-Making And Design Vision
- Part G - Specialised Requirements, Etc.
- Part H - LDP Monitoring and Review

It contains seven appendices that provide detail that informs the draft Plan Strategy. Those of particular relevance to this HRA are Appendix 1 - Plan Strategy Proposals Maps of District – Settlement and Environment and Appendix 6 - Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The District has a population of approximately 150,000 people and a land area of approximately 1,245 square kilometres. It borders Donegal County Council (RoI) and has shared boundaries with Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, Mid-Ulster District Council and Fermanagh & Omagh District Council.

Existing Plans and Local Policies Plan

When adopted, the Council's LDP for the District will replace the current Derry Area Plan 2011 (adopted May 2000) and the Strabane Area Plan 2001 (adopted April 1991). The LDP recognises the need for transitional arrangements during plan preparation and these are detailed in Chapter 39 of the draft Plan Strategy. This LDP Plan Strategy contains a number of policies which are based on a spatial designations. Existing spatial designations contained in the Derry Area Plan 2011 or Strabane Area Plan 2001 will continue to apply until they are reviewed at LPP and some new designations will be introduced at LPP.

The LPP will set out the Council's local policies with site specific proposals for the development and use of land within the Council area and contain designations and zonings to deliver the vision, plan objectives and operational policies of the LDP. Another draft HRA will be prepared to assess the potential impacts of the draft LPP on international sites. The Planning (Local Development Plan)

Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 state that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.

Requirement for HRA

The Habitats¹ and Birds Directives² are implemented through the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations. Regulation 43 of the Habitats Regulations requires an appropriate assessment to be undertaken of plans and projects which are likely to have a significant effect on an international site in Northern Ireland, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and provides for assessment of the implications of a land use plan for international sites in view of their conservation objectives. International sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. This draft HRA Report is prepared in support of the draft Plan Strategy, it records the assessment of the draft Plan Strategy and its potential impacts on international sites.

Step 1: Deciding whether a plan should be subject to HRA

The European Commission (EC) Guidance (referenced in Appendix 1) does not specify the scope of a plan which should be subject to the Directive and related transposing legislation but it does state that the key consideration is whether it is likely to have a significant effect. The HRA Handbook F.3. recommends reviewing proposals against a number of questions. These may lead to plans being exempted, eliminated or excluded from the need for HRA. The draft Plan Strategy does not directly relate to the management of any international site therefore it cannot be exempted from the requirement of the Habitats Regulations. The draft Plan Strategy is part of the LDP and clearly represents a strategic and local development plan. The requirement for planning permission to be determined in light of the relevant land use plan, necessarily means that LDPs have considerable influence on development decisions and that, as such, they must be subject to HRA in their own right. The outcome of this step is that the draft Plan Strategy requires HRA as a strategic and local development plan.

Approach to HRA

The overall approach for this HRA has been developed in accordance with the Directives and Habitats Regulations. The HRA follows the guidance set out in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook³ (the HRA Handbook) and is also informed by the reference material in Appendix 1. Current subscribers to the Handbook include the Department of Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) which represents the Statutory Nature Conservation Body for Northern Ireland. The approach is detailed in Appendix 2 of this report where case law relevant to HRA for plans is also referred to.

The nature of the draft Plan Strategy is that it has the potential to have a significant effect on the selection features of some international sites therefore we are undertaking a HRA in our role as a competent authority. Shared Environmental Service (SES) based in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council provides support to Derry City and Strabane District Council on HRAs for plans and projects. SES has therefore, in conjunction with the Council, prepared this draft HRA for the draft Plan Strategy to ensure the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations are fully met.

HRA is an iterative process carried out in parallel with plan preparation. HRA baseline information was provided for preparation of the Preferred Options Paper. LDPs must also be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) during their preparation with reports

¹ Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

² Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version)

³ Tyldesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*, February 2019 edition UK: DTA Publications Ltd.

required at defined stages. The Sustainability Appraisal process both informed, and was informed by, the HRA process.

In preparing this draft HRA opportunities to strengthen the draft Plan Strategy were identified and have already been incorporated in the policies and supporting text. Examples include adding explicit reference to GDPOL 1, which requires that proposals meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter, and including text in the preamble or the Justification and Amplification (J&A) to highlight the potential for impacts on international sites.

Following public consultation and independent examination of the draft Plan Strategy the HRA will be finalised and adopted by the Council and published alongside the adopted Plan Strategy. Regulation 43 (4) of the Habitats Regulations allows for the competent authority to obtain the opinion of the general public on the HRA if it considers it appropriate. Therefore comments are also invited on this draft HRA.

Context for draft HRA

Appendix 2 explains that the requirement for planning permission to be determined in light of the relevant land use plan, necessarily means that LDPs have considerable influence on development decisions and that, as such, must be subject to HRA in their own right. Many policies represent a continuation of a previous policy, however each was considered on its own merits in the assessment. Many of the proposals affect multiple locations or locations which have not been defined at draft Plan Strategy.

Previous Plans

Extant plans will continue to have effect until the next stage i.e. LPP. This is set out in the transitional arrangements in The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015⁴. Under the transitional arrangements applications submitted following the adoption of the LDP Plan Strategy, will be assessed against that document and the extant statutory Plan for the area. This means that spatial designations in the extant plans will continue to have effect until the next stage, LPP. In preparing the LPP existing and proposed zonings will be reviewed and key site requirements identified where appropriate.

In light of this, the individual zonings that are being carried forward at Plan Strategy have not been assessed in detail in this HRA. They have however been reviewed at a high level to highlight aspects that should be considered in the HRA for the LPP. It is therefore important that the conclusions of this HRA are not relied upon, when LPPs are subject to assessment at a later date, to assert that extant zones and allocations are compliant with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations as the scope of the work undertaken has not included them.

Other Regulations

An assumption is made that existing regulations and legislation that are independent of planning are implemented and enforced by the relevant authority. These include Water Order discharge consents, abstraction licensing, marine licensing and Pollution Prevention Control permits for which HRA may also be required. NI Water is responsible for public wastewater treatment works and is a competent authority. It must approve all connections to mains sewerage and will not do so where there is insufficient network or treatment capacity.

Consideration of Mitigation

A ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in 2018 known as '*People over Wind*' clarified how mitigation should be assessed through HRAs as detailed in Appendix 2. In light of this, measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been adverse effects on the integrity of international sites are not taken into account in Stage 1 and instead will be assessed at Stage 2 appropriate assessment. Stage 1 Assessment does consider essential features and

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2015/62/schedule/made>

characteristics of the plan and takes account of regional and strategic context and other regulatory controls that will apply to development under the plan.

HRA at other Stages of Plan Making and Development Management

The LPP will be subject to HRA, at which stage revised or new zonings and local policies will be assessed. The need for HRA will also be considered for individual projects at the development management stage and assessment carried out where required.

Climate Change

It is acknowledged that increased levels of development that will arise from the plan have the potential to add to anthropogenic drivers of climate change. However the causes of climate change are global and much of the action required must take place at national and international levels as well as at the local level. The conservation objectives for SPAs do not refer to climate change. Those for SACs address climate change as follows: *'Northern Ireland faces changes to its climate over the next century. Indications are that we will face hotter, drier summers, warmer winters and more frequent extreme weather events.'* The action recommended is *'When developing SAC management plans, the likely future impacts of climate change should be considered and appropriate changes made.'* Therefore, while climate change is acknowledged, specific measures have not been addressed in the conservation objectives. If future site-specific evidence or management plans for international sites identify climate change adaptation measures these will be taken into account when this HRA is finalised to assess whether any draft Plan Strategy policies inhibit the potential of selection features to adapt to climate change. Such information about climate change will also be considered at LPP stage.

2 Identification of international sites potentially affected

'Long-list' of international sites

Step 2a: 'Long-list' of international sites that should be considered in the HRA

International sites that are connected with the Council area were firstly identified. These include sites within or immediately adjacent to the Council area; with an ecological connection such as a hydrological link; those within 10km; and those that are connected by infrastructure. Ecological connection includes pathways through rivers or marine waters and supporting habitat for site selection features. All sites within 10km of the Council area were included to consider potential impacts of aerial emissions. Infrastructural connectivity is related to the potential linkage of sites to the Council area by infrastructure services such as water abstraction or wastewater discharges which are discussed further in Section 3. The outcome is a 'long-list' of 23 sites that are in or potentially connected to the Council area. Twelve of these are in Northern Ireland and eleven in Co. Donegal in Ireland. Appendix 4, Maps 3 to 5 illustrate these sites in relation to the Council area.

Table 1 Sites Connected with Council Area

Site Name	Connection with plan area			
	Within or Adjacent	Ecological	Within 10km	By Infra-structure
Banagher Glen SAC			●	●
Fairy Water Bog Ramsar Site	●	●	●	
Fairy Water Bogs SAC	●	●	●	
Lough Foyle Ramsar Site	●	●	●	●
Lough Foyle SPA	●	●	●	●
Moneygal Bog SAC	●	●	●	
Owenkillew SAC	●	●	●	●
River Faughan and Tributaries SAC	●	●	●	●
River Foyle and Tributaries SAC	●	●	●	●
River Roe and Tributaries SAC		●	●	●
Teal Lough SAC			●	
Tully Bog SAC			●	
Croaghonagh Bog SAC (ROI)			●	
Dunragh Loughs / Pettigoe Plateau SAC (ROI)			●	
Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA (ROI)			●	
Lough Derg SPA (ROI)		●	●	
Lough Eske & Ardnamona Wood SAC (ROI)			●	
Lough Foyle SPA (ROI)	●	●	●	
Lough Nageage SAC (ROI)	●	●	●	
Lough Swilly SAC (ROI)			●	
Lough Swilly SPA (ROI)			●	
River Finn SAC (ROI)	●	●	●	
Tamur Bog SAC (ROI)			●	

Step 3: Gathering information about the international sites

Information for each site identified at Step 2a was compiled on selection features, conservation objectives, conservation status, potential threats to site integrity from planning related development and location relative to the plan area and any plan designations. This is presented by site in Appendix

3. This information about international sites will be important as a starting point for HRA at LPP when locations for plan designations can be assessed in more detail.

Under Northern Ireland's Rural Development Programme, DAERA is currently undertaking a four year study to deliver Conservation Management Plans for the river and raised bog SACs in or connected to our District. Monitoring of the site conditions is already underway and will be continued during the study. The site features will also be mapped and any issues impacting on their status will be identified so that measures, which will aim to have a positive impact on the sites' biodiversity, water resource and land management, can be contained in the plans. Available information arising from the monitoring and mapping exercises, together with the Conservation Management Plans, will also be taken into account when finalising this HRA and in carrying out HRA for the LPP.

'Short-list' of international sites

Step 2b: 'Short-list' of sites that should be considered in the HRA

Taking account of the information gathered in Step 3, and the 'long-list' of sites identified at Step 2a, a further scan was carried out to determine the effects that could potentially affect international sites as a result of the plan. This step is recorded in Appendix 3, Table A.3.1. The outcome is summarised in Table 2 which records the potential mechanisms through which impacts could affect the 23 international sites listed. The potential effects are as follows and are discussed in Section 3:

- Direct Impacts
- Aquatic Environment
- Marine Environment
- Coastal Processes
- Mobile Species
- Recreational Pressure
- Growth – Water Supply
- Growth – Wastewater
- Growth – Aerial Emissions
- Aerial Emissions (other)
- Disturbance (other)

As a result of this step it was found that, while there are theoretical pathways to 22 international sites, it is not conceivable that the draft Plan Strategy could undermine the conservation objectives for one site, Tamur Bog SAC. Tamur Bog SAC is 8.9km from the plan area boundary which is beyond the screening distance for impacts from aerial emissions of ammonia from agricultural sources advised by DAERA. While there is a theoretical pathway, it is not conceivable that the plan would generate additional development impacts to an extent that it could undermine the conservation objectives for this site.

Step 4: Discretionary discussions on the method and scope of the appraisal

The Statutory Nature Conservation Body is represented by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Marine and Fisheries Division of DAERA. NIEA has published Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs and further information that NIEA may hold about international sites which is not in the public domain was requested. NIEA provided a spreadsheet on Condition of Features in Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) and international sites in 2017 and provided updates where available in October 2019. Before the HRA is finalised NIEA will be asked for any more up to date information on international sites and selection features. DAERA will also be invited to comment on the draft HRA during the consultation period.

Table 2 Potential Effects on International Sites

	Direct Impacts	Aquatic Environment	Marine Environment	Coastal Processes	Mobile Species	Recreational Pressure	Growth – Water Supply	Growth – Wastewater	Growth – Aerial Emissions	Aerial Emissions (other)	Disturbance (other)
Banagher Glen SAC							•			•	
Fairy Water Bog Ramsar Site	•	•								•	
Fairy Water Bogs SAC	•	•								•	
Lough Foyle Ramsar Site	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Lough Foyle SPA	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Moneygal Bog SAC	•	•								•	
Owenkillew SAC	•	•			•			•		•	
River Faughan and Tributaries SAC	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•
River Foyle and Tributaries SAC	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•
River Roe and Tributaries SAC		•			•		•			•	
Teal Lough SAC										•	
Tully Bog SAC										•	
Croaghonagh Bog SAC (ROI)										•	
Dunragh Loughs / Pettigoe Plateau SAC (ROI)										•	
Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA (ROI)										•	
Lough Derg SPA (ROI)					•					•	
Lough Eske & Ardnamona Wood SAC (ROI)										•	
Lough Foyle SPA (ROI)			•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Lough Nageage SAC (ROI)		•								•	
Lough Swilly SAC (ROI)		•	•			•		•		•	
Lough Swilly SPA (ROI)		•	•		•	•		•		•	•
River Finn SAC (ROI)	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•
Tamur Bog SAC (ROI)											

3 Potential Impacts of Development

The scanning and site selection table A.3.1, Appendix 3, has identified the potential mechanisms through which the Plan might exert an influence over international sites. These are summarised in Section 2, Table 2 which identifies the sites that could be affected by each impact. This section discusses the potential for each of these effects to arise from the draft Plan Strategy and informs Sections 4 and 5.

Direct Effects

All sites within the plan area are potentially vulnerable to direct impacts. These can lead to degradation or loss of habitat or direct effects on species. There are three International sites wholly within the LDP area. These are Moneygal Bog SAC, River Faughan and Tributaries SAC and River Foyle and Tributaries SAC. A number of sites are partially within the plan area and also vulnerable to direct effects. These are Fairywater Bogs SAC & Ramsar site, Lough Foyle SPA & Ramsar site and Owenkillew River SAC. Direct effects on international sites will be considered in screening the draft Plan Strategy in Section 4 and will also be considered at LPP when reviewing or allocating zoned land.

Effects upon the aquatic and marine environment

This covers direct impacts upon the aquatic or marine environment from contamination of surface water or changes in flow regime. Indirect impacts from water supply or disposal of wastewater are covered separately below. A number of freshwater, wetland and marine sites are within, adjacent to or hydrologically linked to the plan area. Such effects are generally limited to proposals in close proximity to an international site.

The River Faughan and Tributaries SAC, the River Foyle and Tributaries SAC, Owenkillew River SAC and Lough Foyle SPA & Ramsar site are all vulnerable to direct effects on the aquatic and coastal environment. The SAC rivers have large catchments within the plan area, the River Foyle encompasses 120km of watercourses and the Faughan 60km of watercourses. Maps 6 and 7 illustrate the major catchments and river sub-basins within the Derry City and Strabane District area.

Water pollution causes deterioration of (or failure to improve) water quality, due to direct runoff of pollutants including fuel, chemicals and sediments from development during construction or operation. Development on brownfield sites may lead to risk of release of contaminants which needs to be assessed and, where necessary, remediation carried out. For individual projects, water quality impacts are addressed through HRA and by the conditioning of pollution prevention measures through the requirement to submit, for example, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and / or a Construction Method Statement (CMS).

Many of the main land uses in the LDP are already zoned and are committed, including Housing and Economic Development Land. The LDP will carry forward most of the Housing zonings / designations from the Derry Area Plan 2011 and the Strabane Area Plan 2001. The Council will strategically allocate and manage housing for 9,000 new homes for the LDP period. In many of our settlements, the number of existing commitments is sufficient to meet the housing requirement up to 2032 and even beyond.

Housing land is distributed within the settlement hierarchy. An element of housing in the countryside is also allowed for, to sustain the rural area in accordance with the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS). The LDP Plan Strategy comprises 47 settlements including Derry City, Strabane Town, 3 Local Towns, 23 Villages and 19 Small Settlements. The strategic aim of the housing allocation is to ensure a balanced growth across the District's settlement hierarchy with a focus on Derry City as the regional city of the North West, as well as Strabane Town as a Main Hub plus other housing opportunities in the rural settlements and the countryside. The majority of new strategic housing growth in the settlements will be delivered through existing housing sites under construction, sites with current planning permission or on 'brownfield' sites within the existing built-up areas.

All of the settlements throughout the district are within the Foyle or Faughan catchments. There may be pathways from undeveloped housing land during construction and operation for pollutant release to these river catchments and to Lough Foyle.

There are numerous opportunities across the City and District in terms of range and choice of site that are available to meet the needs of economic development / employment opportunity. These include Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRAs) within the city centre and Strabane Town Centre, Special Economic Development Areas (SEDAs) such as Ebrington and Fort George and the Port. General Economic Development Areas (GEDAs) are located within and adjacent to the city and within some settlements. There is also a proposal to provide a New Economic Development Area (NEDA) to provide a sustainable location to serve the expansion of the city in the west along the Buncrana Road. There will also be some opportunities for economic development in the countryside. The scale, extent and location of all employment opportunity areas will be confirmed at the Local Policies Plan (LPP) Stage.

As for housing there may be hydrological pathways from undeveloped Economic Land to the Foyle and Faughan catchments, Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly. Development at Buncrana Road may be hydrologically connected to Lough Swilly SPA & Ramsar site, and Foyle Port where an estimated 37ha of land remains available is connected to Lough Foyle SPA & Ramsar site and situated such that any impacts from development could impact on salmon migrating into the Foyle and Faughan catchments.

It is generally considered unlikely that the proposals and policies within the Draft Plan Strategy will result in effects on the aquatic and marine environment however these will be considered in screening the draft Plan Strategy in Section 4 and will also be reviewed at LPP when reviewing or allocating zoned land.

Effects upon the coast

This includes direct impacts upon coastal processes. Such effects are generally limited to proposals in close proximity to an international site. The LDP area includes 12km of Lough Foyle shoreline comprising shallow, intertidal mudflats along Lough Foyle, from beyond Culmore in the north-west as far as City of Derry Airport in the north-east. The coastal area includes Foyle Port. The Derry City and Strabane District Council Coastline may only stretch for approximately 12kms, nonetheless, the River Foyle's tidal reach extends 16kms to Strabane. In that regard coastal consideration can apply to both the traditional shore line and sea interface as well as the tidal element associated with it.

It is generally considered unlikely that the proposals and policies within the Draft Plan Strategy will result in effects upon the coast however these will be considered in screening the draft Plan Strategy in Section 4 and will also be reviewed at LPP when reviewing or allocating zoned land.

Effects on mobile species

Most animal species range beyond the international sites for which they are selection features. Land which is outside the boundary of a designated site but provides functional support for those selection features is referred to as supporting habitat. Potentially development can affect such supporting habitat or the selection features utilising it.

Mobile species in the Council area include whooper swans, bewick swans, light bellied brent goose and an assemblage of wintering waterfowl, features of Lough Foyle SPA & Ramsar site. Habitat outside the SPA & Ramsar site boundary provides high tide roosts and additional supporting habitat, including an area identified south west of Bready. Flight paths for whooper swan could potentially be disrupted by development such as wind turbines and overhead electricity lines. These potential impacts are assessed under RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria and UT 1 Electricity & Gas Infrastructure.

Atlantic salmon is a mobile species which breed in freshwater and migrate to sea to grow and mature to adults. They are therefore present throughout the Foyle and Faughan catchments migrating through the Foyle estuary upstream to spawning locations which include tributaries upstream of the designated sites. Salmon require cool, clean water and spawning gravels and a diverse range of habitat features such as pools to rest in and can be impacted by changes in water quality, quantity, alteration of natural river morphology and pollution.

It is generally considered unlikely that the proposals and policies within the Draft Plan Strategy will result in effects on mobile species outside international sites, however potential impacts are assessed under a number of policies including RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria, UT 2 Water Infrastructure and FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses. Supporting habitat will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

Effects of recreational pressure

This impact mechanism is directly related to general increases in housing development and associated increases in recreational pressure from new residents moving into an area. It may also arise where there are specific proposals to focus recreational development. Recreation has the potential to have a significant effect if it is intensified to a degree that it causes erosion, habitat damage or persistent disturbance, or if the water sports season is extended to when wintering birds are present.

The LDP Plan Strategy is to provide enough land to accommodate and facilitate the provision of approximately 9,000 dwellings and 15,000 jobs, with associated services and infrastructure for up to 160,000 people. This represents provision for potential population growth of residents of up to 6.7% compared to the present population.

There may be opportunities for recreation within the International sites identified. Walking trails adjacent to Lough Foyle (within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council) are on established paths and separated from the SPA & Ramsar site by the seawall. Ness Wood Country Park is within the River Faughan and Tributaries SAC and Claudy and Larmont Country Parks are adjacent to the River Faughan and Tributaries SAC. The River Faughan SAC is well wooded in places and planning applications have been received for facilities such as outdoor recreation sites within these areas.

Other types of recreation include canoeing (the Foyle Canoe Trail stretches over 53km from the start of the River Foyle to the Atlantic Ocean) and other water based recreation such as power boating.

It is generally considered unlikely that the level of growth enabled by the draft Plan Strategy will result in recreational pressures that could undermine conservation objectives of any site however potential recreational impacts are assessed under the policies for Tourism Development and Open Space, Sport & Outdoor Recreation in Section 4. Impacts of recreation will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

Effects of development growth

This impact mechanism is directly related to general increases in housing and economic development and associated increases in demand for water and treatment of wastewater from new residents or businesses moving into an area or expansion of existing businesses. The LDP Plan Strategy is to provide enough land to accommodate and facilitate the provision of approximately 9,000 dwellings and 15,000 jobs, with associated services and infrastructure for up to 160,000 people. The LDP Strategy for Economic Development is to promote sustainable economic development in an environmentally sensitive manner and reinforcing Derry's role as the hub of the North West City Region, strengthening cross-border links and opportunities and by the creation of up to 15,000 jobs. The LDP identifies Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRAs) within the city centre and Strabane Town Centre, Special Economic Development Areas (SEDAs) such as Ebrington and Fort George and the Port. General Economic Development Areas (GEDAs) are located within and adjacent to the city and within some settlements. There is also a proposal to provide a New Economic Development Area

(NEDA) to provide a sustainable location to serve the expansion of the city in the west along the Buncrana Road. There will also be some opportunities for economic development in the countryside.

Water Supply

It is the responsibility of NI Water to ensure that a safe supply of drinking water for the population is maintained. There are five water supply zones wholly or partially within the district at Carmoney Eglinton, Caugh Hill Dungiven, Corrody Derry, Derg Strabane and Lough Bradan Drumquin. Drinking water is supplied to the District from two SAC rivers, the River Faughan through Carmoney WTW and the River Derg through Derg WTW. Water is also abstracted from the Glinedra River in the River Roe catchment and treated at Caugh Hill WTW. NI Water has indicated in correspondence sought for the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report that it does not envisage any substantive water supply issues that will impinge upon new development across the Council area.

NI Water published a draft Water Resource & Supply Resilience Plan (WR&SR Plan) for public consultation until September 2019. This draft Plan shows how the company will manage and develop water resources to make sure there is enough water to meet future supply needs. The draft WR & SR Plan takes into account changes in population, housing, water usage and incorporates any predicted changes to our climate. This includes how water supplies would be maintained during critical periods such as severe winters, drought and also includes a drought plan. The WR & SR Plan acknowledges the need to take account of adopted and emerging Local Development Plans to ensure it complies with the area's aims, objectives and long term vision in terms of growth, constraints and opportunities.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment has been carried out to consider the potential of the options contained within the WR & SR Plan and the Drought Plan to significantly affect internationally important nature conservation sites (SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites), either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

This concludes:

‘Three water resource options and five resilience options have been assessed in this HRA screening report. For four options it was determined there were no, or very weak pathways to European sites and no further assessment within the HRA process was required. However, four options included in the draft WR & SR Plan were identified as requiring HRA Stage 2 AA [appropriate assessment]. For these options, LSEs [likely significant effects] could be mitigated through the implementation of standard mitigation such as adherence to noise and vibration management plans, species protection plans and pollution management plans. No in-combination effects were identified for the options included in the draft WR & SR Plan. However, project-level HRA should revisit the potential for in-combination effects, once an appropriate level of detail about the timing and design of projects is available’.

In light of the sufficiency of the water supply to the Council area over the plan period and the HRA of the WR&SR Plan effects that might undermine the conservation objectives can be excluded.

Waste Water Treatment

The provision of wastewater treatment within the District is the responsibility of NI Water. Whilst there is generally very good treatment infrastructure across most settlements of the District, NIW has identified a number of our smaller settlements as having limitations of sewerage ‘headroom capacity’. As a result ongoing upgrades of the WWTWs and the pipework will be required over the LDP period in order to accommodate existing and new developments whilst achieving the necessary water quality and environmental standards. As well as capacity issues at the WWTW identified by NIW (Ardstraw, Donemana, Douglas Bridge and Drumlegagh) wastewater network capacity issues are emerging due to sewer network modelling. This has highlighted network capacity issues in parts of Derry and Strabane and in Artigarvan, Ballymagorry, Castledearg, Claudy, Eglinton, Killen, Letterbin,

Newtownstewart, and Sion Mills. Where the sewerage network is operating significantly above design capacity, this increases the risk of out of sewer flooding and pollution to local environment.

The Water Utility Regulation Group of DAERA regulates sewage discharges and is a competent authority under the Habitats Regulations. Every consent granted outlines the required quality and quantity of the discharge into the water environment and takes into account the requirements of relevant European directives.

Where a potential development cannot connect to the mains sewerage network, or where NI Water has indicated that consented capacity at the receiving works is limited or restricted, or there are network constraints, then a project will not be able to proceed unless it satisfies operational policy GDPOL 1. This states *'planning permission will only be granted for development relying on non- mains sewerage, where the applicant can demonstrate that this will not create or add to a pollution problem. Applicants will be required to submit sufficient information on the means of sewerage to allow a proper assessment of such proposals to be made. In those areas identified as having a pollution risk, development relying on non-mains sewerage will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.'*

This means that, should there be credible evidence of a real risk to any international sites, then sufficient information will be available to assess whether the development could have a likely significant effect and whether that can be mitigated by a suitable wastewater treatment solution. Therefore there are sufficient measures to ensure that development that might undermine the conservation objectives of international sites cannot proceed.

The J&A for GDPOL 1 discusses Non-Mains Sewerage in more detail at 7.117 to 7.123. This includes *'Planning permission will be refused for development relying on non-mains sewerage where the physical arrangements proposed for on-site sewerage treatment are unsatisfactory or in cases where 'Consent to Discharge' under the Water Order is unlikely to be forthcoming due to pollution risks. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency may identify certain areas where a pollution risk exists sufficient to warrant no further development relying on non-mains sewerage arrangements'*.

It is generally considered unlikely that the demand for wastewater treatment arising as a result of the level of growth enabled by the draft Plan Strategy will result in such pressures that could undermine conservation objectives of any site. Potential impacts of waste water are however assessed under relevant policies in Section 4 and will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

Aerial emissions (traffic)

Housing and economic development tends to be linked with increased traffic and emissions from traffic have been shown to be linked to impacts on vegetation within 200m of the road edge. Beyond 200m significant vegetation level effects associated with traffic emissions (including deposition) have not been observed in scientific studies. The A5 Western Transport Corridor is proposed to be constructed adjacent to a 800m stretch of the River Foyle and Tributaries SAC. This is a regional project that is not proposed by the draft Plan Strategy. It is subject to HRA which has not to date identified any impacts from aerial emissions on the SAC. No new roads are proposed or can be anticipated adjacent to any other international site. The level of growth as a result of the draft Plan Strategy will not lead to a significant increase in traffic compared to current levels.

It is generally considered unlikely that aerial emissions arising as a result of the level of growth enabled by the draft Plan Strategy will result in such pressures that could undermine conservation objectives of any site.

Aerial Emissions (Other)

Deposition of aerial pollutants can damage habitats and species through toxic effects and nutrient enrichment. Nitrogen deposition is identified as a threat for many international sites. Livestock production is a significant source of nitrogen deposition, particularly in the form of ammonia. For the

purposes of screening for this HRA sites within 10km have been considered. The current advice from DAERA is that all livestock developments within 7.5km of an international site should be modelled for ammonia distribution. Potential effects of aerial emissions from agriculture on international sites will be considered in screening the draft Plan Strategy in Section 4.

Disturbance (Other)

Noise or activity during construction and operation can have adverse impacts on sensitive species and mammals and birds in particular. Salmon passage can also be affected by vibration from piling or lighting. Such disturbance from construction or additional built development can occur within or adjacent to international sites and in supporting habitat. It may create barrier effects to species; result in changes in species breeding, roosting, commuting and foraging behaviour; or increase predation. Construction can be planned to avoid causing disturbance at critical times and development can be designed or located to avoid disturbance to sensitive species during operation.

It is generally considered unlikely that disturbance arising from construction or additional built development will result in such pressures that could undermine conservation objectives of any site. Potential impacts of disturbance are however assessed under relevant policies in Section 4 and will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

4 Screening draft Plan Strategy for Likely Significant Effects

Overview of screening

Step 5: Screening the draft / proposed plan for likely significant effects

The approach to screening the proposals is detailed in Appendix 2. All of the Plan Strategy proposals were reviewed, from the Overall Strategy containing the Vision and Plan Objectives, Growth and Spatial Strategy and General Development Principles and Policies, through the strategies and operational policies for Economy, Social Development and Environment, to the Place-Making and Design Vision Chapters and appendices. Appendix 5 presents the full review of the draft Plan Strategy. The outcome of the screening of proposals and policies is summarised below and informed by the findings of Section 3 above.

Screening Contextual Chapters (Part A)

These chapters, 1. Introduction to the LDP Plan Strategy (PS); 2. Survey & Profile of the Derry City and Strabane District; and 3. Policy Context for the LDP, introduce the plan and present the profile of Council area and the regional and local policy context. They are administrative text and do not direct development therefore they are not subject to further assessment.

Screening Overall Strategy (Part B)

4. *LDP Vision and Objectives*

The Vision is an overall aspiration for the Council area. Delivery of the Vision is through the spatial / cross-cutting, economic, social and environmental objectives; the growth and spatial strategies; the general development principles and policies; and the topic based strategies and policies.

The objectives all represent general policy statements, which state a direction without details of how they will be delivered. Some Plan Objectives are possible or likely drivers of potential effects. Examples are some of the Economic Development Objectives to deliver new jobs and businesses, tourism, renewable energy, minerals resources and transport infrastructure and the Social Development Objectives to deliver new homes. For all these objectives the implications can be assessed under related policies therefore no further assessment is required.

5. *Growth Strategy for the Derry City and Strabane District*

The Growth Strategy is a general statement of objectives to sustainably deliver 9,000 new homes for 10,000 more people and 15,000 more jobs. It is a likely driver of potential effects. The implications of growth have been discussed in Section 3 and are also assessed under the LDP policies, as summarised below and detailed in Appendix 5 therefore no further assessment is required.

6. *Spatial Strategy for the Derry City and Strabane District*

The Spatial Strategy is a strategic high level spatial strategy setting out our settlement hierarchy, the main environmental areas, transport corridors and other main infrastructure features, as well as the general spatial strategy for Derry city and Strabane town. The spatial strategy will determine where planned growth will be directed, balanced with the priority areas for environmental protection and enhancement. It is a general statement of policy however it is also a likely driver of potential effects. The implications of the Spatial Strategy have been discussed in Section 3 and are also assessed under the Settlement Hierarchy, Designations and LDP policies, as summarised below and detailed in Appendix 5.

The settlement hierarchy places the focus of development in Derry as the principal city and Strabane as the main town supported by local towns, villages and small settlements. Through SETT 1 and SETT 2 the settlement hierarchy provides a framework for delivering growth. No new settlements have been designated. Each settlement will have a defined development limit, beyond which there will be a presumption against further urban development. The current development limits in the DAP 2011

and SAP 2001 will remain in place and continue to guide development until they are reviewed and adopted in the LPP which will be subject to HRA.

The Spatial Strategy provides for five additional designations: SCA 1 Special Countryside Area (SCA); AHLI 1 Areas of High Landscape Importance (AHLIs); GB 1 Green Belts (GBs); DPA 1 Development Pressure Areas (DPAs); and WECA 1 Wind Energy Capacity Areas (WECAs). While some are indicated for strategic purposes on the dPS Proposals Maps, boundaries will be fully defined at LPP. SCAs and AHLIs have specific policies, NE 6 and NE 7 respectively and WECAs are protected through RED 1. Within DPAs the same policy tests set out for Green Belts will apply. There are several policies that refer to Green Belt e.g. in tourism, renewable energy and economic development. Although these are primarily designations to protect landscape and control visual impacts some are closely associated with international sites and may provide further protection, for example through constraining development in a buffer zone. When boundaries are reviewed or brought forward for these designations at LPP they will be subject to and informed by HRA. No further assessment of the Spatial Strategy is required however assessment of the policies which apply to it are summarised below and detailed in Appendix 5 and designations at LPP will be subject to HRA.

7. *General Development Principles & Policies*

This chapter sets out key development principles GDP 1 to GDP 8 and their underlying criteria which all development requiring Planning permission will seek to achieve. Their purposes include promoting sustainable development, adapting to climate change, supporting sustainable economic growth, creating and enhancing shared space, protecting and providing ecosystem services and preserving and enhancing the natural environment. They are all general statements of objectives and, although they list criteria, these are applied through the LDP policies as summarised below and detailed in Appendix 5.

It also sets out those general policy (GDPOL 1 & GDPOL 2) requirements that development proposals should meet in order to secure planning permission. GDPOL1 is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy which will apply to all development. Planning permission is subject to meeting a number of criteria summarised as follows: iii incorporation of SuDS; viii no significant adverse effect on human health and the environment; and xi development relying on non-mains sewerage, all provide for environmental protection. Criterion vii provides further protection to international sites requiring that *'the proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter'*.

8. *Enforcement of Planning*

This is administrative text setting out the legislative and policy context for enforcement and how enforcement relates to the LDP. It does not direct development therefore is not subject to further assessment.

Screening Economy – Strategy, Designations & Policies (Part C)

9. *Economic Development Land*

The LDP Strategy for Economic Development is a general statement of strategy however it plans for 28% growth in jobs over the life of the plan from 2017 levels. Its implications as a driver of growth are discussed in Section 3. The scale, extent and location of all the employment opportunity areas will be confirmed at the LPP stage which will be subject to HRA.

The policies for economic development are all ones that list general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. ED 1 applies to all the other economic development policies and it indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development. This is sufficient to ensure that there is no conflict between the economic development policies and NE 1 and that they cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

10. City / Town Centres, Retailing, Offices, Leisure and Other Uses

HC 1 and DOS 1 are general statements of policy. HC 1 in itself cannot lead to development and DOS 1 allows for sites to be considered in Derry and Strabane at LPP which will be subject to HRA. Policies RP 1 to RP 10 are all ones that list general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

11. Transport and Movement

The LDP Transport Strategy is encapsulated in the Local Transport Study (LTS) undertaken as part of North West Transport Plan (NWTP). It has been undertaken by DfI in conjunction with the Council. The Strategic Planning Objectives for Delivery of Transport Strategy and Measures are general statements of policy.

TAM 1 to TAM 11 are all either general statements of policy or policies which list the general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

TAM 12 allows for development, either to improve strategic transportation facilities such as regional ports and airports, or that is related to and dependent on siting adjacent to the port or airport. The port and airport are adjacent to international sites or supporting habitat for those sites. This policy specifies a measure that might be construed to be mitigation given the proximity of international sites. TAM 12 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

12. Tourism Development

The LDP Strategy for Tourism is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The preamble states that *'European and international designated sites for nature conservation extend through much of our Council from lowland raised bogs in the south west, along our rivers and to Lough Foyle. There is potential for tourism to have a direct impact on these sites, or an indirect effect on supporting habitat or through increasing recreational pressure. Therefore assessment of the impact of all tourism proposals on these sites will be an important consideration in their assessment to maintain their conservation value.'* The potential for impacts on international sites is therefore highlighted.

TOU 1 is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and cannot lead to development or other change. TOU 2 to TOU 7 are policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. They are not spatially specific and could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites, directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure. All highlight that tourism development must comply with GDPOL 1 which refers specifically to the Natural Environment Policies. Therefore, given the constraints on development under these policies and the policy caveats, Policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

13. Minerals Development

The LDP Strategy for Minerals Development is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The paragraph following the strategy states *'European and international designated sites for nature conservation extend through much of our Council from lowland raised bogs in the south west, along our rivers and to Lough Foyle. There is potential for minerals development to have a direct impact on these sites, or an indirect effect on supporting habitat for example by impacting on water quality.'* The potential for impacts on international sites is therefore highlighted.

MIN 1 applies to all minerals development and is explicitly referred to in MIN 3 and MIN 4. MIN 1 only permits minerals development where *'it meets the requirements of GDPOL 1'* and is demonstrated that the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on: *'the natural environment,*

including earth science features; ...water environment.' The J&A states *'Minerals development within, in close proximity or with a pathway to areas such as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) ... will not normally be given permission where they would prejudice the essential character of such areas (see chapter 21 Natural Environment).* All international sites in the council area are underpinned by ASSIs. The J&A also states that *'Minerals development that will have demonstrable unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment will not be acceptable'* and *'The provision of reliable protective measures will be an important factor in assessing the acceptability of the extraction proposal.'* MIN 1 might be construed to be mitigation given the extent of international sites in the District and the uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed. MIN 1 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

MIN 2 is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy to protect areas from minerals development because of their intrinsic landscape, amenity, scientific or heritage value (including natural, built and archaeological heritage). ACMDs include AHLIs and SCAs and are also proposed for the high Sperrins, Glenelly valley, Faughan valley and Foyle river corridor. Boundaries are to be defined at LLP and will be subject to and informed by HRA. MIN 3 is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.

MIN 4 Valuable Minerals states that *'There will not be a presumption against their exploitation in any area apart from within designated Special Countryside Areas. This however is subject to meeting the relevant requirements of GDPOL 1 and other policies including NE 1.'* It also goes on to say *'All applications for Valuable Minerals will have to comply with MIN 1.'* This policy specifies a measure (referral to GDPOL 1 and NE 1) that might be construed to be mitigation in light of the extent of international sites in the District and the uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed under this policy. MIN 4 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

MIN 5 is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy however the restoration proposals could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites. The credible evidence of a real risk to international sites is low. It is therefore considered that policy NE 1 will provide sufficient protection to avoid proposals coming forward which represent a risk to international sites and therefore this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

14. Signs & Outdoor Advertising

The LDP Strategy for Signage and Outdoor Advertisements is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. Policies AD 1 and AD 2 are general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policies that cannot have any effect on international sites.

15. Agriculture & Other Development in the Countryside

The LDP Strategy for Agriculture & Other Development in the Countryside is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications are assessed under the policies.

AGR 1 Farm and Forestry Diversification is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: *'(c) it will not have an adverse impact on the natural environment or historic environment.'* The J&A specifies that *'This policy should be read in conjunction with a number of policies ...including the relevant... Natural Environment Policy..'* In view of the policy caveat, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

AGR 2 Farm and Forestry Development is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: *'(d) it will not have an adverse impact on the natural environment or*

historic environment; (f) it will not result in damaging impacts on human health, as well as sensitive habitats, wider biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, through increased ammonia emissions;' This policy specifies criteria that might be construed to be mitigation as they specifically address an impact known to affect international sites. AGR 2 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

AGR 3 The Conversion and Re-Use Of Existing Buildings for Agricultural and other Suitable Rural Uses is a policy which lists the general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: '*(f) all necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality; ... (h) All proposals will be in accordance with the Natural Environment chapter.*' In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy and specific reference to the Natural Environment chapter it is considered that NE 1 ensures that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Screening Social Development – Strategy, Designations & Policies (Part D)

16. *Housing in Settlements and in the Countryside*

The LDP Strategy for the Strategic allocation of Housing is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The strategy aims to deliver 9,000 new homes by 2032 and focusses development on the largest settlements with two thirds allocated to Derry and Strabane and an allocation for housing in the countryside of 13.1%. The Strategy is therefore a possible driver of potential effects. The implications of population and housing growth are discussed in Section 3 of this report and delivery is also assessed under the housing policies.

HOU 1 and HOU 2 are general statements of policy for housing in settlements. Within the Villages and Small Settlements, the Council will identify Land Use Policy Areas (LUPAs) in the LPP. The LPP will be subject to HRA and zoning considerations will include sewerage capacity.

The LDP Strategy for Urban Housing is a general statement of policy which, relates to the mix of housing rather than the amount of housing and cannot have any effect on an international site. Similarly HOU 3 is a general statement which relates to the density of urban housing rather than the amount of housing. HOU 4 to HOU 17 are primarily related to the urban housing and all list general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals and cannot affect any international sites.

The LDP Strategy for Housing in the Countryside is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The LDP expects to deliver approximately 1,100 to 1,400 houses in the countryside over the LDP period; these will be delivered via policies HOU 18 to HOU 26. It is therefore a possible driver of potential effects and is assessed under the policies.

Policies HOU 18 to HOU 26 place significant constraints on the circumstances where housing may be brought forward and all specifically refer to GDPOL 1 General Development Management Policy which requires that any proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter. In light of the constraints on development and in view of other policies including GDPOL 1 and NE 1, policies HOU 18 to HOU 26 cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

17. *Open Space, Sport & Outdoor Recreation*

The LDP Open Space Strategy is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. OS 1 is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy which also constrains change of use therefore, in itself, it cannot lead to development or other change. OS 2 relates to provision of open space in new developments and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. OS 3 is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It primarily protects green and blue networks however it also allows for access to them. It includes a requirement that '*Enhancements to the green network will be required to mitigate any impacts from development on existing wildlife habitats or potential connections between them, or other features of value to natural heritage, green space, landscape and recreation.*' The policy also

refers to GDPOL 1. These caveats together with NE 1 are sufficient to ensure that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

The remaining Open Space policies, OS 4 to OS 8, are all ones that list general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Although the location and nature of development that may be brought forward under these policies is uncertain, all have caveats that avoid or reduce potential adverse impacts on site selection features. Given the constraints on development, policy caveats and other policies including NE 1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

18. Community Infrastructure

The LDP Strategy for Community Infrastructure is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. *CI 1* is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

19. Utilities Development

The LDP strategy for Utilities developments is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. Utilities include water supply, wastewater sewerage, and surface water sewerage, energy infrastructure including electricity and gas, as well as telecommunications infrastructure such as fixed lines, mobile connectivity and broadband.

UT 1 Electricity & Gas Infrastructure is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The policy encourages undergrounding however it does not exclude overhead infrastructure for electricity infrastructure. The policy specifies that it must be demonstrated that '*The proposal does not adversely affect natural heritage features*'. The J&A includes '*The potential of overhead lines to disrupt the flight paths of birds will also be a consideration.*' In view of the policy caveat, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

UT 2 Water Infrastructure is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The implications of growth in relation to water infrastructure are discussed in Section 3 of this report. The policy enables adequate facilities for treatment of waste water, the provision of which may contribute to meeting the conservation objectives of international sites. The policy contains a protective caveat and the J&A highlights international sites. Given the extent of aquatic international sites in our District this policy might be construed to be mitigation as it specifically addresses an impact known to affect international sites. UT 2 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

UT 3 and UT 4 are policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

20. Waste Planning

The LDP Strategy for waste management is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.

WP 1 Environmental Impact of a Waste Management Facility is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It applies to all waste management development and is explicitly referred to in WP 2 to WP 4. The policy includes protective criteria which are expanded on in the J&A. In view of these caveats and NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities and WP 3 Waste Disposal are policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Both states '*proposals for waste collection and treatment facilities will be permitted where they comply with policy MIN 1...*' This is a typographical error and should have referred to WP 1. WP 1 applies to all waste management development and is

referred to later in WP 2 and WP 3. In view of the caveats in WP 1, and of policy NE 1, it is unlikely that WP 2 or WP 3 could undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. However, for the purposes of clarity, the policies should be corrected. WP 2 and WP 3 are therefore screened in for further assessment.

Screening Environment – Strategy, Designations & Policies (Part E)

21. Natural Environment

The LDP Strategy for the Natural Environment is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. NE 1 Nature Conservation Sites restates the legal and policy requirements of the Habitats Regulations and the SPPS in relation to international sites. This policy also applies to ASSIs, which underpin all the international sites in our Council area.

NE 2 to NE 8 are all general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policies. Some such as NE 2 Protected Species and their Habitats and NE 4 Development adjacent to Main Rivers and Open Water Bodies may afford additional protection to international sites and their selection features however they were not included for this specific purpose therefore do not represent mitigation for impacts on international sites.

22. Coastal Development

The LDP Strategy for coastal development is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. CD 1 Coastal Development is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy and it constrains coastal development. Lough Foyle SPA and Estuary is immediately adjacent to the coastal area and other sites are hydrologically connected to it. The policy states *'Development proposals must comply with NE 1 and should not have an unacceptable effect, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively, on the coastal area and its setting.'* It goes on to state *'Proposals to extend access to the coastline or for the provision of associated facilities such as pathways or picnic areas, should not impact adversely on the natural, built or archaeological / defence heritage, geological or landscape value of the area.'* *'Where development within the 'undeveloped coast' is acceptable in principle, it must: Avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural environment...'* The policy includes criteria and caveats that protect international sites and can be construed to be mitigation given the proximity of international sites. CD 1 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

23. Historic Environment

The LDP Strategy in relation to our District's historic environment is a general statement of policy and HE 1 to HE 8 are all general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policies which cannot have any effect on an international site. HE 9 is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It sets out the exceptional circumstances where Enabling Development may be permitted and the J&A places requirements for early pre-application consultation and provision of adequate information on impacts and mitigation. Therefore potential impacts on international sites will be identified at an early stage and Policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites such that it cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

24. Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development

The LDP Strategy for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It states *'The impact of proposals on designated natural and historic environment assets will also be a priority consideration.'* *'Renewable energy development proposals require particular scrutiny through Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (AA) where applicable.'* The policy and the J&A go into more detail about what the impacts of renewable energy may be. This policy specifies measures that might be construed to be mitigation as they

specifically address impacts known to affect international sites. RED 1 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

25. *Development and Flooding*

The LDP Strategy for Development and Flooding a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. FLD 1 Development in Fluvial (River) and Coastal Flood Plains and FLD 5 Development in Proximity to Controlled Reservoirs are policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. FLD 2 Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure and FLD 3 Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains are general statements of policy. These policies, in themselves, cannot have any effect on an international site.

FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses is a general plan-wide environmental safeguarding policy. It clarifies that, where exceptions are provided for, the Council *'will discourage culverting or modification of watercourses in a SPA, SAC, Ramsar sites and supporting habitat. Where there is no alternative, the Council will seek to ensure that such artificial modification of a watercourse will not lead to a loss of supporting habitat, disrupt the passage of site selection features or adversely affect them during construction.'* This policy specifies a measure that can be construed to be mitigation as it specifically addresses impacts known to affect international sites. FLD 4 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

Screening Place-Making And Design Vision (Part F)

26. *Settlements – Place-making and Design Vision*

This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. PDO 2 and PDP 4 to PDP 6 seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.

27. *Settlements – Derry-Londonderry: Strategic Vision and Design*

These are general statements of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and cannot have any effect on an international site. There is reference to potential bridges in DSDP 2 but this is qualified as being *'Subject to compliance with other Planning policy within the LDP and other statutory permissions'*.

28. *Settlements – Strabane: Strategic Vision and Design*

These are general statements of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. Re-development sites may be identified within Strabane Town Centre through the LPP which will be subject to HRA.

29. *Settlements – Local Towns: Strategic Vision and Design*

These apply to Castlederg, Newtownstewart and Claudy and are general statements of policy which will be delivered through the operational policies above and, cannot have any effect on an international site.

30. *Settlements – Villages: Strategic Vision and Design*

This chapter relates to protecting and / or enhancing the character of the 23 villages. This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the operational policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.

31. *Settlements – Small Settlements: Strategic Vision and Design*

This chapter relates to protecting and / or enhancing the character of 19 small settlements. This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the operational policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.

32. *Countryside: Strategic Vision and Design*

The LDP approach for Place-making and Design in the Countryside is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. CY 1 is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy in terms of visual integration. CY 2 is a policy listing general

criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals in terms of rural character. In itself the policy cannot lead to any development or change. CY 3 is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. CY 4 is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals in terms of siting and design in the context of the AONB. In itself the policy cannot lead to any development or change.

Screening Specialised Requirements, Etc. (Part G)

33. Hazardous Substances and Major Accidents

This is a general statement of policy which restates the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations and sets out how the Council will support their implementation. The three identified COMAH sites in the Council Area are adjacent to Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site and connected to the River Faughan and tributaries SAC and will be subject to the COMAH Regulations. It will not, in itself, lead to development or other change.

34. Developer Contributions and Community Benefits

This is a general statement of policy which sets out how the Council will manage development contributions and community benefits. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

35. Demolition and Re-development

This is a general statement of policy which sets out how the Council will manage demolition / redevelopment. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

36. Regeneration and Comprehensive Re-Development

This is a general statement of policy which sets out how the Council will manage regeneration / comprehensive redevelopment. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site. It refers to a number of major projects under the Council's Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) 2032 and City Deal: Derry~Londonderry City Region. *'The policies and development principles contained within the LDP are designed to support and facilitate the regeneration of the District in a sustainable manner and it may be that to do so comprehensively will necessitate the identification of further opportunity sites, spaces, buildings and other assets at LPP stage.'* The LPP will be subject to HRA. In itself this general statement of policy cannot have any effect on an international site.

37. Other Specialised Requirements

This refers to other regulatory requirements. It cannot have any effect on an international site.

38. Supplementary Planning Guidance

This is a general statement of policy which, combined with Appendix 6, sets out how SPGs will be taken forward. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

39. Transitional Arrangements

This is administrative text setting out transitional arrangements up to adoption of the Plan Strategy and LPP.

Screening LDP Monitoring and Review (Part H)

40. Monitoring Criteria & Review Process

This is administrative text setting out monitoring arrangements which will be detailed in a Monitoring and Review Technical Paper.

41. Next Steps – From Draft Plan Strategy Onwards

This is administrative text detailing how the LDP will progress.

Screening Appendices

Appendix 1: Plan Strategy Proposals Maps of District – Settlement-Environment

The Environment Map shows ASSIs but not international sites. It is recommended that international sites are indicated on maps at Plan Strategy adoption.

Appendix 2: Tourism Benefit Statement and Sustainable Benefit Statement

This is a general statement of policy which sets out requirements for Tourism Benefit Statements & Sustainable Benefit Statements. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

Appendix 3: Open Space Annex

This is a general statement which defines open space and its functions. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

Appendix 4: Development and Flooding Annexes

This sets out the requirements for: Annex A: Sustainable Drainage; Annex B: Assessing Flood Risk and Drainage Impact; Annex C: Flood Proofing - Resistance & Resilience Construction. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

Appendix 5: Housing Allocation Tables

This presents the evidence that informs the housing allocations

Appendix 6: Supplementary Planning Guidance; Appendix 7: Glossary of Terms & Abbreviations

This sets out how SPGs will be taken forward. It included (Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance: Anaerobic Digestion June 2013 which is dated and does not fully reflect the potential impacts of ammonia impacts on international sites from an Anaerobic Digestion plant or potential impacts of the spreading of digestate on air and water quality. The comment in relation to the guidance states *'This document is to be retained as, despite being in draft form, it reflects most up to date guidance for it informs consideration of this type of development. However more recent guidance, including that published by DAERA, must also be taken into account and relied on where it is more up to date.'* Therefore there is a risk that outdated information in the draft SPG may inform proposals. This should be reviewed and updated before the Plan Strategy is adopted to clarify that the draft guidance is not the most up to date and advise if / how it should be relied upon. Appendix 6 is therefore screened in for further assessment.

Outcome of screening

Table 3 summarises the ten operational policies that are screened in for further assessment. These will be assessed in relation to the sites listed in Table 2, and their selection features and conservation objectives which are presented in 3. Additionally, Appendix 6 has been identified as creating a risk that outdated information in the draft SPG may inform proposals. This is also recorded in Table 3 and discussed in Section 5.

Consideration of in combination assessment with other plans and projects in screening

Consideration must be given to any cumulative effects of proposals during plan preparation. These include potential cumulative effects within the plan and in combination effects with other relevant plans and projects. All policies which have been screened out at this stage are assigned to a screening category which allows them to be recognised as unlikely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination. Those policies screened in are all included on the basis of their effects 'alone' in the absence of mitigation, Category I, and are brought forward to appropriate assessment. As such, no further 'in-combination' assessment is required in respect of the policies which have been screened out as having no likely significant effect. Policies identified as having a likely significant effect are considered further as part of the appropriate assessment in Section 5.

Table 3 Policies having a likely significant effect and requiring further assessment

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening Comment
TAM 12 Transport Facilities	The port and airport are adjacent to international sites or supporting habitat for those sites. This policy specifies a measure that might be construed to be mitigation given the proximity of international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
MIN 1 Minerals Development	MIN 1 might be construed to be mitigation given the extent of international sites in the District and the uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
MIN 4 Valuable Minerals	This policy specifies a measure (referral to GDPOL 1 and NE 1) that might be construed to be mitigation in light of the extent of international sites in the District and the uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed under this policy. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
AGR 2 Farm and Forestry Development	This policy specifies criteria that might be construed to be mitigation as they specifically address an impact known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
UT 2 Water Infrastructure	Given the extent of aquatic international sites in our District this policy might be construed to be mitigation as it specifically addresses an impact known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities	WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities and WP 3 Waste Disposal both state <i>'proposals for waste collection and treatment facilities will be permitted where they comply with policy MIN 1...'</i> This is a typographical error and should have referred to WP 1. For the purposes of clarity, the policies should be corrected.
WP 3 Waste Disposal	
CD 1 Coastal Development	Lough Foyle SPA and Estuary is immediately adjacent to the coastal area and other sites are hydrologically connected to it. The policy includes criteria and caveats that protect international sites and can be construed to be mitigation given the proximity of international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria	This policy specifies measures that might be construed to be mitigation as they specifically address impacts known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses	This policy specifies a measure that can be construed to be mitigation as it specifically addresses impacts known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
Appendix 6: Supplementary Planning Guidance	This includes (Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance: Anaerobic Digestion June 2013 which is dated and does not fully reflect the potential impacts of ammonia impacts on international sites from an AD plant or potential impacts of the spreading of digestate on air and water quality. There is a risk that outdated information in the draft SPG may inform proposals. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.

5 Appropriate Assessment

Step 6: The Appropriate Assessment

Following the screening of plan proposals it has been found that there is potential for likely significant effects to arise from ten operational policies and supplementary information in one appendix:

- TAM 12 Transport Facilities
- MIN 1 Minerals Development
- MIN 4 Valuable Minerals
- AGR 2 Farm and Forestry Development
- UT 2 Water Infrastructure
- WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities
- WP 3 Waste Disposal
- CD 1 Coastal Development
- RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria
- FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses
- Appendix 6: Supplementary Planning Guidance

Protective Measures in the draft Plan Strategy

GDPOL1 is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy which will apply to all development. Planning permission is subject to meeting a number of criteria summarised as follows: iii incorporation of SuDS; viii no significant adverse effect on human health and the environment; and xi development relying on non-mains sewerage, all provide for environmental protection. Criterion vii provides further protection to international sites requiring that *'the proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter'*.

The Natural Environment chapter includes policies NE 1. Policy NE 1 Nature Conservation Sites, states the existing requirements of the Habitats Regulations and of the SPPS which reiterates those legislative requirements as follows.

'NE 1 Nature Conservation Sites

European / International Sites

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 (Special Protection Area - SPA, Special Areas of Conservation – SAC, candidate Special Areas of Conservation 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 Council shall make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions may be imposed. In light of the conclusions of the assessment, the Council shall agree to the development only having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

In exceptional circumstances, a development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European a listed or proposed Ramsar Site may only be permitted where:

- *there are no alternative solutions; and*
- *the proposed development is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- *Compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

As part of the consideration of exceptional circumstances, where a European or Ramsar site hosts a priority habitat or priority species listed in Annex I or II of the Habitats Directive, a development proposal will only be permitted when:

- *it is necessary for reasons of human health or public safety or there is a beneficial consequence of primary importance to the environment; or*
- *agreed in advance with the European Commission.*

For most policies the fact that NE 1 must also apply, through direct reference or by reference to GDPOL1, is sufficient. However, for those policies that have the greatest potential to enable development that could have an adverse effect on an international site, it is advisable to indicate the need to comply with NE 1 within the policy and / or highlight sites that may be affected in the J&A. This ensures that site selection features are a consideration when the proposal is being developed and reduces the potential for tensions between NE 1 and other operational policies.

Mitigation measures

The consideration of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a plan on an international site has been progressed to Stage 2 appropriate assessment. The first step in this appropriate assessment is to seek to incorporate mitigation measures which might be relied upon to avoid any adverse effects to the integrity of the international sites potentially affected. For this plan it was found that case-specific policy caveats will provide sufficient mitigation and in most cases they have already been incorporated.

This section therefore considers each of the policies identified in Table 3 above in light of potential mitigation measures which might be retained or incorporated into the plan. With the approach in Appendix 2, Step 6 in mind the policies which were identified as having a likely significant effect were considered further below.

Transport (TAM 12)

TAM 12 allows for development, either to improve strategic transportation facilities such as regional ports and airports, or that is related to and dependent on siting adjacent to the port or airport. The port and airport are adjacent to Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site and are hydrologically connected to other sites.

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site. Adjoining habitat is particularly important for swans and geese as well as providing high tide roost locations. Significant changes in land management and disturbance are key considerations. Commercial and recreational boating can cause disturbance especially to particularly sensitive areas within the site. Loss of habitats can occur through development, changes in coastal processes, invasive species. Loss of inter-tidal habitat is a critical issue as this is the feeding zone for the majority of birds in terms of both numbers and species. Open water habitat could be impacted through port expansion although this is likely to be limited. Habitat quality can also be impacted by diminution of water quality. Power cables within flight lines present a problem in relation to swans and geese.

Policy TAM 12 includes, for proposals to improve transport facilities, *'Such proposals should be directly related to the transportation function of the site and meet all other relevant LDP policies.'* It adds *'Development which is related to, and dependent on, siting adjacent to the port or airport will normally be considered acceptable unless it would result in an unacceptable loss of safety or amenity for adjacent communities or does not meet the requirements of GDPOL 1.'* GDPOL 1 specifies criteria to protect the environment including *'the proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter.'* The Natural Environment chapter includes policy NE 1. The policy caveats address the potential impacts of any development that could be brought forward under this policy. They will ensure that all development must comply with GDPOL 1 and with NE 1 and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Minerals Development (MIN 1 & MIN 4)

MIN 1 applies to all minerals development and is explicitly referred to in MIN 3 and MIN 4. There is uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed under the MIN policies.

Water quality is the most important factor for most of the river SAC selection features. Siltation is detrimental to aquatic selection features and sand wash from a number of commercial sandpits in the upper reaches of tributary rivers has resulted in high suspended solid loads and siltation of the riverbed downstream.

MIN 1 only permits minerals development where *'it meets the requirements of GDPOL 1'* and is demonstrated that the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on: *'the natural environment, including earth science features; ...water environment.'* The J&A states *'Minerals development within, in close proximity or with a pathway to areas such as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) ... will not normally be given permission where they would prejudice the essential character of such areas (see chapter 21 Natural Environment).* All international sites in the council area are underpinned by ASSIs. The J&A also states that *'Minerals development that will have demonstrable unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment will not be acceptable'* and *'The provision of reliable protective measures will be an important factor in assessing the acceptability of the extraction proposal.'*

Earlier in Chapter 13, paragraph 13.6 highlights the extent of international sites through the council area and that there is potential for minerals development to adversely impact on these sites and supporting habitat. This is addressed in the policy which makes clear that development must comply with GDPOL 1. This is further addressed in the J&A which highlights that development beyond international sites may impact on them. In view of the policy caveats, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Policy MIN 4 states that *'There will not be a presumption against their exploitation in any area apart from within designated Special Countryside Areas. This however is subject to meeting the relevant requirements of GDPOL 1 and other policies including NE 1.'* It also goes on to say *'All applications for Valuable Minerals will have to comply with MIN 1.'* This ensures that the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are met while allowing for exceptional circumstances to be assessed in line with the Habitats Regulations as detailed in NE 1. In view of the policy caveats, MIN 1, GDPOL 1 and other policies including NE 1 development cannot be brought forward under this policy that does not meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. No further policy amendments are required.

Agriculture (AGR 2)

Chapter 7 paragraphs 7.82 identifies that ammonia is an important air quality issue with emissions from agricultural activities such as manure storage, handling and spreading. 7.83 attributes high levels of ammonia to the relative reliance of our regional and local economies on the agricultural sector. The majority of Northern Ireland's designated sites are exceeding their critical levels, the concentration at which environmental damage occurs, for ammonia. Increased (or more intensive) agricultural activities may further exacerbate this issue.

AGR 2 specifically addressed this, criteria include: *'(d) it will not have an adverse impact on the natural environment or historic environment; (f) it will not result in damaging impacts on human health, as well as sensitive habitats, wider biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, through increased ammonia emissions;'* The J&A 15.16 expands on this *'Ammonia (NH₃) is a gas emitted into the air as a result of many farm activities such as the housing of livestock, the storage and spreading of animal manures and slurries and the use of chemical fertiliser. Air pollution related to ammonia, and the associated nitrogen deposition, is known to have a damaging impact on sensitive habitats, wider biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, as well as human health. Agriculture is a dominant source of ammonia'*

emissions, currently making up 94% of Northern Irelands current emission levels. The majority of Northern Irelands designated sites are exceeding their critical levels, the concentration at which environmental damage occurs. Increases (or more intensive) agricultural activities may further exacerbate this widespread issue.

This ensures that the significance of and need to consider ammonia emissions is clear and that the requirements of the Natural Environment policies, including NE 1, are not overlooked. In view of these policy caveats, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Utilities Development (UT 2)

Sites with aquatic selection features extend along our rivers and to Lough Foyle. Water quality is the most important factor for most of these selection features, with both point and diffuse sources of pollution being potentially damaging. These are influenced by human activities throughout the catchment.

Policy criteria include: *'There is no unacceptable adverse effect on the environment, nature conservation...'*. The J&A highlights that there is a potential risk of impacts on international sites *'Freshwater and marine habitats and species are important features in our Council and European and International designated sites extend along our rivers and to Lough Foyle.'* The policy enables adequate facilities for treatment of waste water, the provision of which may contribute to meeting the conservation objectives of international sites.

In view of the policy caveat, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Waste Management (WP 2 & WP 3)

WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities and WP 3 Waste Disposal are policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Both state *'proposals for waste collection and treatment facilities will be permitted where they comply with policy MIN 1...'* This is a typographical error and should have referred to WP 1.

WP 1 applies to all waste management development and is explicitly referred to in WP 2 & 3. The criteria include: *'j) the development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the natural environment, areas of landscape value or the historic environment; k) 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.'* The J&A adds *'In assessing all proposals for waste management facilities, the Council will be guided by the precautionary approach i.e. 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.'* 20.15 expands on potential risks.

In view of the caveats in WP 1, and of policy NE 1, it is unlikely that WP 2 or WP 3 could undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. However, for the purposes of clarity, the policies should be corrected. With this correction, in view of the policy caveat referring to WP 1, and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. Amend 'MIN 1' to 'WP 1' in WP 2 & WP 3.

Coastal Development (CD 1)

CD 1 Coastal Development is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy and it constrains coastal development. Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site is immediately adjacent to the coastal area and other sites are hydrologically connected to it. The policy states *'Development proposals must comply with NE 1 and should not have an unacceptable effect, either directly,*

indirectly, or cumulatively, on the coastal area and its setting.' It goes on to state *'Proposals to extend access to the coastline or for the provision of associated facilities such as pathways or picnic areas, should not impact adversely on the natural, built or archaeological / defence heritage, geological or landscape value of the area.'* *'Where development within the 'undeveloped coast' is acceptable in principle, it must: Avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural environment...'* These caveats will ensure that all coastal development must comply with GDPOL 1 and with NE 1 and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria (RED 1)

RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The generation of energy from renewable resources will be permitted provided the requirements of any designations are met. Proposals will be permitted where they will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on: *'b) visual amenity, landscape character and designated / protected areas; c) biodiversity, natural and / or historic assets; d) local natural resources, such as air quality or water quality or quantity.'* Proposals for anaerobic digesters will also be required to meet all the specific criteria including: *'iii. details of appropriate arrangements must be provided for the storage, transport and end use of all digestate / waste outputs of the AD process, taking account of the 'proximity principle', likely transportation requirements, safety, amenity, environmental and visual impact'*. It also states *'The impact of proposals on designated natural and historic environment assets will also be a priority consideration.'* *'Renewable energy development proposals require particular scrutiny through Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (AA) where applicable.'* *The J&A lists 'Some of the more common potential adverse impacts...'* These include *'pollution of watercourses through unsuitable measures for managing run off and/or effluent leading to harm or destruction of biodiversity, including riverine ecology – particularly in relation to anaerobic digesters and from land spreading of digestate; changes to flows of watercourses through abstraction; disruption of bird flight paths.* These caveats will ensure that all development must comply with GDPOL 1 and with NE 1 and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Artificial Modification of Watercourses (FLD 4)

FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses is a general plan-wide environmental safeguarding policy. It clarifies that, where exceptions are provided for, the Council *'will discourage culverting or modification of watercourses in a SPA, SAC, Ramsar sites and supporting habitat. Where there is no alternative, the Council will seek to ensure that such artificial modification of a watercourse will not lead to a loss of supporting habitat, disrupt the passage of site selection features or adversely affect them during construction.'* Given this caveat, NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and the policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. No further policy amendments are required.

Appendix 6: Supplementary Planning Guidance

This sets out how SPGs will be taken forward. It includes (Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance (dSPG): Anaerobic Digestion June 2013 which is dated and does not fully reflect the potential impacts of ammonia impacts on international sites from an AD plant or potential impacts of the spreading of digestate on air and water quality.

The risks to designated sites are discussed above under AGR 2. The comment in relation to the guidance states *'This document is to be retained as, despite being in draft form, it reflects most up to date guidance for it informs consideration of this type of development. However more recent guidance, including that published by DAERA, must also be taken into account and relied on where it is more up to date.'* The statement suggests the SPG is up to date and there are some typographical errors which reduce the clarity of the statement. Therefore there is a risk that outdated information

in the draft SPG may inform proposals. This is not directly referred to in RED 1 however it is relevant to the implementation of that policy.

There has been considerable development in technology for anaerobic digestion and in understanding the impacts of ammonia since 2013. It may be that there will be more up to date information available before the draft Plan Strategy is adopted such that reference to the dSPG can be removed. Therefore Appendix 6 should be reviewed and updated before the Plan Strategy is adopted to clarify that the draft guidance is not the most up to date, advise if / how it should be relied upon and refer to more up to date information if available. The update will ensure that appropriate and up to date guidance on anaerobic digestion is referred to. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy RED 1 be informed by up to date guidance and will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site. Review and update the reference to the (Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance: Anaerobic Digestion June 2013 before the Plan Strategy is adopted.

Step 7: Amending the plan until there would be no adverse effects on site integrity

Integrity test taking account of mitigation measures

Having identified potential case specific policy restrictions and caveats in respect of aspects of the Plan which were identified as having a likely significant effect, it is now necessary to apply the integrity test, taking account of these mitigation measures. Following incorporation of the mitigation measures identified above the re-screening of the elements of the Plan which are affected by the mitigation measures is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Applying the integrity test following incorporation of mitigation measures

Policy	Recommended mitigation measures	Integrity test conclusion
TAM 12 Transport Facilities	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already requires that all development must comply with GDPOL 1 which specifies criteria to protect the environment including <i>'the proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter.'</i> The Natural Environment chapter includes policy NE 1.	The policy caveat will ensure that all development must comply with GDPOL 1. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy TAM 12 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
MIN 1 Minerals Development	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already requires that all development must comply with GDPOL 1.	The policy caveat will ensure that all development must comply with GDPOL 1. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy MIN 1 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
MIN 4 Valuable Minerals	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already requires that all development must comply with GDPOL 1, MIN 1 and other policies including NE 1 and the J&A makes specific reference to protection of ASSIs and SACs.	The policy caveat will ensure that all development must comply with GDPOL 1. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy MIN 4 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
AGR 2 Farm and Forestry Development	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already includes criteria to avoid adverse impacts on the natural environment and to avoid damaging impacts on sensitive habitats through increased ammonia emissions. The J&A expands on the impacts of ammonia on international sites.	The policy caveats will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites, including from ammonia. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy AGR 2 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.

Policy	Recommended mitigation measures	Integrity test conclusion
UT 2 Water Infrastructure	No further policy amendments are required. The policy includes a criterion to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the environment and nature conservation. The J&A highlights that there is a potential risk of impacts on international sites.	The policy caveat will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy UT 2 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities	<u>Amend 'MIN 1' to 'WP 1'.</u> WP 2 will then be subject to WP 1 which includes criteria to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural environment. The J&A for WP 1 expands on potential risks and states that a precautionary approach will be taken.	The correction will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy WP 2 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
WP 3 Waste Disposal	<u>Amend 'MIN 1' to 'WP 1'.</u> WP 3 will then be subject to WP 1 which includes criteria to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural environment. The J&A for WP 1 expands on potential risks and states that a precautionary approach will be taken.	The correction will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy WP 3 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
CD 1 Coastal Development	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already requires that all development must not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the natural environment.	The policy caveats will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy CD 1 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already requires that all development must not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the natural environment. It also highlights that proposals may be subject to HRA. The J&A expands on potential risks from renewables development.	The policy caveats will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy RED 1 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses	No further policy amendments are required. The policy already includes a specific measure to ensure that, where there is no alternative to artificial modification of a watercourse, it must not have an adverse effect on site selection features.	The policy caveat will ensure that all development must avoid adverse effects on international sites. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy FLD 4 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.
Appendix 6: Supplementary Planning Guidance	<u>Review and update the reference to the (Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance: Anaerobic Digestion June 2013 before the Plan Strategy is adopted.</u> This will ensure that appropriate and up to date guidance is referred to.	The update will ensure that appropriate and up to date guidance on anaerobic digestion is referred to and will inform delivery of policy RED 1. Policy NE 1 can then be relied upon to ensure that policy RED 1 will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international site.

Consideration of in combination effects

For all sites it was found that there are protective measures and overarching policies in the draft Plan Strategy that, with the proposed amendments, will ensure that development causing an adverse effect on site integrity cannot be approved. The incorporated mitigation and policy amendments recommended to avoid adverse effects on site integrity all include specific reference to policy GDPOL 1 or other caveats that will ensure that NE 1 is applied to development.

It will be important that HRAs for individual developments also consider in combination effects before planning permission is granted. It is not possible at this stage to predict or anticipate what other plans and projects may be relevant to any such future project HRAs in respect of development provided for within this plan as this will be dependent on the timing of future planning applications.

Policy NE 1 is explicit that a development proposal will be subject to appropriate assessment where it is *'likely to have a significant effect (either alone or in combination)'*. Policy NE 1 therefore ensures that any development approved under the plan will have to demonstrate compliance with the 'in combination' provisions of the Habitats Regulations. There is therefore no risk of a residual effect at this draft Plan Strategy HRA stage, which might act in combination with other plans and projects, which would not be addressed at later assessment stages.

It is therefore concluded that, on the basis of the underlying reasoning supporting Principle 6 of Section C.8.1 of the HRA Handbook, reliance on Policy NE 1 provides the basis upon which effects which might act in combination with other plans and projects can be ruled out. There will be greater opportunity to consider the potential for in combination effects at LPP, and to put in place measures to address any risks, for example through selection of planning designations or by including key site requirements. No further assessment in combination with other plans and projects is required at this stage.

6 Conclusions

Outcome of HRA

Step 8: Preparing a draft of the HRA Record

The draft Plan Strategy has been subject to screening under the Habitats Regulations. All proposals and policies have been considered in respect of the potential for likely significant effects upon any international site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Following the initial screening exercise, ten policies and supplementary information in one appendix were identified as having a likely significant effect in the absence of mitigation. Mitigation measures, in the form of suggested case-specific policy caveats, were already incorporated or were recommended in respect of all of these policies and reviewed as part of an appropriate assessment. The rationale for these is set out in Section 5 and they are summarised in Table 4.

Assuming the recommended mitigation measures are retained and, where changes are required, the plan amended accordingly, it is possible to ascertain that the Plan Strategy will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any international sites.

Following public consultation and independent examination of the draft Plan Strategy the HRA will be finalised and adopted by the Council and published alongside the adopted Plan Strategy. It is recommended that international sites are indicated on maps at Plan Strategy adoption.

The Local Policies Plan (LPP) is the second stage of the LDP and will identify settlement limits, zonings and detailed boundaries of environmental designations and, where appropriate, introduce local policies or key site requirements for these zonings and designations. Another draft HRA will be prepared to assess the potential impacts of the draft LPP on international sites. The information about international sites in Appendix 3, which will be updated, will be important as a starting point for the HRA at LPP. Following public consultation and independent examination of the draft LPP that HRA will be finalised and adopted by the Council and published alongside the adopted LPP.

Glossary

Adverse effect on site integrity	An effect on the qualifying features of an international site which would undermine the achievement of the conservation objectives for that site and which would have a negative effect on the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitats, complex of habitats and / or the levels of populations of the species for which the site is or will be designated.
Competent Authority	For the purposes of the Habitats Regulations the expression ‘competent authority’ includes government departments, district councils and statutory undertakers, and any trustees, commissioners, board or other persons who, as a public body and not for their own profit, act under any statutory provision for the improvement of any place or the production or supply of any commodity or service.
Cumulative Impact	A number of developments in a locality or a continuous activity over time that together may have an increased impact on the environment.
De Minimis	Having no appreciable effect.
Global Status	The global status is an expert judgement of the overall value of the international site for the conservation of the relevant Annex I habitat. Sites have been graded A, B or C.
International sites	Collective term that includes European SACs, SPAs, SACs, pSPAs, SCIs and Ramsar sites (the latter is a wider international designation).
Habitats Regulations	The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).
In combination effect	Refers to effects that may be likely significant effects when considered in combination with effects from other plans or projects.
Likely significant effect	An effect that cannot be ruled out on the basis of objective information. Likely in this context means there is a risk or possibility that an effect will be significant. An effect is significant if it would undermine an international site’s conservation objectives.
Mitigation measures	Measures to avoid, cancel or reduce the effects of a plan or project on an international site.
Natura 2000 (N2K)	The European network of special areas of conservation and special protection areas under the Wild Birds Directive, provided for by Article 3(1) of the Habitats Directive.
Ramsar site	Site listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance adopted at Ramsar, Iran in 1971. As a matter of policy these sites are treated in the same way as international sites.
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are sites that have been adopted by the European Commission and formally designated by the government of each country in whose territory the site lies.
Special Protection Area (SPA) The Directives	Area classified under Article 4 of the EU Birds Directive 1979 and 2009. Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version). These Directives are referred to as the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive respectively and together are called ‘The Directives’ for the purposes of this report.

Appendix 1: References & Evidence Sources

In the absence of specific Northern Ireland guidance on carrying out Habitats Regulations Assessment for plans and programmes reference has been made to other sources of guidance and relevant documents including those listed below. Site specific references and sources of evidence are detailed in Appendix 3.

Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (2001), European Commission Environment DG

DAERA (2015 – 2017) Conservation Objectives *(Online)* Available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/protected-areas> (Accessed November 2019)

DAERA (2019) Data Layers for designated and proposed European and Ramsar sites *Available at* <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets> (Accessed November 2019)

Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans Guidance for Plan-Making Bodies in Scotland Version 3.0, (2015) Scottish Natural Heritage (Initially Prepared by David Tyldesley and Associates)

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (Dates vary) Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS). *(Online)* Available at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1393> (Accessed November 2019)

JNCC (Dates vary) Standard data forms generated from the Natura 2000 Database submitted to the European Commission. *(Online)* Available at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-161> (Accessed November 2019)

NI Water (2019) draft Water Resource & Supply Resilience Plan <https://www.niwater.com/managing-northern-irelands-water-resources/> (Accessed November 2019)

Outdoor Recreation NI (2018) A Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Plan for Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Strangford Lough Marine Protected Area. Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership <http://www.strangfordlough.org/> (Accessed November 2019)

Spatial NI (2017) Data Layers for Local Government boundaries *(Online)* Available at <https://www.spatialni.gov.uk/> (Accessed November 2019)

Tyldesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*, February 2019 edition UK: DTA Publications Ltd

Appendix 2: The Approach to Habitats Regulations Assessment for Plans

Introduction

This appendix sets out the approach to carrying out Habitats Regulations Assessments for Local Development Plans (LDPs) in Northern Ireland in the context of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). It is informed by the Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook⁵ (HRA Handbook) which is regularly updated to reflect case law. The HRA Handbook is aimed at statutory bodies, local authorities, and other 'competent authorities'. It is a definitive source of detailed guidance that is regularly updated for good practice and monitored by a barrister specialising in environmental law and the Habitats Regulations in particular. In places reference is made to relevant sections of the HRA Handbook where more detail can be found and, at times, extracts of the HRA Handbook are quoted.

The context for HRA is set out firstly. This is followed by an overview of how HRA applies to plans and the consideration of mitigation. Finally the stages and steps for the HRA process, as applied to Local Development Plans in Northern Ireland, are detailed. HRA is an iterative process carried out in parallel with plan preparation. The HRA will be modified in light of consultation and representations on and any amendments to the draft Plan Strategy. The record of the HRA will be completed and published with the adopted plan (Plan Strategy or Local Policies Plan).

The Directives and Regulations

The Directives are Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version). These Directives are referred to as the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive respectively and together are called the Directives for the purposes of this report. The overall aim of the Directives is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to habitats and species listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives. These designations form a suite of sites that are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

The Directives are implemented through the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations. For the purposes of the Habitats Regulations the expression 'competent authority' is construed in accordance with Regulation 5. Competent authorities include government departments, district councils and statutory undertakers, and any trustees, commissioners, board or other persons who, as a public body and not for their own profit, act under any statutory provision for the improvement of any place or the production or supply of any commodity or service. Councils as planning authorities are competent authorities. Regulation 43 (1) of the Habitats Regulations requires competent authorities to make an appropriate assessment of plans and projects which are likely to have a significant effect on an international site in Northern Ireland, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. For this report international sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), proposed SPAs and Ramsar sites.

Applying HRA to Local Development Plans

LDPs are prepared under the provisions of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the Planning Act) and the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (NI) 2015. The Planning Act requires the LDP

⁵ Tyldesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*, February 2019 edition UK: DTA Publications Ltd.

to be produced in two stages – the first being the Plan Strategy, followed upon adoption, by the Local Policies Plan.

The approach to HRA for a plan differs to that for a project. In the case of projects the precise location of development is known and more detailed information is generally available, or can be obtained about construction, operation and other stages of the development thus enabling full assessment.

By comparison, a Plan Strategy is a strategic level plan setting out a framework for development but generally lacking detail of where and when developers will bring forward development. This will not be known until after the plan has been published. Therefore the approach to HRA for LDPs differs to that for projects. The plan does however steer how and where projects may be brought forward.

The assessment of strategic plans can present a challenge in terms of deciding what effects may come about as a result of the plan and which cannot occur due to other strategic and regulatory requirements with which the LDP and development management decisions must comply. The view could be taken that, given that a policy is included to meet the requirements of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), and that all planning applications must comply with the Habitats Regulations, then the draft Plan Strategy cannot result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any international site. However, this argument has been rejected by the Courts who have ruled⁶ that the requirement for planning permission to be determined in light of the relevant land use plan, necessarily means that those plans have considerable influence on development decisions and that, as such, land use plans must be subject to HRA in their own right. As a result, to terminate the HRA on this basis would not only be contrary to case law but it would also miss the opportunity to draw attention to the extent of international sites in, or connected to, the Council area and to inform land use planning in such a way as to minimise the regulatory burden of compliance with the Regulations at the later project HRA stage.

There are a number of pieces of case law that clarify how the Directives should be interpreted as applying to plans. The key points are summarised here, these are detailed in the Habitats Regulations Handbook and the relevant section of Handbook content is referenced accordingly (e.g. F.x.x or C.x etc.).

EC v UK⁷ detailed in F.10.1.5.

- A. Land use plans can potentially have significant effects on European sites, despite the subsequent need for planning permission at 'project' level stage.
- B. Assessment of land use plans must therefore be secured under the provisions of the Habitats Directive.
- C. The assessment of plans has to be tailored to the stage of plan making.
- D. The assessment should be 'to the extent possible based on the basis of the precision of the plan'.

Feeney⁸ (UK High Court) F.10.1. reinforced this.

- 'Each appropriate assessment must be commensurate to the relative precision of the plans at any particular stage and no more. There does have to be an appropriate assessment at the Core Strategy stage, but such an assessment cannot do more than the level of detail of the strategy at that stage permits.'

⁶ Refer para 55 in EC v UK Case C-6/04 (2005)

⁷ Case C-6/04: Commission of the European Communities v United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland judgment of the Court 20 October 2005.

⁸ Sean Feeney v Oxford City Council and the Secretary of State CLG para 92 of the judgment dated 24 October 2011 Case No CO/3797/2011, Neutral Citation [2011] EWHC 2699 Admin

Boggis⁹ Court of Appeal & EC v UK C.7.5.2.

The implications for HRA of plans are that the HRA should be proportionate to the level of detail. There should be “*credible evidence that there was a real, rather than a hypothetical, risk*”

- The plan has weight as planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan (unless material considerations indicate otherwise).
- HRA should concentrate on aspects of the plan that could, realistically, be likely to have a significant effect.
- A likely significant effect should not be assumed for:
 - policies and proposals that are no more than general policy statements or which express a general aspiration or intent;
 - policies which generate no more than theoretical risks, or vague or hypothetical effects; or
 - policies or proposals for which meaningful assessment can be made at this stage, where no particular significant effect on any particular international site can actually be identified.
- Reliance should not simply be placed on a general international site protection policy as this does not address potential tensions or conflicts in the plan between site protection and policies or proposals which could significantly affect international sites.
- Tensions in the plan must be resolved in favour of protecting the international sites from harm.
- Policies or proposals with a high potential for significant adverse effects on international sites should be removed or subject to mitigation measures.

Assessing and applying mitigation measures

CJEU Case C323/17 (People over Wind & Sweetman)¹⁰ C.5, F7.1

On 12 April 2018, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) issued a judgment, *Case C323/17 (People over Wind & Sweetman)*, which ruled that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive must be interpreted as meaning that mitigation measures, referred to in the judgment as measures which are intended to avoid or reduce effects, should be assessed within the framework of an appropriate assessment. It is therefore no longer permissible to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a plan or project on an international site at the Stage 1 test of likely significance.

In light of this Stage 1 Assessment does consider essential features and characteristics of the plan; it also takes account of regional and strategic context and other regulatory controls that will apply to development under the plan. However measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been adverse effects on the integrity of international sites are not taken into account in Stage 1 and instead are assessed at Stage 2 appropriate assessment.

The consideration of mitigation differs between projects and plans, although for both cases it is not appropriate to take account of mitigation measures which might be incorporated into the plan at the screening stage. The first step in appropriate assessment is therefore to seek to incorporate mitigation measures which might be relied upon to avoid any adverse effects to the integrity of the international site.

⁹ Peter Charles Boggis and Easton Bavants Conservation v Natural England and Waveney District Council, High Court of Justice Court of Appeal case C1/2009/0041/QBACF Citation No [2009] EWCA Civ. 1061 20th October 2009

¹⁰ Case C-323/17 Request for a preliminary ruling, *People Over Wind* and Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta, 12th April 2018

Feeney v Oxford City Council¹¹ F10.1.

Case law has established that it is acceptable in principle to include policies within a Local Plan which are conditional upon certain conditions being met.

Abbotskerswell v Teignbridge (2014)¹² F10.1.

In this case the High Court specifically endorsed an approach which potentially relies upon matters being finalised after the adoption of the plan. The competent authority must however be satisfied that the measures can be delivered in practice.

This is captured in the HRA Handbook F.10.1 (emphasis added):

'Because the integrity test incorporates the application of the precautionary principle as a matter of law, and because plan assessments are, by their nature, less precise than project assessments, it is important for the assessment process to eliminate the prospect of adverse effects on site integrity in so far as that is possible at the level of specificity inherent in the nature and purpose of the particular plan.'

F.10.1.2 of the Handbook refers to mitigation measures which might be relied upon to show that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity. Examples are provided as follows:

'mitigation measures that may be introduced during or after the 'appropriate assessment' stage may be:

- a) Case-specific policy restrictions;*
- b) Case-specific policy caveats;*
- c) Prescribing how adverse effects on site integrity will be avoided by mitigation measures in a lower level or more detailed plan, to be confirmed by a more detailed Habitats Regulations Assessment at that level;*
- d) Deleting aspects of the plan that will probably fail the tests of the Directive at project application stage;*
- e) Ensuring that there are no proposals that could adversely affect the integrity of a European site that if retained in the plan may lead to a case for the proposal to be permitted, using the incorporation in the plan as the imperative reason of overriding public interest in its favour, because the plan relies on it being, or assumes that it will be, implemented;*

To be an appropriate restriction or caveat (in (a) or (b) above), enabling the plan-making body to ascertain no adverse effect on the integrity of a European site, the restriction must be:

- case-specific;*
- explicit; and*
- added to the policy and not merely added to the explanatory text or commentary, or not merely inserted into the implementation or monitoring chapters.'*

Co-ordination with other Habitats Regulations Assessments

The Habitats Regulations provides for co-ordination between competent authorities at Regulation 47. While Regulation 47 does not strictly apply to HRA for Local Development Plans it does establish the principle that a competent authority can place weight on a HRA carried out by another competent authority. This is subject to the proviso that the competent authority should be satisfied that the earlier HRA was robust and has not become outdated by further information or developments. No guidance has been issued by DAERA as allowed for under 47(3) however the Department for

¹¹ Sean Feeney v Oxford City Council and the Secretary of State CLG para 92 of the judgment dated 24 October 2011 Case No CO/3797/2011, Neutral Citation [2011] EWHC 2699 Admin

¹² Abbotskerswell Parish Council v Teignbridge District Council [2014] EWHC 4166 (Admin)

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published guidance¹³ in 2012 to meet the equivalent regulation for England. Paragraphs 5 – 7 of that guidance are referred to here as an expansion of how it interprets co-ordination between competent authorities.

'5. The Regulations transposing the Habitats Directive enable competent authorities to adopt the reasoning or conclusions of another competent authority as to whether a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, or will adversely affect the integrity of a European site. They also provide that a competent authority is not required to assess any implications of a plan or project that would be more appropriately assessed by another competent authority.'

6. Competent authorities should adopt the reasoning, conclusion or assessment of another competent authority in relation to the appropriate assessment requirements for a plan or project, if they can. This can happen when all or part of the appropriate assessment requirements have already been met by another competent authority. It could also happen if one competent authority is completing all or part of the appropriate assessment requirements on behalf of others. Competent authorities remain responsible for ensuring their decisions are consistent with the Habitats Directive, so must be satisfied:

- No additional material information has emerged, such as new environmental evidence or changes or developments to the plan or project, that means the reasoning, conclusion or assessment they are adopting has become out of date*
- The analysis underpinning the reasoning, conclusion or assessment they are adopting is sufficiently rigorous and robust. This condition can be assumed to be met for a plan or project involving the consideration of technical matters if the reasoning, conclusion or assessment was undertaken or made by a competent authority with the necessary technical expertise.*

7. Due to these conditions there may be cases where it is not appropriate to adopt the reasoning, conclusions or assessment of another competent authority, or it is only appropriate to adopt some elements of an earlier assessment. In addition, even where the conditions are met, a competent authority may need to undertake additional work to supplement the assessment they have adopted in order to meet the full appropriate assessment requirements.'

The application and implications of the DEFRA guidance has been considered in detail within Part C.12 of the HRA Handbook. Therefore it is accepted as good practice that consideration may be given to HRAs carried out by other competent authorities where they are applicable to development to be brought forward under the LDP.

HRA the Stages and Steps - Overview

HRA is normally described in four stages:

- Stage 1: Screening for likely significant effects;
- Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment and the Integrity Test;
- Stage 3: Alternative Solutions; and
- Stage 4: Imperative reasons of overriding public interest and compensatory measures.

The approach to HRA for LDPs in Northern Ireland is described through 11 Steps across Stages 1 and 2. These steps are not named as such in the HRA Handbook however the section which applies to each step is referenced and Figure A.1.1 illustrates each step in the HRA process.

¹³ [Defra guidance on competent authority co-ordination](#), July 2012

Stage 1 involves firstly deciding whether a plan or project should be subject to HRA (Step 1). Steps 2, identifying international sites, and 3, gathering information about those sites, help to identify the international sites which the plan may affect and compile information about those sites. Step 4 allows for discretionary discussion with the Statutory Nature Conservation Body and other stakeholders. The final step of Stage 1 is the preliminary screening of the plan to determine which elements of it are likely to have a significant effect on an international site and identify the sites that may be affected.

Stage 2 is referred to as 'appropriate assessment' and assesses the implications of the plan or project for international sites in view of the sites' conservation objectives. A plan can only proceed if it can be ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of an international site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

If Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment finds that there would be an adverse effect on site integrity then alternative solutions which are financially, legally and technically feasible need to be considered further in Stage 3. Alternative solutions are already considered in preparation of many plans, for example through the Preferred Options Paper for Local Development Plans and in carrying out Strategic Environmental Assessment which requires consideration of reasonable alternatives. Compliance with regional policies and strategies also means that environmental effects will have been taken into account. It is therefore rare for HRAs for LDPs to progress beyond Stage 2.

Stage 4 applies in the event that there is an imperative reason of public interest which overrides the risk and harm to sites, and priority features where appropriate. It provides for compensatory measures to protect the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network to be identified, delivery detailed and the government notified. As already noted it is rare for HRAs for LDPs to progress beyond Stage 2. Stage 3 and 4 are not therefore detailed further in this approach.

Stage 1: Screening Plan for Likely Significant Effects

Step 1: Deciding whether a plan should be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment

This involves considering the nature of the plan and its individual proposals to determine whether there is a requirement to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and is further detailed in HRA Handbook F.2. and F.3.

The following questions help determine whether the document being reviewed is a plan in the context of the Directives.

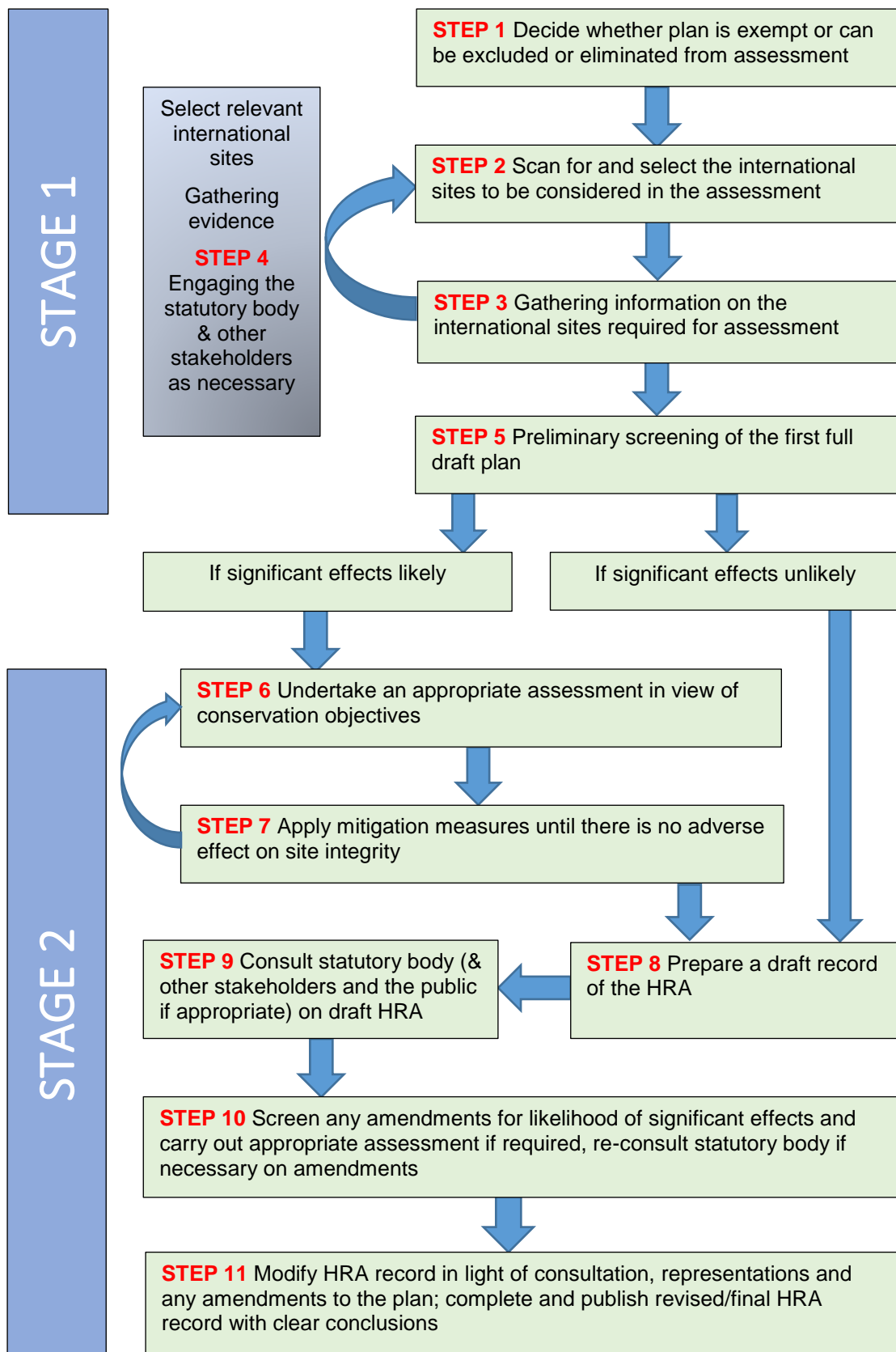
- Is the whole of the plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of an international site for nature conservation purposes?
- Is the plan a strategic development plan, local development plan, supplementary guidance?
- Is the plan a general statement of policy showing only the general political will or intention of the plan making body, and no effect on any particular international site can reasonably be predicted?
- Does the plan contain a programme, or policies, or proposals which could affect one or more particular international sites?

Step 1 is recorded in Section 1 of this report. If it is found that the plan is not subject to HRA then the outcome is recorded and it is not necessary to progress beyond this step. In practice an LDP is a plan in the context of the Directives and subject to HRA.

Step 2: Scanning and selecting international sites potentially affected

This step follows the scan-collate-consider-select procedure set out in the HRA Handbook Figure F.4.3 and is carried out in parallel with Step 3. Step 2a is the scanning stage; Step 3 collates information; Step 2b involves considering the information and selecting the relevant sites that may be affected.

Figure A.1.1 Steps in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Process



Step 2a: 'Long-list' of sites with potential connection to plan area

International sites that are within the plan area, within a zone of influence beyond the plan area or connected to the plan area through ecology or infrastructure are identified. This is detailed in the HRA Handbook F.4 and presented in Section 2. Information is collected about this 'long-list' of sites in Step 3 and presented in Appendix 3.

Step 2b: 'Short-list' of sites that should be considered in the HRA

Taking account of the information gathered in Step 3 and the 'long-list' of sites identified at Step 2a a further scan is carried out to determine the effects that could potentially affect international sites as a result of the plan. This is carried out using the Scanning and Site Selection List in Figure F.4.4. of the HRA Handbook. As this takes account of the site selection features, pathways to sites and conservation objectives this is likely to find that some of the sites on the long-list can be eliminated from further assessment as there is no conceivable effect or their conservation objective could not be undermined. This step could potentially identify some sites that were overlooked at Step 2a.

This step is recorded in Appendix 3, Table A.3.1. Any sites that are eliminated as a result of this step are listed in Table A.3.2. The outcome is summarised in Section 2, Table 2.

Step 3: Gathering information about the international sites

This step is carried out in parallel with and informs Step 2. Information for each site on the long-list identified at Step 2a is compiled to include selection features, conservation objectives, conservation status, potential threats to site integrity from planning related development and location relative to the plan area and any plan designations. This is detailed in the HRA Handbook F.4 and presented in Appendix 3.

Step 4: Discretionary discussions on the method and scope of the appraisal

The Statutory Nature Conservation Body, represented by the Department of Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), may be consulted informally to ensure that the information at Step 3 is up to date and reflects known issues for the international sites. This provides the opportunity to invite comment on the scope of the HRA and potential in combination considerations.

Step 5: Screening the draft / proposed plan for likely significant effects

This step is detailed in the HRA Handbook F.6 Part A and F.7 advises how the outcome should be recorded. The screening of the whole plan is presented in Appendix 5 and the outcome summarised in Section 4 of the HRA. The HRA Handbook also presents principles, with reference to case law and government guidance, which inform screening and the interpretation of terms used; some relevant extracts are:

'As a result of European case law in Waddenzee, irrespective of the normal English meaning of 'likely', in this statutory context a 'likely significant effect' is a possible significant effect; one whose occurrence cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information. In this context it is permissible to ask whether a plan or project 'may have a significant effect'...(principle 3)'

'A significant effect is any effect that would undermine the conservation objectives for a European site... (principle 4)'

'An effect which would not be significant can properly be described as : as 'insignificant effect'; or a 'de Minimis effect; or a 'trivial effect'; or as having 'no appreciable effect'; but it is important to bear in mind that, in this context, all the terms are synonymous and are being used to describe effects which would not undermine the conservation objectives'....(principle 8)'

'Objective', in this context, means clear verifiable fact rather than subjective opinion. It will not normally be sufficient for an applicant merely to assert that the plan or project will not have an adverse effect on a site, nor will it be appropriate for a competent authority to rely on reassurances based on supposition or speculation. On the other hand, there should be credible

evidence to show that there is a real rather than a hypothetical risk of effects that could undermine the site's conservation objectives. Any serious possibility of a risk that the conservation objectives might be undermined should trigger an 'appropriate assessment' (principle 11).'

Draft Plan Strategies are set in the context of a vision and objectives which indicate the outcomes intended to be achieved through the plan. How these should be considered is set out in Sections F.6.2.2 and F.6.2.3 of the HRA Handbook as follows:

'...it is possible that the goals and objectives are the drivers for the possibility of a significant effect on a European site, but in most cases, it will be subsequent, more detailed policies or proposals that would have such implications, rather than the general goals or objectives. In most cases the general goals and objectives will be screened out, either because they will have no effect at all, or because they are general statements which are too vague to have a significant effect on a particular site. Even if they are the driver of the potential effect, it is likely that the plan will contain a more specific policy or proposal that would be the better target for assessment.'

The 'screening categories' in Part F of the HRA Handbook are used to provide a consistent and transparent approach to the screening process. The following categories are used to assess whether an overall plan and its individual proposals require HRA. They are explained in detail in the section of the HRA Handbook referenced.

- A. General statement of policy / general aspiration (screened out). F.6.3.1
- B. Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability / sustainability of proposals (screened out). F.6.3.2
- C. Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan (screened out). F.6.3.3
- D. General plan-wide environmental protection / site safeguarding / threshold policies (screened out). F.6.3.4
- E. Policies or proposals which steer change in such a way as to protect international sites from adverse effects (screened out). F.6.3.5
- F. Policy that cannot lead to development or other change (screened out). F.6.3.6
- G. Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site (screened out). F.6.3.7
- H. Policy or proposal the (actual or theoretical) effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects) (screened out). F.6.3.8
- I. Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone (screened in) F.6.3.9
- J. Policy or proposal with an effect on a site but unlikely to be significant alone, so need to check for likely significant effects in combination F.6.3.10
- K. Policy or proposal unlikely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination (screened out after the in combination test). F.6.3.11
- L. Policy or proposal which might be likely to have a significant effect in combination (screened in after the in combination test). F.6.3.11
- M. Bespoke area, site or case-specific policies or proposals intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on an international site (screened in) F.6.3.12

In some cases more than one category may apply. Where it is the case that part of a policy is in one category e.g. B. 'policy listing general criteria', whereas another part is in another category e.g. H. 'cannot undermine the conservation objectives' then both categories are listed e.g. B/H. Where part of a policy is screened in then this part will be further assessed.

Consideration must be given to any cumulative effects of proposals during plan preparation as detailed in HRA Handbook F.6.3.11. These include potential cumulative effects within the plan and in combination effects with other relevant plans and projects. For those proposals falling under

categories A to H there is no likely significant effect alone and cannot be any effect in combination. Those under category I are deemed to have a likely significant effect alone and will be progressed to appropriate assessment therefore in combination assessment is not required at Stage 1. Those policies or proposals falling under category J do need to be assessed further to determine whether they fall into K or L when considered in combination.

If there are likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, then the sites and features which may be affected and potential impacts are summarised in preparation for Stage 2.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment and the Integrity Test

Step 6: The appropriate assessment

The summary from Step 5 is the starting point for the appropriate assessment. Step 6 assesses whether any likely significant effect could lead to an adverse effect on site integrity for each site. This is set out in the HRA Handbook F.6. PART B and in F.9.

Where it is found that there could be an adverse effect for any site then measures are identified to remove any potential for adverse effects as described above. Measures considered at appropriate assessment must be subject to *'a full and precise analysis of the measures capable of avoiding or reducing any significant effects'*. These measures may include case-specific policy restrictions or caveats, adding mitigation in a further plan that will deliver the current plan, removing proposals that could have an adverse effect on site integrity, specific mitigation plans or a large scale mitigation strategy which includes measures to mitigate adverse effects of the current plan.

In considering in combination assessment at appropriate assessment principle 4 of C.8.1 in Section C.8 'The in combination assessment' of the HRA Handbook reads as follows:

'In deciding the required scope of an appropriate assessment one must always keep firmly in mind that the underlying purpose of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive is to ensure (subject to the operation of Article 6(4)) that a plan or project is authorised only to the extent that it will not, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, adversely affect the integrity of the European site; the key purpose.

European Commission guidance and case law establishes that the underlying intention of the in-combination provision is to take account of cumulative effects. An appropriate assessment need not be extended further than is necessary to fulfil the key purpose.'

Principle 6 of Section C.8.1 of the HRA Handbook states that, following an appropriate assessment:

'...if on assessment alone it is ascertained that the subject plan or project will in fact have no effect at all on the European site, an adverse effect in combination is ruled out and no further assessment is required. The plan or project may be authorised.'

Step 7: Amending the plan until there would be no adverse effects on site integrity

Any mitigation identified in Step 6 is incorporated in the plan. This is further detailed in the HRA Handbook F.11 and presented in Section 5. In the case of a draft HRA, if the mitigation is not already included in the DPS, it will be incorporated before the Plan Strategy is finalised and adopted.

Step 8: Preparing a draft of the HRA Record

This is a draft report which records the HRA and supporting evidence and comprises this report with clear conclusions as set out in Section 6.

Step 9: Consultation

If the HRA is concluded at Stage 1 the HRA Report with a Statement of Finding of No Likely Significant Effects is published. Consultation is not required on this Stage 1 Test of Likely Significance in these circumstances however it is recommended that the record is published as a supporting document for the plan. If the draft plan is subject to consultation a draft Stage 1 HRA Report may be included in the

consultation with a note that it will be updated to take account of any changes in the proposals or international sites before the plan is finalised.

If the HRA progresses to Stage 2 then DAERA must be consulted on a draft Stage 2 HRA Report (also known as an appropriate assessment). Other stakeholders such as managers of international sites should be consulted where appropriate. Public consultation is not required on the draft Stage 2 HRA Report however it may be included as a supporting document for any public consultation on the draft plan and comment on it invited. It should be stated that the HRA will be updated to take account of any changes in the proposals or international sites before the plan is finalised.

Step 10: Proposed modifications

Modifications to a plan may come about as a result of consultation, independent examination or the outcome of the HRA and the approach to their consideration is set out in F.12 of the HRA Handbook. Representations by DAERA and other consultees are recorded with a note on if and how they have been addressed in the HRA. Further mitigation identified through Step 9, or as a result of a revised HRA in light of modifications to the plan, is incorporated in the plan. Steps 6 - 8 are updated to reflect any additional mitigation and adverse effects reviewed.

Step 11: Modifying and completing the appraisal record

If it is found that there are no adverse effects on site integrity then the HRA may be concluded and a Stage 2 HRA Appropriate Assessment Report published to include a Record of No Adverse Effect on the Integrity of any international site under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).

Appendix 3: Site information

An overview of the information to be presented for each site is firstly provided. This is followed by a record of Step 2b: 'Short-list' of sites that should be considered in the HRA. Information for each site identified in the 'long-list' identified in Section 2, Step 2a follows. This details selection features, conservation objectives, conservation status, potential threats to site integrity from planning related development and location relative to the plan area and any plan designations. This has informed the current draft HRA and will also provide baseline information for the HRA to be carried out for the LPP. The site information is grouped as follows.

Banagher Glen SAC	Banagher Glen SAC
Fairy Water Bogs SAC & Ramsar Site	Fairy Water Bogs SAC
	Fairy Water Bogs Ramsar Site
Lough Foyle SPA & Ramsar Site	Lough Foyle SPA
	Lough Foyle Ramsar Site
Moneygal Bog SAC	Moneygal Bog SAC
Owenkillew River SAC	Owenkillew River SAC
River Faughan and Tributaries SAC	River Faughan and Tributaries SAC
River Foyle and Tributaries SAC	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC
River Roe and Tributaries SAC	River Roe and Tributaries SAC
Teal Lough SAC	Teal Lough SAC
Tully Bog SAC	Tully Bog SAC
Croagonagh Bog SAC	Croagonagh Bog SAC
Dunragh Lough / Pettigo SAC & SPA	Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC
	Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA
Lough Derg SPA	Lough Derg SPA
Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC	Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC
Lough Foyle SPA	Lough Foyle SPA
Lough Nageage SAC	Lough Nageage SAC
Lough Swilly SAC & SPA	Lough Swilly SAC
	Lough Swilly SPA
River Finn SAC	River Finn SAC

Introduction to Site Information

Conservation Objectives

EU Member States have responsibility under the Habitats and Birds Directives to ensure that all habitats and species of Community Interest are maintained or restored to Favourable Conservation Status (FCS). Natura 2000 sites have a role to play in achieving this overall objective as the most important core sites for these species and habitats. Each site must therefore be managed in a way that ensures it contributes as effectively as possible to helping the species and habitats for which it has been designated reach a favourable conservation status.

In accordance with Article 6.1 of the Habitats Directive, Member States are required to implement, on each site, the necessary conservation measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the protected habitat types and species of Community Interest present. DAERA has commissioned management plans for many international sites. Those that are available will be taken into account when this HRA is finalised.

Member States must also prevent any damaging activities that could significantly disturb those species and habitats (Article 6.2) and protect the site from new plans and projects that are potentially damaging or likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site (Article 6.3, 6.4).

To ensure that each Natura 2000 site contributes fully to reaching this overall target of FCS, it is important to set clear conservation objectives for each individual site. These define the desired state for each of the species and habitat types for which the site was designated. Conservation objectives are not published for Ramsar sites therefore the conservation objectives for the associated SAC & SPA were referred to.

Conservation Objectives have a role in:

- Conservation planning and management by guiding management to maintain habitats and species in, or restore them to, favourable condition;
- Assessing plans and projects, as required under article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive in light of the site's conservation objectives; and
- Monitoring and reporting by providing the basis for assessing the condition of a feature, the factors that affect it and the actions required.

Favourable Condition is defined as *'the target condition for an interest feature in terms of the abundance, distribution and/or quality of that feature within the site'*. The most recent condition assessment for site selection features was referred to where available in preparing this report.

Sources of information Northern Ireland sites

The appropriate assessments draw on or refer to source documents as detailed below. Digital maps for all sites can be viewed on the DAERA Natural Environment Map Viewer¹⁴ or downloaded from its digital datasets web page¹⁵. Maps are also provided in Appendix 4 to illustrate the relationship between the plan area and international sites. Additional, site specific, sources of information are listed for each site.

Special Areas of Conservation

An overview of each SAC can be found on the JNCC website at its section on UK Protected Sites¹⁶. Under 'General Site Character' there is a link to the Natura 2000 standard data form for that SAC. Further detail is provided on this website about the Annex I habitats and Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of the site. It also explains why the site is important and provides a link to information about that habitat in the UK context. Further information for each SAC can be found online through the DAERA Protected Areas page¹⁷. On each site page the link to guidance and literature allows the Reasons for designation, Conservation Objectives and site map to be accessed.

Special Protection Areas

A link to the Natura 2000 standard data form for each SPA can be found on the JNCC website at its section on UK protected sites. Further information for each site can be found through the DAERA Protected Areas page. On each site page the link to guidance and literature allows the SPA citation document and Conservation Objectives to be accessed.

Ramsar sites

A link to the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) for each Ramsar site can be found on the JNCC UK Protected Sites page. Further information for each site can be found through the DAERA Protected Areas page. On the DAERA site page the link to guidance and literature allows the Ramsar site citation document and map to be accessed.

¹⁴ DAERA (2018) 'Natural Environment Map Viewer' Available at: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer>

¹⁵ DAERA (2018) 'Download Digital Datasets' Available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets> (accessed 23/01/2019).

¹⁶ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1458>

¹⁷ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/protected-areas>

Condition Assessment

DAERA has compiled and made available a spreadsheet, 'Condition of Features in ASSIs and N2Ks'. This details the most recent condition assessment for features, usually with an explanation of the reason why a feature is in unfavourable condition. This spreadsheet was referred to in compiling site information. DAERA also provided unpublished condition assessment reports for some individual sites and some site selection features such as otter.

Sources of Information Ireland sites

The background information for appropriate assessment draws on or refers to source documents as detailed below. Digital maps for all sites can be downloaded from the NPWS website at their Designated Site Data web page¹⁸.

Special Protection Areas Ireland

An overview of Ireland's SPA network can be found on the NPWS website at the page on Special Protection Areas¹⁹. On this page, there are links to SPA boundary data and a statutory list of SPAs where further information on the SPA citation document, conservation interests and operations or activities requiring consent can be found. Links to individual web pages for each SPA, which include their Natura 2000 standard data form, are found on the NPWS website page on Conservation Objectives²⁰.

Condition Assessment Ireland

Condition Assessment information for designated sites is provided from the NPWS website at its Conservation Objectives page. A list of SACs and SPAs is provided with links to site conservation objectives, Natura 2000 data forms and site synopsis information. For some of these sites, Conservation Objectives Supporting Documents are also provided and include condition information.

Step 2b: 'Short-list' of sites that should be considered in the HRA

Taking account of the 'long-list' of sites identified in Section 2, the discussion of potential impacts of development in Section 3 and the site information in this Appendix, a further scan was carried out to determine the effects that could potentially affect international sites as a result of the plan. This was carried out using the Scanning and Site Selection List in Figure F.4.4. of the HRA Handbook as described in Appendix 2.

¹⁸ NPWS (2018) 'Designated site data' <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/designated-site-data> (accessed November 2019)

¹⁹ NPWS (2018) 'Special Protection Areas (SPA)' <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa> (accessed November 2019)

²⁰ <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives>

Table A.3.1 Scanning and site selection list for sites that could potentially be affected by the plan

Extract from The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, www.dtapublications.co.uk © DTA Publications Limited (November 2018) all rights reserved. This work is registered with the UK Copyright Service

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
1. All plans (terrestrial, coastal and marine)	Sites within the geographic area covered by or intended to be relevant to the plan	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Owenkillev Rivr SAC Moneygal Bog SAC Fairy Water Bogs SPA Fairy Water Bogs Ramsar site
2. Plans that could affect the aquatic environment	Sites upstream or downstream of the plan area in the case of river or estuary sites	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Owenkillev River SAC River Roe and Tributaries SAC Lough Swilly SPA River Finn SAC Lough Foyle SPA (ROI)
	Open water, peatland, fen, marsh and other wetland sites with relevant hydrological links to land within the plan area, irrespective of distance from the plan area	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Owenkillev Rivr SAC Lough Swilly SPA Lough Swilly SAC River Finn SAC Fairy Water Bogs SPA Fairy Water Bogs Ramsar site Moneygal Bog SAC Lough Nageage SAC (ROI) Lough Foyle SPA (ROI)
3. Plans that could affect the marine environment	Sites that could be affected by changes in water quality, currents or flows; or effects on the inter-tidal or sub-tidal areas or the sea bed, or marine species	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Swilly SPA Lough Swilly SAC River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Lough Foyle SPA (ROI) River Finn SAC
4. Plans that could affect the coast	Sites in the same coastal 'cell', or part of the same coastal ecosystem, or where there are interrelationships with or between different physical coastal processes	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Foyle SPA (ROI)

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
5. Plans that could affect mobile species	Sites whose qualifying features include mobile species which may be affected by the plan irrespective of the location of the plan's proposals or whether the species would be in or out of the site when they might be affected	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Swilly SPA River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC River Roe and Tributaries SAC Owenkillew River SAC Lough Derg SPA (ROI) Lough Foyle SPA (ROI) River Finn SAC
6. Plans that could increase recreational pressure on international sites potentially vulnerable or sensitive to such pressure	Such international sites in the plan area	Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Foyle SPA (ROI) River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC
	Such international sites within an agreed zone of influence or other reasonable and evidence-based travel distance of the plan area boundaries that may be affected by local recreational or other visitor pressure from within the plan area	Lough Swilly SPA Lough Swilly SAC
	Such international sites within an agreed zone of influence or other evidence-based longer travel distance of the plan area, which are major (regional or national) visitor attractions such as international sites which are National Nature Reserves where public visiting is promoted, sites in National Parks, coastal sites and sites in other major tourist or visitor destinations	None
7. Plans that would increase the amount of development	Sites in the plan area or beyond that are used for, or could be affected by, water abstraction irrespective of distance from the plan area	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC River Roe and Tributaries SAC
7. cont., Plans that would increase the amount of development	Sites used for, or could be affected by, discharge of effluent from waste water treatment works or other waste management streams serving the plan area, irrespective of distance from the plan area	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC River Roe and Tributaries SAC Owenkillew River SAC Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Swilly SPA Lough Swilly SAC
	Sites that could be affected by the provision of new or extended transport or other infrastructure	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
	Sites that could be affected by increased deposition of air pollutants arising from the proposals, including emissions from significant increases in traffic	Lough Foyle Ramsar Site Lough Foyle SPA River Faughan and Tributaries SAC River Foyle and Tributaries SAC Lough Foyle SPA (ROI) River Finn SAC (ROI)
8. Plans for linear developments or infrastructure	Sites within a specified distance from the centre line of the proposed route (or alternative routes), the distance may be varied for differing types of site / qualifying features and in the absence of established good practice standards, distance(s) to be agreed by the statutory nature conservation body	None
9. Plans that introduce new activities or new uses into the marine, coastal or terrestrial environment	Sites considered to have qualifying features potentially vulnerable or sensitive to the effects of the new activities proposed by the plan	None (No such 'new' uses introduced by the draft Plan Strategy)
10. Plans that could change the nature, area, extent, intensity, density, timing or scale of existing activities or uses	Sites considered to have qualifying features potentially vulnerable or sensitive to the effects of the changes to existing activities proposed by the plan	None (recreational uses covered at 6 above)
11. Plans that could change the quantity, quality, timing, treatment or mitigation of emissions or discharges to air, water or soil	Sites considered to have qualifying features potentially vulnerable or sensitive to the changes in emissions or discharges that could arise as a result of the plan	All sites except Tamur Bog SAC (ROI)
12. Plans that could change the quantity, volume, timing, rate, or other characteristics of biological resources harvested, extracted or consumed	Sites whose qualifying features include the biological resources which the plan may affect, or whose qualifying features depend on the biological resources which the plan may affect, for example as prey species or supporting habitat or which may be disturbed by the harvesting, extraction or consumption	Not applicable to land use plans
13. Plans that could change the quantity, volume, timing, rate, or other characteristics of physical resources extracted or consumed	Sites whose qualifying features rely on the non- biological resources which the plan may affect, for example, as habitat or a physical environment on which habitat may develop or which may be disturbed by the extraction or consumption	None

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
14. Plans which could introduce or increase, or alter the timing, nature or location of disturbance to species	Sites whose qualifying features are considered to be potentially sensitive to disturbance, for example as a result of noise, activity or movement, or the presence of disturbing features that could be brought about by the plan	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Foyle SPA (ROI) River Finn SAC (ROI)
15. Plans which could introduce or increase or change the timing, nature or location of light or noise pollution	Sites whose qualifying features are considered to be potentially sensitive to the effects of changes in light or noise that could be brought about by the plan	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Lough Foyle SPA Lough Foyle Ramsar site Lough Foyle SPA (ROI) River Finn SAC (ROI)
16. Plans which could introduce or increase a potential cause of mortality of species	Sites whose qualifying features are considered to be potentially sensitive to the source of new or increased mortality that could be brought about by the plan	None (direct impacts are considered at 1 above)

Sites considered but eliminated

As Step 2b takes account of the site selection features, pathways to sites and conservation objectives it found that one of the sites on the long-list can be eliminated from further assessment as there is no conceivable pathway for an effect or their conservation objectives could not be undermined.

Table A.3.2 Sites Eliminated from Further Assessment

Site	Elimination Reason
Tamur Bog SAC	Tamur Bog SAC is 8.9km from the plan area boundary which is beyond the screening distance for impacts from aerial emissions of ammonia from agricultural sources advised by DAERA. While there is a theoretical pathway, it is not conceivable that the plan would generate additional development impacts to an extent that it could undermine the conservation objectives for this site.

Banagher Glen SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030083
Year:	2005	Area:	87.9ha
ASSIs:	Banagher Glen ASSI		
References:	Banagher Glen SAC Conservation Objectives V2 1/4/2015		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

The site consists of a complex system of river valleys with wooded areas surrounding the main Owenrigh River valley and its three tributary valleys all to the south. The site has a history of continuous woodland cover, with the present woodland being over 200 years old. Due to the underlying geology the site supports examples of both acid Oak woodland and a smaller component of base rich Ash woodland. The site hosts examples of the metamorphic Dart Formation, principally schists, and metamorphic basic intrusive igneous rocks. It also hosts an internationally important exposure of the Dungiven metamorphic limestones in Banagher Glen Quarry.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Habitat	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	B	60.4ha
Habitat	<i>Tilio-Acerion</i> forests of slopes, screes and ravines	C	17.5ha

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles and *Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives for Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles are:

- Maintain and where feasible expand the extent of existing oak woodland but not at the expense of other SAC (ABC) features. (There are area of degraded heath, wetland and damp grassland which have the potential to develop into oak woodland).
- Maintain and enhance Oak woodland species diversity and structural diversity.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the Oak woodland, e.g. fen, swamp, grasslands, scrub, especially where these exhibit natural transition to Oak woodland
- Seek nature conservation management over adjacent forested areas outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland rehabilitation.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland expansion.

The SAC selection feature component objectives for *Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines are:

- Maintain and where feasible expand the extent of existing ash woodland, but not at the expense of other SAC (ABC) features (There is an area of degraded bog, wetland and damp grassland which have the potential to develop into ash woodland).
- Maintain and enhance ash woodland species diversity and structural diversity.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the ash woodland, e.g. scrub, especially where these exhibit natural transition.
- Seek nature conservation management over adjacent forested areas outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland rehabilitation.

- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland expansion.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Land management activities adjacent to the site can cause poaching by domestic stock and feral goats. Activities outside the site causing release of water can cause landslides and severe erosion to valleys. Removal of dead wood can remove valuable habitat for fungi and invertebrates. Activities occurring outside the site (e.g. agricultural intensification, drainage works, and development) may be detrimental to the site through remote affects such as nitrogen deposition which can favour the growth of competitive plants and lead to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	Unfavourable: No change	2011
<i>Tilio-Acerion</i> forests of slopes, screes and ravines	Unfavourable: No change	2011

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan area is 4.5 km west from the SAC. The SAC is within the River Roe catchment and there is no hydrological pathway from the plan area for any effects. The SAC is downstream of a water source for the council area and close to infrastructure related to Caugh Hill Water Treatment Works. Potential for impacts from aerial pollution pathways and increased pressure on drinking water source.

Fairy Water Bogs SAC & Ramsar Site

Site Name:	Fairy Water Bogs SAC	Site Code:	UK0016611
Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Area:	224.18ha
Year:	2005		
Site Name:	Fairy Water Bogs Ramsar Site	Site Code:	UK12008
Status:	Designated Ramsar Site	Area:	223.7ha
Year:	1999		
ASSIs:	Fairy Water Bogs ASSI		
References:	Fairy Water Bogs SAC Conservation Objectives V2.1 01/04/2015 Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands JNCC: Version 3.0, 13/06/2008		
Map:	Map 4&5		

Summary Site Description

Fairy Water Bogs are located at an elevation below 80m in the former floodplains of the Fairy Water valley to the north of Drumquin. They are considered to be the most important concentration of lowland raised bogs in Northern Ireland. Although there has been a long history of peat extraction in the area, a large extent of intact bog remains amongst the drumlins that are generally improved farmland. The SAC is made up of three separate active raised bogs with classic dome structure – Bomackatall and North Drumnafallow, Claragh and Kilmore Robinson. Bomackatall Bog surrounds an agriculturally improved drumlin top, which is excluded from the SAC. Claragh was the subject of a study in the late 1950s of the ecology of a raised bog (Morrison, 1959). Hummocks and hollows, with widespread bryophyte communities, are generally well developed on all four bogs and contain some notable species, including *Sphagnum fuscum* and *Sphagnum imbricatum*. At North Drumnafallow there is still some evidence of mire development over the site of an old pond. The site has a detailed Holocene pollen record with radiocarbon dates providing a detailed vegetational history. Recent work shows this site also has a good tephra record.

The Ramsar site boundary is entirely coincident with both that of the Fairy Water Bogs Area of Special Scientific Interest and the Fairy Water Bogs. The site qualifies under criterion 1a of the Ramsar Convention by being a particularly good representative example of lowland raised bog. In Western Europe most of the relatively intact raised bogs occur in the UK and Ireland. Three examples of bogs - Bomackatall, Claragh and Kilmore Robinson - are included in this composite site. As other bog complexes in Northern Ireland have suffered much more severe exploitation, this hummock and hollow pool complex is considered to be one of the largest and most intact concentrations of active lowland raised bogs in Northern Ireland and represents one of the best examples of this habitat type in the UK. Many invertebrate species such as the Brown hawker dragonfly can be seen in this habitat.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Habitat	Active raised bog	B	188ha

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the active raised bog to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives for active raised bog are:

- Maintain the extent of intact lowland raised bog and actively regenerating raised bog vegetation.
- Maintain and enhance the quality of the lowland raised bog community types including the presence of notable species.

- Seek to expand the extent of actively regenerating raised bog vegetation into degraded (non-active) areas of cutover bog.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of other habitats associated with the active raised bog, e.g. acid grassland, fen and swamp, especially where these exhibit natural transition to the raised bog.
- Maintain the hydrology of the raised bog peat mass.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the SAC where there may be potential for lowland raised bog rehabilitation.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Peat cutting and burning have occurred within the site impacting on ecology and hydrology. Drainage works associated with peat cutting and drainage works outside the site boundary can impact bog hydrology. Any changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development, may be detrimental to the SAC through scrub encroachment, poaching by grazing animals and nitrogen deposition. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity. Construction in support of intensive agriculture can increase nitrogen deposition from the development site or as a result of land spreading of litter, slurry, manure or digestate.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Active raised bog	Unfavourable: No-change	22/09/2011

Connectivity with the plan area

The SAC consists of four components, one in the plan area and the remainder within 1.6km. Potential for direct impacts, and also hydrological and aerial pollution pathways from the plan area.

Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar Site

Site Name:	Lough Foyle SPA	Site Code:	UK9020031
Status:	Classified Special Protection Area	Area:	2204.36ha.
Year:	1999		
Site Name:	Lough Foyle Ramsar Site	Site Code:	UK12014
Status:	Designated Ramsar Site	Area:	2204.3ha
Year:			
ASSIs:	Lough Foyle ASSI		
References:	Lough Foyle SPA Conservation Objectives V4.1 01/04/2015 Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands JNCC: Version 3.0, 13/06/2008		
Map:	Map 3&5		

Summary Site Description

This major sea lough is remarkably shallow, with extensive mud and sand flats exposed at low tide. Though considerably diminished by historical reclamation schemes, notably around Myroe, Ballykelly and Longfield, it hosts the second largest area of inter-tidal habitat in Northern Ireland. The shoreline is generally engineered except around the Roe Estuary and northwards. Adjoining agricultural land is of importance as high tide roosts and in supporting wintering geese and swans.

The Ramsar site includes the whole of the Lough Foyle Area of Special Scientific Interest, the intertidal area of the Magilligan ASSI in Lough Foyle extending south of Magilligan Point and all of Lough Foyle Special Protection Area. The site is composed of a large shallow lough including estuaries, extensive intertidal areas of mudflats, sandflats, saltmarsh and associated brackish ditches. It supports a diverse assemblage of waterfowl (*Limosa lapponica*, 1.6% of the population, and *Branta bernicla hrota*, 11% of the population) and internationally important (more than 29,000 birds) waterfowl.

Selection Features

Feature Type	Feature	Population (5 year average 1995-2000)	Population at time of designation (ASSI)	Population at time of designation (SPA)	SPA Review population	Common Standards Monitoring baseline
Species – wintering population	Bewick's Swan ^b	43	74	New (78)	78	10
	Whooper Swan ^a	811	905	890	890	566
	Golden Plover ^b	4511	4614	New	4891	2960
	Bar-tailed Godwit ^a	2059	2097	1896	1896	1535
	Light-bellied Brent Goose ^a	3765	3603	3730	3730	1765
Assemblage species – wintering population	Great Crested Grebe	148	278	220	220	28
	Cormorant	106	120	Not listed	118	67
	Greylag Goose	391	85	67	67	22
	Shelduck	468	321	287	287	174
	Wigeon	9011	6153	8107	8107	3513
	Teal	660	718	751	751	403
	Mallard	1606	1802	1694	1694	1154
	Eider	143	154	50	50	8
	Red-breasted Merganser	135	96	73	73	26
	Oystercatcher	3101	2335	2045	2028	1683
	Lapwing	4024	3601	3084	3084	1078
	Knot	499	433	412	441	135
Dunlin	4991	5606	4847	5606	3666	

Feature Type	Feature	Population (5 year average 1995-2000)	Population at time of designation (ASSI)	Population at time of designation (SPA)	SPA Review population	Common Standards Monitoring baseline
	Curlew	2263	2079	2152	2038	1710
	Redshank	988	811	791	812	386
Waterfowl assemblage - wintering population	Waterfowl Assemblage wintering population ^a (Component species: Bewick's Swan, Whooper Swan, Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant, Greylag Goose, Shelduck, Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Eider, Red-breasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Knot, Dunlin, Curlew, Redshank)	24952	36416	36599	37310	14905
Habitat ¹	Habitat extent					
Habitat ¹	Roost site locations					

¹ Habitat is not a selection feature but is a factor and is more easily treated as if it were a feature.

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for this site are:

- To maintain each feature in a favourable condition.

The SPA selection feature objectives are:

- To maintain or enhance the population of the qualifying species
- To maintain or enhance the range of habitats utilised by the qualifying species
- To ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained;
- To ensure there is no significant disturbance of the species and
- To ensure that the following are maintained in the long term:
 - Population of the species as a viable component of the site
 - Distribution of the species within site
 - Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species
- Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species
- Maintain species diversity contributing to the Waterfowl Assemblage
- Maintain or enhance the area of natural and semi-natural habitats used or potentially usable by Feature bird species (2056.13 ha intertidal area) subject to natural processes
- Maintain the extent of main habitat components subject to natural processes
- Maintain or enhance sites utilised as roosts

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Adjoining habitat is particularly important for swans and geese as well as providing high tide roost locations. Significant changes in land management and disturbance are key considerations. Activities such as aquaculture, bait digging and sand and gravel extraction can alter the natural littoral and sub-littoral communities. Commercial and recreational boating can cause disturbance especially to particularly sensitive areas within the

site. Loss of habitats can occur through development, changes in coastal processes and invasive species. Loss of inter-tidal habitat is a critical issue as this is the feeding zone for the majority of birds in terms of both numbers and species. Open water habitat could be impacted through port expansion although this is likely to be limited. Habitat quality can also be impacted by diminution of water quality. Power cables within flight lines present a problem in relation to swans and geese.

Condition Assessment

2014 Condition Assessment

Species	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	CSM	5 yr mean	% CSM	Status
Golden Plover	7640	9534	9211	8486	5091	2960	7992.40	270.01	Favourable
Bewick's Swan	18	0	0	0	0	10	3.60	36.00	Unfavourable
Whooper Swan	1030	1042	1167	1240	2033	566	1302.40	230.11	Favourable
Bar-tailed Godwit	1133	2672	2300	2789	1501	1535	2079.00	135.44	Favourable
Light-bellied Brent Goose	3641	1778	3251	2550	3875	1765	3019.00	171.05	Favourable
Waterbird assemblage	38372	35032	33155	37562	28535	28494	34531.20	121.19	Favourable

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan area overlaps with the SPA & Ramsar site along 8.3km of the Lough Foyle shoreline. The SPA & Ramsar site also includes part of the River Faughan estuary which contains natural / semi-natural habitat of importance as bird roosts and feeding areas. Any major development within or adjacent to the site could impact through disturbance to features and deterioration in water quality. Significant increases in recreational disturbance could impact species or supporting habitat. Disturbance of whooper swans or loss of habitat outside the site on which they depend. Roost sites can occur outside the site boundary. An Area of High landscape Importance is designated along the eastern shore of Lough Foyle within the plan area.

Moneygal Bog SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030211
Year:	2005	Area:	156.16ha
ASSIs:	Moneygal Bog ASSI Moneygal Bog ASSI Part II		
References:	SAC Conservation Objectives V2. 01/04/2015		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

Moneygal Bog lies in a basin surrounded by low hills directly north of Castlederg and represents the most north-westerly lowland raised bog in Northern Ireland. The bog lies at a moderate elevation between 130m and 140m O.D. and displays some characteristics of transitional / intermediate bog. It is set within a landscape which has largely been improved for agricultural use. A bog burst that occurred in 1910 has resulted in a soak surrounded by a large pool system which extends to the centre of the bog. The pools are arranged concentrically around the site of the soak and represent one of the best raised bog pool systems in Northern Ireland. In addition, a number of notable plant species have been recorded including *Sphagnum imbricatum* and *S. fuscum*.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Habitat	Active Raised Bog	B	114.2ha

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the active raised bog to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives for active raised bog are:

- Maintain the extent of intact lowland raised bog and actively regenerating raised bog vegetation.
- Maintain and enhance the quality of the lowland raised bog community types including the presence of notable species.
- Seek to expand the extent of actively regenerating raised bog vegetation into degraded (non-active) areas of cutover bog.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of other habitats associated with the active raised bog, e.g. acid grassland, fen and swamp, especially where these exhibit natural transition to the raised bog.
- Maintain the hydrology of the raised bog peat mass.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the SAC where there may be potential for lowland raised bog rehabilitation.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Forest Service owns all of the site, including Turbary Rights, except for one small parcel of land to the north. With Forest Service the major landowner, there should be no significant management constraints. Drainage works outside the site's boundaries could potentially impact upon the bog's hydrology. No grazing is permitted within the site however the boundary along the border between the Republic of Ireland and the SAC is not stock proof, cattle move into peripheral areas of the cutover bog and graze the grassy areas. Any changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development, may be detrimental to the SAC through scrub encroachment, fly-tipping, drainage and nitrogen deposition. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function

and to a reduction in biodiversity. Construction in support of intensive agriculture can increase nitrogen deposition from the development site or as a result of land spreading of litter, slurry, manure or digestate.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Active Raised Bog	Unfavourable: Recovering	09/09/2015

Connectivity with the plan area

The SAC is wholly within the plan area. To the north lies the border with the Republic of Ireland. The main impacts from the plan area would be from aerial pollution from intensive agriculture or development adjacent to the site. Development within the site is unlikely as the site is owned by Forest Service and the intact surface of the bog has been declared as a Forest Nature Reserve.

Owenkillev River SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030233
Year:	2005	Area:	214 ha
ASSIs:	Owenkillev River ASSI Drumlea and Mullan Woods ASSI Owenkillev and Glenelly Woods ASSI.		
References:	Owenkillev River SAC Conservation Objectives V3.1 27/07/2017		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

The SAC includes the river (42 km stretch) and its associated riverine flora and fauna and adjacent semi-natural vegetation, primarily woodland flora and fauna. The river rises at an altitude of 415m and flows into the Strule at an altitude of 35m. It is a fast-flowing spate river; notable for the physical diversity and naturalness of the bank and channel, the richness and naturalness of its plant and animal communities, which includes extensive beds of Stream Water Crowfoot *Ranunculus penicillatus* var. *penicillatus* and the largest Northern Ireland population of the now rare Fresh Water Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*. In addition, the river is important for Otter *Lutra lutra* and Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*.

Adjacent woodlands which form part of the SAC include Drumlea and Mullan Woods ASSI and the Owenkillev and Glenelly Woods ASSI, two of the largest stands of Oak woodland in Northern Ireland. An area of localised waterlogging in the former woodland has resulted in the development of Bog Woodland.

In the upper reaches, the river flows through a predominantly upland peatland landscape used for rough grazing. The river channel is generally unenclosed. The main SAC qualifying features include *Margaritifera margaritifera* and *Ranunculus* communities, which are confined to the main channel. The upper limits of the site have been determined by the restricted size of the channel. The downstream limit is at the confluence with the Strule, where the site joins with the adjacent River Foyle and Tributaries SAC.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Species	Freshwater Pearl Mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	B	10,000
Habitat	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	B	83% of channel length
Habitat	Old Sessile Oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	B	79ha
Habitat	Bog Woodland	C	1.5ha
Species	Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	C	
Species	Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	C	2,700

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the
 - Fresh Water Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*
 - Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation
 - Old Sessile Oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
 - Bog Woodland

- Otter *Lutra lutra*
 - Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*
- to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives are:

Freshwater Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*

- Maintain and if feasible enhance population numbers through natural recruitment.
- Improve age structure of population.
- Improve water quality.
- Improve channel substrate quality by reducing siltation.
- Ensure host fish population is adequate for recruitment.
- Increase the amount of shading through marginal tree cover along those sections of river currently supporting this species.

Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation

- Maintain and if feasible enhance extent and composition of community.
- Improve water quality
- Improve channel substrate quality by reducing siltation.
- Maintain and if feasible enhance the river morphology

Old Sessile Oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles

- Maintain and expand the extent of existing oak woodland. (There is an area of degraded bog, wetland and damp grassland which have the potential to develop into oak woodland).
- Maintain and enhance Oak woodland species diversity and structural diversity.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the Oak woodland, e.g. fen, swamp, grasslands, scrub, especially where these exhibit natural transition to Oak woodland
- Seek nature conservation management over adjacent forested areas outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland rehabilitation.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland expansion.

Bog Woodland

- Maintain and expand the extent of existing bog woodland. (There is an area of degraded bog, wetland and damp grassland that have the potential to develop into bog woodland).
- Maintain and enhance bog woodland species diversity and structural diversity.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the bog woodland, e.g. fen, swamp, especially where these exhibit natural transition to swamp woodland.
- Seek nature conservation management over adjacent forested areas outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland rehabilitation.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland expansion.

Otter *Lutra lutra*

- Population numbers and distribution to be maintained and if possible, expanded.
- Maintain the extent and quality of suitable Otter habitat, in particular the chemical and biological quality of the water, and all associated wetland habitats

Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*

- Maintain and if possible, expand existing population numbers and distribution
- Maintain and where possible, enhance the extent and quality of suitable Salmon habitat, in particular the chemical and biological quality of the water

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Water quality is the most important factor for most of the SAC selection features, with both point and diffuse sources of pollution potentially damaging. These are dependent on human activities throughout the catchment. Channel and bank modification can directly affect the habitat. The Owenkillew River has been extensively altered by man in the past, especially along the upper reach of the river, resulting in a reduction of the natural channel area available to *M. margaritifera* and macrophyte communities. Siltation is detrimental to aquatic selection features. A significant portion of the area is afforested (especially the upper catchments), with a potential risk of sediment release during forestry operations, especially clear-felling. Sand wash from a number of commercial sandpits in the upper reaches of the river has resulted in siltation of the riverbed downstream. Trampling by livestock has an obvious direct impact but in some sections of the river, trampling and poaching of the river bank and channel have caused erosion, resulting in siltation of the riverbed downstream. Any changes in local land-use e.g. agricultural intensification, drainage works and development may be detrimental to the SAC. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity. Construction in support of intensive agriculture can increase nitrogen deposition from the development site or as a result of land spreading of litter, slurry, manure or digestate.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	ASSI Name	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Bog woodland	Drumlea and Mullan Woods	Unfavourable: Recovering	03/05/2012
<i>Lutra lutra</i>	Owenkillew River	Favourable: Un-classified	27/06/2015
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	Owenkillew River	Unfavourable: Un-classified	31/12/2011
Old sessile oak woods	Drumlea and Mullan Woods	Unfavourable: Recovering	03/05/2012
Old sessile oak woods	Owenkillew and Glenelly Woods	Unfavourable: Un-classified	25/05/2016
<i>Salmo salar</i>	Owenkillew River	Unfavourable: Un-classified	01/01/2011
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	Owenkillew River	Unfavourable: Un-classified	31/12/2011

Connectivity with the plan area

The SAC rises in the Sperrin mountains and runs for about 10km through Mid Ulster and extends a further 20km west through Fermanagh and Omagh and into Derry City and Strabane District Council area. The SAC flows for approximately 8.5km within the plan area before joining the River Mourne (River Foyle and Tributaries SAC) upstream of Newtown Stewart. Any development within the site or changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development may be detrimental to the SAC. Atlantic salmon is a mobile feature and impacts can occur beyond the SAC boundary. Therefore impacts further downstream within the plan area could impact migrating species and supporting habitat. Development within the catchment can lead to alteration of the natural flow regime from increases in storm water, increase in non-mains sewerage and pressure on WWTW within the catchment.

River Faughan and Tributaries SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030361
Year:	2013	Area:	293.79ha
ASSIs:	River Faughan and Tributaries ASSI		
References:	River Faughan and Tributaries SAC Conservation Objectives V2.1 11/10/2017		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

The area is of interest because of the physical features of the river and its associated riverine flora and fauna. The River Faughan and Tributaries SAC includes the River Faughan and its tributaries the Burntollet River, Bonds Glen and the Glenrandal River (and its tributary the Inver River). In total, the area encompasses approximately 60km of watercourse and is notable for the physical diversity and naturalness of the banks and channels, especially in the upper reaches, and the richness and naturalness of its plant and animal communities, in particular the population of Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*, which is of international importance and the widespread and common occurrence of Otter *Lutra lutra* in the catchment. Upland Oak Woodland is also well developed in places along the valley sides of the River Faughan and its tributaries.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Species	Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	B	1,000-10,000
Habitat	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	C	96ha
Species	Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	C	C

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the

- Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
- Otter *Lutra lutra*

to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives are:

Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*

- Maintain and if possible expand existing population numbers and distribution (preferably through natural recruitment), and improve age structure of population.
- Maintain and if possible enhance the extent and quality of suitable Salmon habitat - particularly the chemical and biological quality of the water and the condition of the river channel and substrate.

Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles

- Maintain and where feasible expand the extent of existing oak woodland but not at the expense of other SAC (ABC) features. (There are areas of degraded heath, wetland and damp grassland which have the potential to develop into Oak woodland)
- Maintain and enhance Oak woodland species diversity and structural diversity.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the Oak woodland, e.g. fen, swamp, grasslands, scrub, especially where these exhibit natural transition to Oak woodland
- Seek nature conservation management over adjacent forested areas outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland rehabilitation.

- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland expansion.

Otter *Lutra lutra*

- Maintain and if possible increase population numbers and distribution.
- Maintain the extent and quality of suitable Otter habitat, in particular the chemical and biological quality of the water and all associated wetland habitats

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Water quality is the most important factor for most of the SAC selection features, with both point and diffuse sources of pollution potentially damaging. These are dependent on human activities throughout the catchment. Channel and bank modification can directly affect the habitat. The Faughan River was designated for drainage in 1947, primarily to improve flood defences. The River Faughan and some of its tributaries have undergone fisheries modifications with the installation of weirs and deflectors as part of habitat enhancement schemes. Enhancement work should be limited to areas of river that have been extensively modified by past drainage schemes and which have lost much of their natural dynamic character.

Siltation is detrimental to aquatic selection features. A portion of the catchment is afforested (especially the upper catchment of the Burntollet River), with a potential risk of sediment release during forestry operations, especially clear-felling. Trampling by livestock has an obvious direct impact but in some sections of the river, trampling and poaching of the river bank and channel have caused erosion, resulting in siltation of the riverbed and damage to salmon spawning grounds and macrophyte communities.

A natural flow regime is essential for the maintenance of the main selection features. There are several extraction sites along the river. Any changes in local land-use e.g. agricultural intensification, drainage works and development) may be detrimental to the SAC. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity. Construction in support of intensive agriculture can increase nitrogen deposition from the development site or as a result of land spreading of litter, slurry, manure or digestate.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	Favourable: Un-classified	01/01/2011
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	Not assessed	
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	Favourable: Un-classified	12/06/2015

Connectivity with the plan area

The majority of the River Faughan catchment is located within the plan area. Any development within the site or changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development may be detrimental to the SAC. Atlantic salmon is a mobile feature and impacts can occur beyond the SAC boundary. Development within the catchment can lead to alteration of the natural flow regime from increases in storm water, increase in non-mains sewerage and pressure on WWTW within the catchment. There is an NIW water supply zone (Carmony Eglinton ZN0603) which abstracts water from the River Faughan to supply drinking water to the plan area, any increase in demand for this source could impact the SAC. The upper reaches of tributaries of the River Faughan are within the Special Countryside Area (SCA 1) designated within the Sperrin AONB. An Area of High Landscape Importance (AHLI 1) is designated along the Faughan River from

Drumahoe to Claudy. Although not spatially defined Main Rivers are protected in the dPS through policy NE4 which sets out provisions which must be met before planning permission can be granted for a development proposal adjacent to main rivers. This also refers to the tidal extent of the SAC.

River Foyle and Tributaries SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030320
Year:	2005	Area:	771.8ha
ASSIs:	River Foyle and Tributaries ASSI		
References:	River Foyle and Tributaries SAC Conservation Objectives V3 27/07/2017		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

The SAC includes the River Foyle and its tributaries i.e. that part of the River Finn which lies within Northern Ireland, the River Mourne and its tributary the River Strule (up to its confluence with the Owenkillew River) and the River Derg, along with two of its sub-tributaries, the Mourne Beg River and the Glendergan River. In total, the area encompasses 120km of watercourse and is notable for the physical diversity and naturalness of the banks and channels, especially in the upper reaches, and the richness and naturalness of its plant and animal communities. Of particular importance is the population of Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*, which is one of the largest in Europe. Research has indicated that each sub-catchment within the system supports genetically distinct populations.

The area is also important as a river habitat. In their upper catchments, the rivers are all fast-flowing spate rivers with dynamic flow regimes characterised by sequences of rapid, riffle and run. Although the banks may have been modified in the past, the channels are natural and composed of large cobble substrate with scattered boulders and sandy marginal deposits, while cobble side and point bars and discrete sand deposits are common features. At the top end of the River Derg and its two tributaries, the aquatic flora reflect the highly acidic character of the water, with mosses and liverworts dominant. Beds of Stream Water Crowfoot *Ranunculus penicillatus* var. *penicillatus* occur where the flow is less dynamic. The River Foyle below Strabane is slow-flowing and is influenced by a tidal regime, rising and falling with the tidal cycle. Aquatic plants in the channel are extremely limited, particularly in the more saline areas; here, fucoids make up the main component.

Otter *Lutra lutra* is found throughout the system. A small population of the now rare Freshwater Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* was still present in the Mourne River in the mid-nineties.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Species	Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	B	10,000-100,000
Habitat	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	B	16.44ha
Species	Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	C	C

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the

- Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*
- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation
- Otter *Lutra lutra*

to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives are:

Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*

- Maintain and if possible expand existing population numbers and distribution (preferably through natural recruitment), and improve age structure of population.
- Maintain and if possible enhance the extent and quality of suitable Salmon habitat - particularly the chemical and biological quality of the water and the condition of the river channel and substrate.

Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation

- Maintain and if possible enhance extent and composition of community.
- Improve water quality
- Improve channel substrate quality by reducing siltation.
- Maintain and if feasible enhance the river morphology.

Otter *Lutra lutra*

- Maintain and if possible increase population numbers and distribution.
- Maintain the extent and quality of suitable Otter habitat, in particular the chemical and biological quality of the water and all associated wetland habitats

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Water quality is the most important factor for most of the SAC selection features, with both point and diffuse sources of pollution potentially damaging. These are dependent on human activities throughout the catchment.

Channel and bank modification can directly affect the habitat. A number of sections of the river channels have been extensively altered by man in the past. These modifications have changed the natural flow regime of the river, resulting in a reduction of the natural channel area available to aquatic vegetation or for spawning Atlantic salmon. Enhancement work should be limited to areas of river that have been extensively modified by past drainage schemes and which have lost much of their natural dynamic character.

Siltation is detrimental to aquatic selection features. A significant portion of the upper catchments of the tributaries are afforested, with a potential risk of sediment release during forestry operations, especially clear-felling. The 2015 RBMPs have identified eight river catchments in NI that are at risk of acidification from forestry activities. Five of these catchments are in the Derg catchment, west of Castlederg.

Sand wash from a number of commercial sandpits in the upper reaches of the tributary rivers has resulted in siltation of the riverbed downstream. Trampling by livestock has an obvious direct impact but in some sections of the river, trampling and poaching of the river bank and channel have caused erosion, resulting in siltation of the riverbed and damage to salmon spawning grounds and macrophyte communities.

A natural flow regime is essential for the maintenance of the main selection features. There are several extraction sites along the river. Any changes in local land-use (e.g. agricultural intensification, drainage works and development) may be detrimental to the SAC. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity. Construction in support of intensive agriculture can increase nitrogen deposition from the development site or as a result of land spreading of litter, slurry, manure or digestate.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	Favourable: Un-classified	01/01/2011
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculus fluitans and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation	Unfavourable: Un-classified	21/12/2011
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	Favourable: Un-classified	21/08/2015

Connectivity with the plan area

The majority of the plan area is within the River Foyle catchment. Any development within the site or changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development may be detrimental to the SAC. Atlantic salmon is a mobile feature and impacts can occur beyond the SAC boundary both upstream and downstream towards the sea. Development within the catchment can lead to alteration of the natural flow regime from increases in storm water, increase in non-mains sewerage and pressure on WWTW within the catchment. An NIW water supply zone (Derg Strabane ZN0701) abstracts water from the River Derg to supply drinking water to the plan area, any increase in demand for this source could impact the SAC.

There are a number of settlements on or close to the SAC including Castledearg, Spamount, Ardstraw, Newtownstewart, Victoria Bridge, Sion Mills and Strabane. Areas of High Landscape Importance (AHLI 1) are designated on the east bank of the River Foyle just downstream of the SAC boundary between Magheramason and the City and on both banks upstream of Newtownstewart on the River Strule. Although not spatially defined Main Rivers are protected in the dPS through policy NE4 which sets out provisions which must be met before planning permission can be granted for a development proposal adjacent to main rivers. This also refers to the tidal extent of the SAC.

River Roe and Tributaries SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030360
Year:	2010	Area:	408.19ha
ASSIs:	River Roe and Tributaries ASSI		
References:	River Roe and Tributaries SAC Conservation Objectives V3 27/07/2017		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

The area is of special scientific interest because of the physical features of the river and its associated riverine flora and fauna. The River Roe and Tributaries ASSI includes the River Roe and its tributaries the Curly River, the Gelvin River, the Bovevagh River (and its tributary the Altahullion Burn), the Wood Burn, the Owenbeg (and its tributary the Clogherna Burn), the Owenrigh River, the Black Burn (and its tributary the Currawable Burn) and the Owenalena River. In total, the area encompasses approximately 87km of watercourse and is notable for the physical diversity and naturalness of the banks and channels, especially in the upper reaches, and the richness and naturalness of its plant and animal communities, in particular the population of Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*, which is of international importance and in the extent of Upland Oakwood present.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Species	Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	B	1,000-10,000
Habitat	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	C	20km or 20%of channel length
Habitat	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	C	145.45ha
Species	Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	C	C

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the

- Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*
- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
- Otter *Lutra lutra*

to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives are:

Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*

- Maintain and if possible expand existing population numbers and distribution (preferably through natural recruitment), and improve age structure of population.
- Maintain and if possible enhance the extent and quality of suitable Salmon habitat - particularly the chemical and biological quality of the water and the condition of the river channel and substrate.

Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation

- Maintain and if possible enhance extent and composition of community.
- Improve water quality

- Improve channel substrate quality by reducing siltation.
- Maintain and if feasible enhance the river morphology

Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles

- Maintain and where feasible expand the extent of existing oak woodland but not at the expense of other SAC (ABC) features. (There are areas of degraded heath, wetland and damp grassland which have the potential to develop into Oak woodland)
- Maintain and enhance Oak woodland species diversity and structural diversity.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the Oak woodland, e.g. fen, swamp, grasslands, scrub, especially where these exhibit natural transition to Oak woodland
- Seek nature conservation management over adjacent forested areas outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland rehabilitation.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the ASSI where there may be potential for woodland expansion.

Otter *Lutra lutra*

- Maintain and if possible increase population numbers and distribution.
- Maintain the extent and quality of suitable Otter habitat, in particular the chemical and biological quality of the water and all associated wetland habitats

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Water quality is probably the most important single factor for the SAC selection features, with both point and diffuse sources of pollution potentially damaging. These are dependent on human activities throughout the catchment. A significant portion of the upper catchments of the River Roe and its tributaries are afforested; there is a potential for enrichment of the river during forestry operations (planting and fertiliser application) and of sediment release during clear-felling.

Channel and bank modification can directly affect the habitat. A number of sections of the river channels have been extensively altered by man in the past. These modifications have changed the natural flow regime of the river, resulting in a reduction of the natural channel area available to aquatic vegetation or for spawning Atlantic salmon. Enhancement work should be limited to areas of river that have been extensively modified by past drainage schemes and which have lost much of their natural dynamic character.

Siltation is detrimental to aquatic selection features. A significant portion of the upper catchments of the tributaries are afforested, with a potential risk of sediment release during forestry operations, especially clear-felling. Sand wash from a number of commercial sandpits in the upper reaches of the tributary rivers has resulted in siltation of the riverbed downstream. Trampling by livestock has an obvious direct impact but in some sections of the river, trampling and poaching of the river bank and channel have caused erosion, resulting in siltation of the riverbed and damage to salmon spawning grounds and macrophyte communities.

A natural flow regime is essential for the maintenance of the main selection features. There are several extraction sites along the river. Any changes in local land-use e.g. agricultural intensification, drainage works and development) may be detrimental to the SAC. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity. Construction in support of intensive agriculture can increase nitrogen deposition from the development site or as a result of land spreading of litter, slurry, manure or digestate.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	Favourable: Un-classified	01/01/2011
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation	Unfavourable: Un-classified	31/12/2011
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	Unfavourable: Un-classified	25/05/2011
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	Favourable: Un-classified	12/05/201

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 1km from the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. There is a minor hydrological connection between the plan area and the SAC with a small part of the plan area draining to the Owenbeg River catchment. An NIW water supply zone (Caugh Hill Dungiven ZN0604) abstracts water from the Glenedra River which supplies Caugh Hill Water Treatment Works and provides drinking water to the plan area, any increase in demand for this source could impact the SAC.

Teal Lough SAC and Proposed Ramsar Site

Site Name:	Teal Lough SAC	Site Code:	UK0016608
Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Area:	199ha
Year:	2005		
Site Name:	Teal Lough proposed Ramsar Site	Site Code:	UK12022
Status:	Proposed Ramsar Site	Area:	198.22ha
Year:	Proposed 2005		
ASSIs:	Teal Lough ASSI		
References:	Teal Lough SAC Conservation Objectives V2.1 13/10/2017 Northern Ireland Environment Agency Further information to support the Ramsar site proposals January 2019 Teal Lough Ramsar Site citation		
Map:	Map 4&5		

Summary Site Description

Teal Lough SAC

Teal Lough Bog lies to the north-west of Cookstown beyond Lough Fea at an elevation of 220m. It is bisected by the county boundary, which runs through Teal Lough itself. This is one of the largest and least disturbed upland blanket peat and raised bog habitats in Northern Ireland. The features of interest are all hydrologically linked; being four actively developing upland raised bogs surrounded by active blanket peat with an oligotrophic lake to the north.

The pool and hummock complexes display rich bryophyte communities (including *Sphagnum imbricatum* and *Myliia taylorii*), a limited but notable range of upland invertebrates (including *Salda muelleri* and *Agabus arcticus*) and a vascular flora uncommon in Northern Ireland (*Drosera intermedia* and *Utricularia minor*). The underlying Pleistocene sand and gravel fluvioglacial outwash series, together with the ridge series, are important, being related to a major deglaciation phase of the South Sperrins. The boundary around the entire site is clearly defined as the edge of the peatland hydrological unit, being completely surrounded by improved agricultural land. The boundary rationale and management considerations are detailed in the Conservation Objectives.

Teal Lough Ramsar Site

Teal Lough Bog lies some 10 km north-west of Cookstown beyond Lough Fea at an elevation of 220 m. This is one of the largest and least disturbed upland blanket peat and raised bog habitats in Northern Ireland. The features of interest are all hydrologically linked, with actively developing upland raised bog surrounded by active blanket peat, and with an oligotrophic lake to the north. Teal Lough has one of the finest hummock and pool complexes of any peatland complex in Northern Ireland.

The boundary of the Ramsar site is entirely coincident with the Teal Lough Special Area of Conservation (SAC) area, incorporating part of Teal Lough and Slaghtfreeden Bogs Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) (Teal Lough part only), and all of Teal Lough Part II ASSI. The county boundary bisects the Ramsar site.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Habitat	Active blanket bog	B	155.5 ha

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the active blanket bog to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives for the active blanket bog are:

- o Maintain the extent of intact blanket bog and actively regenerating blanket bog vegetation.

- Maintain and enhance the quality of the blanket bog community types including the presence of notable species.
- Seek to expand the extent of actively regenerating blanket bog vegetation into degraded (non-active) areas of cutover bog.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of other habitats associated with the blanket bog especially where these exhibit natural transition to the blanket bog.
- Maintain the hydrology of the intact blanket bog peat mass.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the SAC where there may be potential for blanket bog rehabilitation.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Any removal of minerals, e.g. peat or sand, from the site will destroy that part of the site and may have consequential effects on the rest of the area due to its fragile, integrated structure and hydrology. Recreational activities: Regular use of any part of the area, by walking but especially by four-wheel drive vehicles, can cause local vegetation loss and structural damage to the peat which may lead to significant erosion, particularly on slopes. Wet moss hummocks are also vulnerable to more than occasional treading so over-use of the site should be avoided.

Any changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development may be detrimental to the SAC. Any changes in local land-use e.g. drainage, road improvements, afforestation, agricultural intensification and development may be detrimental to the SAC. Excess nitrogen deposition can directly damage plants and also favour the growth of competitive plants leading to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Active blanket bog	Favourable: Maintained	03/06/2015

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 5.2km from the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. There is no hydrological connectivity between the plan area and the SAC.

Tully Bog SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	UK0030326
Year:	2005	Area:	36.06ha
ASSIs:	Tully Bog ASSI		
References:	Tully Bog SAC Conservation Objectives V2 01/04/2015		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

Tully Bog is an isolated lowland raised bog lying in a shallow hollow within the former flood plain of the Lower Fairy Water River. The central intact dome is fairly well developed and supports a weak temporary pool system with a good hummock and hollow development on the bog plain. There is a small raised drumlin in the centre of the bog, which is covered by a shallow layer of peat, where birch woodland has developed. Close to this, a linear pool with *S. cuspidatum* has formed in a deep, narrow fissure in the peat's surface. This may be the result of marginal cutting. *S. imbricatum* and *S. fuscum* are present. Disturbance to the bog had been confined to cutting and occasional burning on both the intact core and cutover margins.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Habitat	Active raised bog	B	23.77ha

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the active raised bog to favourable condition.

The SAC selection feature component objectives for active raised bog are:

- Maintain the extent of intact lowland raised bog and actively regenerating raised bog vegetation.
- Maintain and enhance the quality of the lowland raised bog community types including the presence of notable species.
- Seek to expand the extent of actively regenerating raised bog vegetation into degraded (non-active) areas of cutover bog.
- Maintain the diversity and quality of other habitats associated with the active raised bog, e.g. acid grassland, fen and swamp, especially where these exhibit natural transition to the raised bog.
- Maintain the hydrology of the raised bog peat mass.
- Seek nature conservation management over suitable areas immediately outside the SAC where there may be potential for lowland raised bog rehabilitation.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Direct impacts within the site such as peat cutting and burning and grazing will lead to loss of or damage to bog habitat and changes to habitat structural diversity. Any changes in local land-use e.g. agricultural intensification, drainage works and development) may be detrimental to the SAC through changes to habitats / hydrology / nitrogen deposition. Drainage works outside of the site boundaries could potentially impact on the bog's hydrology. Excess nitrogen deposition can favour the growth of competitive plants and lead to changes in ecosystem structure or function and to a reduction in biodiversity.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Most recent Condition Assessment	Date
Active raised bog	Unfavourable: No-change	26/09/2014

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 5.6km from the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. There is no hydrological connection between the plan area and the SAC.

Croaghonagh Bog SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	IE0000129
Year:	SCI since January 2002	Area:	248.87ha
References:	Natura 2000 Standard Data Form NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Croaghonagh Bog SAC 000129. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Croaghonagh Bog site synopsis 24/07/2013.		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

Croaghonagh Bog is a small but quite intact blanket bog which occurs on the southwest shore of Lough Mourne, 17 km north-east of Donegal town. The site is underlain by metamorphosed sandstone and includes a good diversity of habitats including active bog, wet heath, lakeshore, streams and ditches, and some old cutaway bog.

Croaghonagh Bog displays some features of a raised bog and consists of a large, broad dome divided into two parts by dry, narrow channels, some of which contain swallow-holes. There is also a small lake in the middle of the site. The bog surface is spongy or quaking in localised areas, and contains a variety of features including widespread hummock / hollow communities and some large bog pools. There is an extensive cover of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.), including several species of note such as *S. fuscum*, *S. imbricatum* and *S. magellanicum*. Other species recorded here include Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*), Lesser Bladderwort (*Utricularia minor*) and Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*). Hummock vegetation includes Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*) and *Cladonia* lichens.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population*
Habitat	Blanket Bog (* if active bog)	-	Approx. 170ha

*From Conservation Objectives

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To restore the favourable conservation condition of Blanket bogs (* if active bog) in Croaghonagh Bog SAC.

(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives.)

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. The margins of the bog have been affected by turbary, particularly at the south and south-eastern sides, and there are indications that its surface is drying out in places. The hydrology of the bog may also be affected by water abstraction from Lough Mourne which is used as a reservoir for Donegal town. Due to extensive afforestation, many bogs have been drained in this region and Croaghonagh Bog is one of only a handful of intact blanket bogs remaining in east Donegal.

Condition Assessment

No information available.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 3.2km east of the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. The SAC drains to the plan area but there is no hydrological connection from the plan area to the SAC.

Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC and Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA

Site Name:	Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC	Site Code:	IE0001125
Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Area:	2022.48ha
Year:	SCI since November 1997		
Site Name:	Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA	Site Code:	IE0004099
Status:	Classified Special Protection Area	Area:	691.27ha
Year:	1996		
References:	Natura 2000 Standard Data Form NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC 001125. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC site synopsis 24/07/2013. Dunragh Loughs/Pettigo Plateau SAC (site code 001125) Conservation objectives supporting document - blanket bogs and associated habitats NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA [004099]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA Site synopsis 24/04/2012		
Map:	Map 3&4		

Summary Site Description

Dunragh Loughs / Pettigo Plateau SAC

Dunragh Lough / Pettigo Plateau SAC is located 10 km south-east of Donegal town on the western shore of Lough Derg. It comprises an extensive complex of blanket bog, wet heath, lakes and pools covering an area of low hills and broad basins. It is bounded by extensive conifer plantations and areas of turbarry. The site is underlain by metamorphic gneiss and schist.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population*
Habitat	Wet Heath	-	728ha
Habitat	Blanket Bog	-	1123ha

* Conservation objectives supporting document

Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA

At the time this site was designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) it was being utilised by a Greenland White-fronted Goose population. In the 1980s, the Greenland White-fronted Goose flock utilising this site largely deserted the bogs in favour of coastal grassland sites, e.g. Durnesh Lough SPA. Greenland White-fronted Goose still occurs within this site and it is one of the few places where this species continues to utilise peatland habitats. Greenland White-fronted Goose is regarded as a special conservation interest for this SPA.

Selection Features

Feature*	
Greenland White Fronted Goose <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	The site was known to support a nationally important flock of Greenland White-fronted Goose. However, it is not known whether the species is using the site at present.
Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	The site provides suitable habitat for the Golden Plover, which breeds within the site.
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	The site provides very suitable habitat for the Merlin and is known to support breeding pairs.
Peregrine	The site provides habitat for the Peregrine Falcon.

Feature*	
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	
Red-throated diver <i>Gavia stellata</i>	The site supports good habitat resources for this species.

*Species above listed in the Dunragh Loughs & Pettigo Plateau cSAC, SPA & NR National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Plan for 2005-2010.

Greenland White Fronted Goose is the only species listed in the Conservation Objectives.

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for these sites are:

- To restore the favourable conservation condition of Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* and Blanket Bogs in Dunragh Lough / Pettigo Plateau SAC.
(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives.)
- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. The main conservation issues identified at this site are over grazing, peat extraction, Rhododendron infestation, drainage of the bog and forestry operations.

Condition Assessment

No information available.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 2km north east of the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. The SAC drains to the plan area but there is no hydrological connection from the plan area to the SAC.

Lough Derg (Donegal) SPA

Site Name:	Lough Derg SPA	Site Code:	IE0004057
Status:	Classified Special Protection Area	Area:	889.8ha
Year:	1995		
References:	Natura 2000 Standard Data Form NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Lough Derg (Donegal) SPA [004057]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Lough Derg (Donegal) SPA Site synopsis 27/01/2012		
Map:	Map 3		

Summary Site Description

Lough Derg is a large, oligotrophic lake situated north of Pettigo, Co. Donegal. The lake lies in a landscape of extensive blanket bogs and conifer plantations which make up its catchment. The underlying geology of the area is acid gneiss with some basic intrusions. The lakeshore is mainly stony, and marginal vegetation is poorly developed due to the close proximity of the conifer plantations. The lake has a number of islands.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Lesser Black-backed Gull and Herring Gull. A large colony of nesting gulls was discovered on Inishgoosk Island in 1977. A survey in 1999 estimated a population of 500 pairs of Lesser Black-backed Gull, which is the largest colony in the country. An estimated 100 pairs of Herring Gull were also present, which is of national importance. Common Gull has bred here in the past. The Pettigo Plateau Greenland White-fronted Goose flock formerly used Lough Derg as a feeding and / or roost site. Inishgoosk Island appeared to be the main feeding area used. In the 1980s, the bogs were largely deserted in favour of coastal grassland sites at Durnesh Lough and Brownhall. Wintering waterfowl are scarce on Lough Derg due to the oligotrophic character of the system but small numbers of Tufted Duck, Mallard and Goldeneye occur. A feral Greylag Goose flock is resident at the site. Lough Derg SPA is of national importance for both Lesser Black-backed Gull and Herring Gull. In the past it was used by Greenland White-fronted Goose, a species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive

Selection Features

Feature	
Lesser Black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	A survey in 1999 estimated a population of 500 pairs of Lesser Black-backed Gull, which is the largest colony in the country.
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	An estimated 100 pairs of Herring Gull which is of national importance.

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. No detailed information available however water quality is likely to be a significant factor.

Condition Assessment

No information available.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 420m north east of the SPA, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. The SPA drains to the plan area and is connected to River Foyle and Tributaries SAC but there is no hydrological connection from the plan area to the SPA. Potential for feature species to use habitat within the plan area.

Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	IE0000163
Year:	Proposed as SCI 1998	Area:	860.3ha
References:	Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood Site Synopsis Natura 2000 -Standard Data Form NPWS (2019) Conservation Objectives: Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC 000163. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

Lough Eske is a large lowland oligotrophic lake. It lies approximately 5 km northeast of Donegal town at the junction of Carboniferous rocks with more resistant Dalradian gneiss and granite. The site also includes the River Eske and short stretches of the Lowerymore, Clogher and Drummenny Rivers, as well as a number of smaller tributaries.

This site contains three habitats listed in the E.U. Habitats Directive - lowland oligotrophic lake, petrifying springs and old oak woodland. Three species which are also included in the Habitats Directive - the Killarney Fern, the Atlantic Salmon and the Freshwater Pearl Mussel - are also present in the site.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population*
Habitat	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>)	-	386ha
Habitat	Petrifying springs with tufa formation	-	8.61ha
Habitat	Old sessile oak woodlands with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles	-	86.07ha
Species	Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>)	-	11,000
Species	Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	-	Common
Species	Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>)	-	-

*From Natura 2000 data sheet

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for this site are:

- To restore the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*), Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) and Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) in Lough Eske and Ardnamona Woods SAC.
- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Petrifying Springs with tufa formation, Old sessile oak woodlands and Killarney fern in Lough Eske and Ardnamona Woods SAC.

(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives.)

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. A number of exotic species, notably the invasive *Rhododendron ponticum*, have become established in Ardnamona Wood and represent a threat to the ecological value of the habitat. The lake and its flora and fauna are vulnerable to pollution from the surrounding agricultural land and also from an increase in domestic waster effluent.

Condition Assessment

No information available.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 4.3km east of the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. There is no hydrological connectivity between the plan area and the SAC.

Lough Foyle SPA (Ireland)

Status:	Classified Special Protection Area	Site Code:	IE0004087
Year:	1996	Area:	587.67ha
References:	Natura 2000 Standard Data Form Lough Foyle SPA Site Synopsis NPWS (2014) Conservation Objectives: Lough Foyle SPA 004087. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Lough Foyle SPA Conservation Objectives Supporting Document NPWS September 2014		
Map:	Map 3		

Summary Site Description

The site comprises a section of the western shore of Lough Foyle from Muff to north of Vances Point in Co. Donegal. The site is part of the larger cross-border Lough Foyle complex which regularly supports in excess of 20,000 wintering waterbirds. The majority of the wintering waterbirds that utilise this site occur along the southern and eastern shoreline of Lough Foyle in Derry, which is also designated as an SPA in Northern Ireland.

Lough Foyle SPA is of high ornithological importance as it is part of an internationally important wetland site that regularly supports internationally important populations of Whooper Swan, Light-bellied Brent Goose and Bar-tailed Godwit, and nationally important populations of a further 20 species. Of note is that five of the species which occur regularly, i.e. Red-throated Diver, Bewick's Swan, Whooper Swan, Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

Selection Features

Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population*
Red-throated Diver <i>Gavia stellata</i>	-	28
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	-	148
Bewick's Swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>	-	43
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	-	811
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	-	391
Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	-	3,765
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	-	468
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	-	9,011
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	-	660
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	-	1,635
Eider <i>Somateria mollissima</i>	-	143
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	-	82
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	-	3,101
Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	-	4,562
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	-	4,024
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	-	499
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>	-	4,991
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	-	2,059
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	-	2,265
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	-	988
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	-	2,212
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	-	2,846
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	-	1,261
Wetlands	-	

*Baseline population from Lough Foyle SPA Conservation Objectives Supporting Document.

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for this site are:

- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the qualifying species in Lough Foyle SPA.
- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat in Lough Foyle SPA as a resource for the regularly occurring waterbirds that utilise it.

(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives)

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Adjoining habitat is particularly important for swans and geese as well as providing high tide roost locations. Anthropogenic disturbance that occurs in or near the site could result in the displacement of one or more of the listed waterbird species from areas within the SPA, and / or a reduction in their numbers. Significant changes in land management and disturbance are key considerations. Activities such as aquaculture, bait digging and sand and gravel extraction can alter the natural littoral and sub-littoral communities. Commercial and recreational boating can cause disturbance especially to particularly sensitive areas within the site. Loss of habitats can occur through development, changes in coastal processes, invasive species. Loss of inter-tidal habitat is a critical issue as this is the feeding zone for the majority (numbers and species) of birds. Open water habitat could be impacted through port expansion although this is likely to be limited. Habitat quality can also be impacted by diminution of water quality. Power cables within flight lines present a problem in relation to swans and geese.

Condition Assessment

Feature	Conservation Condition*
Red-throated Diver <i>Gavia stellata</i>	Favourable
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Intermediate Unfavourable
Bewick's Swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>	Highly Unfavourable
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Favourable
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	Favourable
Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	Unfavourable
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Unfavourable
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	Highly Unfavourable
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	Favourable
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Unfavourable
Eider <i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Favourable
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	Favourable
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Favourable
Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Favourable
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Intermediate Unfavourable
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	Highly Unfavourable
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>	Unfavourable
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	Intermediate Unfavourable
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Intermediate Unfavourable
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	Favourable
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Favourable
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	Favourable
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Unfavourable
Wetlands	

* Lough Foyle SPA Conservation Objectives Supporting Document

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is immediately adjacent to the SPA at Culmore and connected through the waters of Lough Foyle. Any major development within or adjacent to the site could impact through disturbance to features and deterioration in water quality. Significant increase in recreational disturbance could impact species or supporting habitat. Disturbance of whooper swans or loss of habitat outside the site on which they depend. Roost sites can occur outside the site boundary.

Lough Nageage SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	IE0002135
Year:	Proposed as SCI 2002	Area:	156.7ha
References:	Natura 2000 Standard Data Form NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Lough Nageage SAC [002135]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Lough Nageage SAC Site Synopsis ¹ Conservation management of the white-clawed crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> Part 1 J. D. Reynolds IRISH WILDLIFE MANUALS No. 1 Series Editor: F. Marnell		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

Lough Nageage is situated to the east of Lough Derg, and approximately 5 km north east of Pettigo in the south of Co. Donegal. This small site contains three lakes, the highest of which lies at an altitude of 181 m. The lakes lie in a basin, surrounded by gently sloping ground, underlain by bedrocks of Lower Avonian Shales and Sandstones. The surrounding soils are predominantly thin peats, with a greater depth of peat accumulated on flatter ground.

White-clawed Crayfish is the only species of crayfish found in Ireland, where it is protected under the Wildlife Act, 1976. It is classified as a vulnerable and rare species in the IUCN Red List of threatened animals, it is listed as a protected faunal species in Appendix III of the Bern Convention, and is also listed in Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The first and only record for White-clawed Crayfish from Co. Donegal was made at Lough Nageage in August 1991. The species was recorded again in June 1998 when large populations were noted in both Lough Nageage and Lough Veenagreane. Females carrying young were also reported. The altitude of these lakes, 165 m and 181 m respectively, are noteworthy as White-clawed Crayfish are rare at altitudes above 150 m.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Species	White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)	-	Present

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objective for this site is:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) for which the SAC has been selected.

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. The biggest threat to the populations of White-clawed Crayfish is deterioration of water quality, particularly acidification and nutrient enrichment associated with the recent afforestation in the catchment. Run-off from agricultural practices is not thought to be a major threat due to the limited amount of improved pasture in the vicinity of the site. Wind farm development has occurred upstream in the Termon catchment within the plan area, these proposals have been subject to HRA.

Condition Assessment

No information available.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan area is immediately adjacent to and connected to the SAC by the Termon River with a small part of the catchment originating in the plan area south west of Killeter. The Termon river catchment is within a mountainous area with forestry within the catchment. The feature species may be present in the Termon River as well as within the SAC¹.

Lough Swilly SAC and SPA

Site Name:	Lough Swilly SAC	Site Code:	IE0002287
Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Area:	9257.6ha
Year:	Proposed as SCI 2000		
Site Name:	Lough Swilly SPA	Site Code:	IE0004075
Status:	Classified Special Protection Area	Area:	
Year:	1995		
References:	Natura 2000 Standard Data Form Lough Swilly SAC Natura 2000 Standard Data Form Lough Swilly SPA Lough Swilly SAC Site Synopsis. Lough Swilly SPA Site Synopsis. NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: Lough Swilly SAC 002287 and Lough Swilly SPA 004075. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Lough Swilly SAC Conservation objectives supporting document marine habitats. Version 1 March 2011 Lough Swilly SAC Conservation objectives supporting document coastal habitats. Version 1 March 2011		
Map:	Map 3&4		

Summary Site Description

Lough Swilly SAC

This large site, situated in the northern part of Co. Donegal, comprises the inner part of Lough Swilly. It extends from below Letterkenny to just north of Buncrana. Lough Swilly is a long sea lough, cutting through a variety of metamorphic rocks on the west side of Inishowen. The main rivers flowing into the site are the Swilly, Lennan and Crana. At low tide, extensive sand and mudflats are exposed, especially at the mouths of the Swilly and Lennan rivers. The site is estuarine in character, with shallow water and intertidal sand and mudflats being the dominant habitats. This site is of conservation importance as it contains good examples of at least five habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive (estuaries, lagoons, Atlantic salt meadows, Molinia meadows, old oak woods) and supports a population of Otter.

Lough Swilly SPA

The site supports an excellent diversity of waterfowl species in autumn and winter as well as breeding terns, gulls and ducks. The shallow waters provide suitable habitat for grebes and diving duck, while the intertidal flats are used by an abundance of wildfowl and waders. At high tide, the duck and wader species roost on the salt marshes and shorelines, with some species moving to the adjacent pasture and arable fields. The combination within this site of extensive feeding areas and safe resting and roosting sites makes this one of the most important wetlands in the north-west of the country for wintering waterfowl. Lough Swilly SPA supports internationally important numbers of Whooper Swan (1,673 - mean peak for the five winters 1995/96-1999/2000), Greenland White-fronted Goose (847 for the Lough Swilly flock - mean peak for the five winters 1994/95-1998/99) and Greylag Goose (1,218 - mean peak for the five winters 1995/96-1999/2000). The main areas of the site used by these species are at Big Isle, Farsetmore, Blanket Nook, Ballylawn and Inch Levels. The flock sizes for Whooper Swan and Greylag Goose are the highest in the country. Considerably higher numbers of Whooper Swan (peak of 1,946) have been recorded, especially early in the season, as this is the area where the swans make their Irish landfall in autumn on their return from breeding grounds in Iceland. Both Greenland White-fronted Goose and Whooper Swan are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

Lough Swilly SPA is of major ornithological importance for wintering waterbirds, with three species occurring in numbers of international importance and 18 occurring regularly in numbers of national importance. The site is regularly used by more than 20,000 waterfowl and as such is of international importance.

Selection Features

Lough Swilly SAC

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population
Habitat	Estuaries	-	6118.3ha
Habitat	Coastal lagoons	-	205.7ha
Habitat	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)	-	38.98ha
Species	Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	-	Present
Habitat	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	-	58.6ha

Lough Swilly SPA

Feature	Population	Size/extent/population*
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Wintering	284
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Wintering	57
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Wintering	1,673
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	Wintering	1,218
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Wintering	772
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	Wintering	1,580
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	Wintering	1,581
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Wintering	1,169
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	Wintering	60
Scaup <i>Aythya marila</i>	Wintering	103
Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Wintering	170
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	Wintering	127
Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	Wintering	514
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Wintering	1,595
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	Wintering	303
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>	Wintering	7,285
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Wintering	1,720
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	Wintering	1,404
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Wintering	48
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Breeding	800 pairs
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	Wintering	1,523
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Breeding	258 pairs
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Breeding	89
Greenland White-fronted goose <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	Wintering	847
Wetlands & Waterbirds		

*Baseline population from Lough Swilly SPA Conservation Objective Supporting Document.

Conservation Objectives

Lough Swilly SAC

The Conservation Objectives for this site are:

- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Estuaries in Lough Swilly SAC.
- To restore the favourable conservation condition of Lagoons, Atlantic salt meadows, Otter and Old sessile oak woodland in Lough Swilly SAC.

(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives.)

Lough Swilly SPA

The Conservation Objectives for this site are:

- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the waterbird Special Conservation Interest species listed for Lough Swilly SPA.
- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Swilly SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.

(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives Supporting Document.)

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Various inshore fishery activities occur within the site although their spatial extent is largely unknown. Increased urbanisation is evident at Letterkenny, Rathmullan and Buncrana which has led to pressures upon Waste Water Treatment facilities. Economic growth and prosperity in recent decades has resulted in an expansion of holiday homes in the region, particularly at Rathmullan, and Buncrana.

Changes in farming practices has seen a reduction in grassland and an increase in arable crops which has implications for wintering geese and swan populations that rely on grass foraging. Marina developments can lead to increased disturbance and loss of feature habitats.

Condition Assessment

Component Feature	Sub-site	Conservation status
Atlantic salt meadows	Fahan	Unfavourable - Bad
	Green Hill	Unfavourable - Bad
	Lower Lough Swilly	Unfavourable - Bad
	Rathmelton	Unfavourable - Inadequate
	Ray	Unfavourable - Bad

Lough Swilly SPA

Feature		Conservation Condition*
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Wintering	Moderately Unfavourable
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Wintering	Intermediate (Unfavourable)
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Scaup <i>Aythya marila</i>	Wintering	Intermediate (Unfavourable)
Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Wintering	Moderately Unfavourable
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	Wintering	Intermediate (Unfavourable)
Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>	Wintering	Moderately Unfavourable
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Wintering	Intermediate (Unfavourable)
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Breeding	
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	Wintering	Intermediate (Unfavourable)
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Breeding	

Feature		Conservation Condition*
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Breeding	
Greenland White-fronted goose <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	Wintering	Favourable
Wetlands & Waterbirds		

*From Lough Swilly SPA Conservation Objective Supporting Document.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan boundary is approximately 2.1km east of the SPA and 4.9 km from the SAC, therefore within the screening distance for impact of aerial emissions. The SAC and SPA are connected to the plan area via the Skeoge River which drains from the plan area. For Whooper Swan and Greylag goose Lough Swilly forms part of the Lough Swilly / Lough Foyle / River Foyle complex as the birds move frequently around the whole area, therefore these species could be impacted by development within the plan area which may interfere with flight lines or supporting habitat.

River Finn SAC

Status:	Designated Special Area of Conservation	Site Code:	IE0002301
Year:	Proposed as an SCI 2003	Area:	5499.4ha
References:	River Finn SAC Site Synopsis 06/01/2014 NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: River Finn SAC 002301. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.		
Map:	Map 4		

Summary Site Description

This site comprises almost the entire freshwater element of the River Finn and its tributaries the Corlacky, the Reelan sub-catchment, the Sruhamboy, Elatagh, Cummirk and Glashagh, and also includes Lough Finn, where the river rises. The spawning grounds at the headwaters of the Mourne and Derg Rivers, Loughs Derg and Belshade and the tidal stretch of the Foyle north of Lifford to the border are also part of the site. The Finn and Reelan, rising in the Bluestack Mountains, drain a catchment area of 195 square miles. All of the site is in Co. Donegal. The underlying geology is Dalradian Schists and Gneiss for the most part though quartzites and Carboniferous Limestones are present in the vicinity of Castlefinn. The hills around Lough Finn are also on quartzite. The mountains of Owendoo and Cloghervaddy are of granite felsite and other intrusive rocks rich in silica. There are many towns along the river but not within the site, including Lifford, Castlefinn, Stranolar and Ballybofey.

Upland blanket bog occurs throughout much of the upland area of the site along the edges of the river. However, more extensive examples are found at Tullytresna and in the Owendoo / Cloghervaddy bogs. A valley bog fills the low lying areas to the north-east of Lough Finn which is dominated by Deergrass, cottongrass, Purple Moor-grass and Heather. Mossy hummocks occur in the wetter areas. Transition mires (or quaking bogs or scraws) occur at several locations, usually at the interface between bog and lake or stream. Wet heath is associated with the blanket bog throughout the site and is found on the shallow peats and better drained slopes. Lowland oligotrophic lakes are found at Loughs Finn, Belshade and Derg, as well as at many of the smaller lakes within the site. On the tidal stretches within the site the main habitats are the river itself, mudflats and the extensive reedbeds that have colonised the former mudflats. The habitats found are typically freshwater in nature.

The Finn system is one of Ireland's premier salmon waters. Although the Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive.

Selection Features

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population*
Habitat	Oligotrophic Waters containing very few minerals	-	880.29ha
Habitat	Wet Heath	-	165ha
Habitat	Blanket Bogs (Active)*	-	880.29ha
Habitat	Transition Mires	-	55.02ha

Feature type	Feature	Global Status	Size/extent/population*
Species	Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	-	The estimated rod catch from the Finn is approximately 500-800 spring salmon and 4,000 grilse annually, producing about 40% of the total Foyle count.
Species	Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	-	Present

*From Natura 2000 data sheet

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for this site are:

- To restore the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*), Wet Heath, Blanket Bogs (Active)* and Transition Mires and quaking bogs in River Finn SAC.
- To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) and Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

(Full list of attributes and targets is detailed in Conservation Objectives.)

Main Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Site

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect the site. Agriculture, with particular emphasis on grazing, is the main land use along the Finn and its tributaries. Much of the grassland is unimproved but improved grassland and silage are also present, particularly east of Ballybofey. The spreading of slurry and fertiliser poses a threat to the water quality of this salmonid river, particularly in this region as the river is subject to extensive flooding. Fishing is a main tourist attraction on the Finn and there are a large number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. The River Finn is a designated Salmonid Water under the E.U. Freshwater Fish Directive. Other aspects of tourism such as boating are concentrated around Lough Finn. Afforestation is ongoing, particularly along the western sections of the site adjacent to the headwaters and around the shores of Lough Derg. Forestry poses a threat in that sedimentation and acidification occurs. Sedimentation can cover the gravel beds resulting in a loss of suitable spawning grounds.

Condition Assessment

No information available.

Connectivity with the plan area

The plan area is directly connected to the SAC along the international border in the lower reaches of the River Foyle which is the migratory route for Atlantic salmon to the sea. The SAC also includes the spawning grounds at the headwaters of the Mourne and Derg Rivers (adjacent to River Foyle and Tributaries SAC along the international border) and Lough Derg and so is directly connected to the plan area at these locations. Development within the plan area impacting on water quality or quantity could impact on migrating salmon and on the riverine habitat directly where this is immediately adjacent to the plan area.

Appendix 4: Maps

Map 1: The Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan Area – Settlements

Map 2: The Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan Area – Environmental

Map 3: SPAs in relation to Derry City and Strabane District

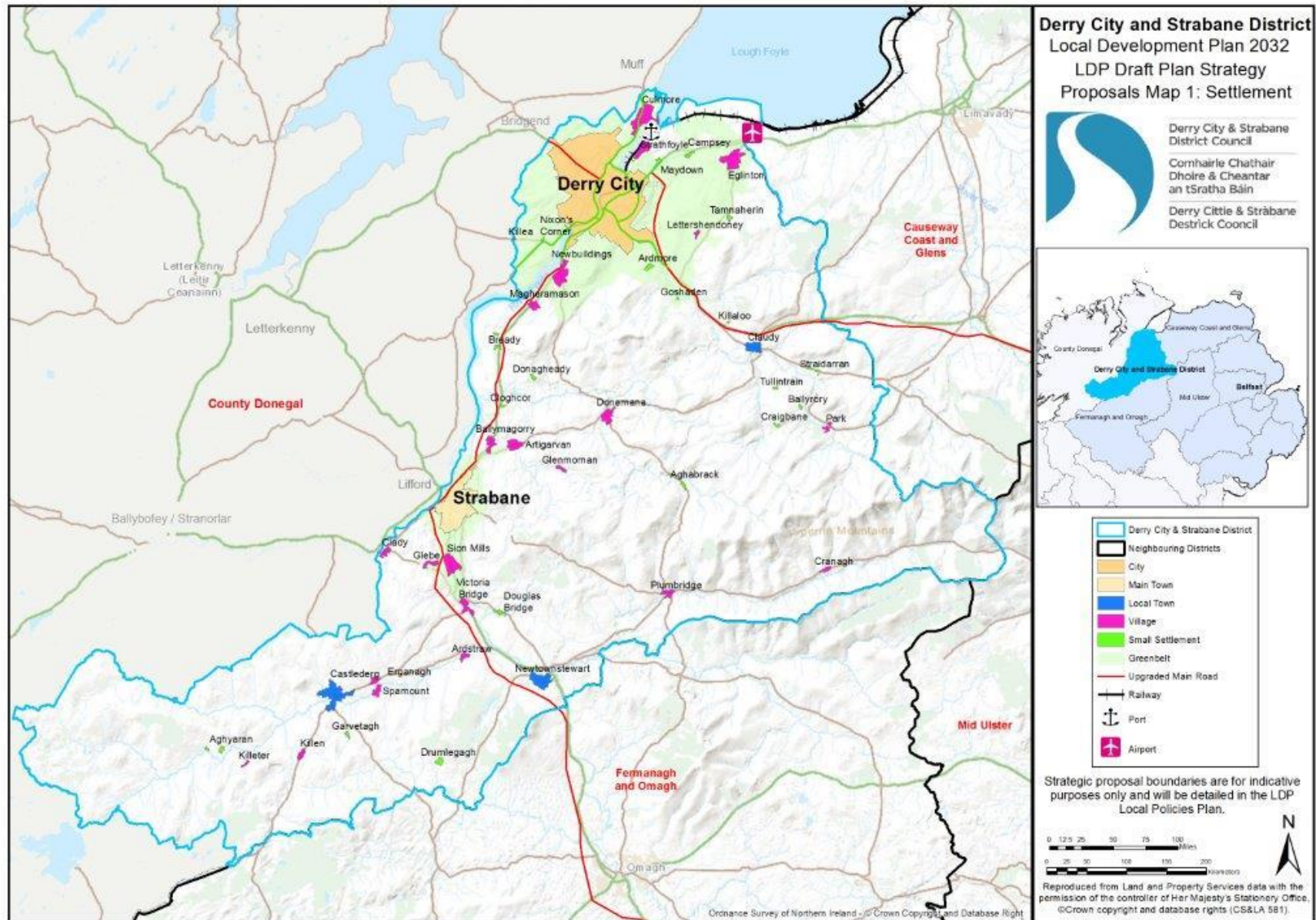
Map 4: SACs in relation to Derry City and Strabane District

Map 5: Ramsar Sites in relation to Derry City and Strabane District

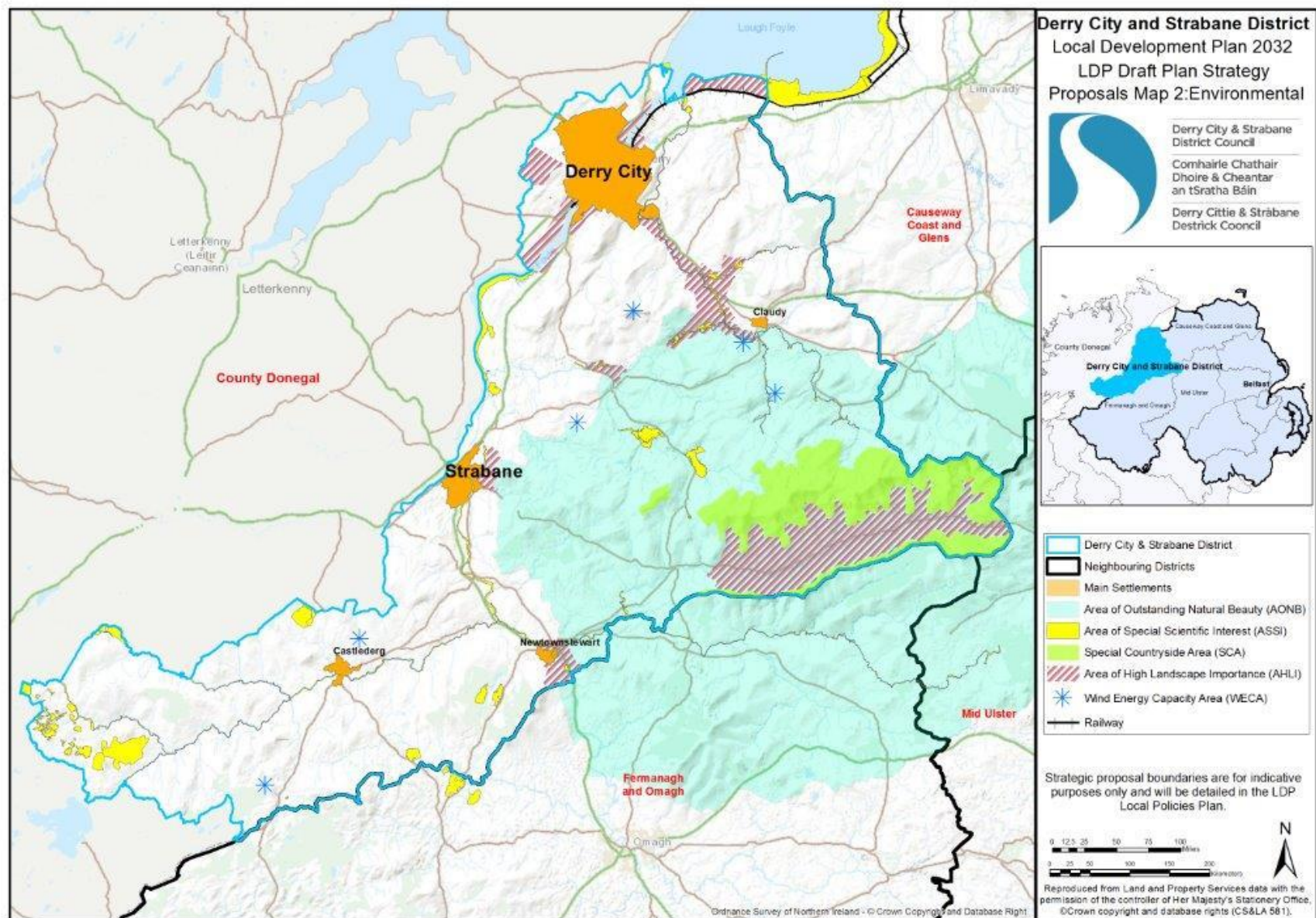
Map 6: Major Catchments within the Derry City and Strabane District area

Map 7: River Sub-basins within the Derry City and Strabane District area

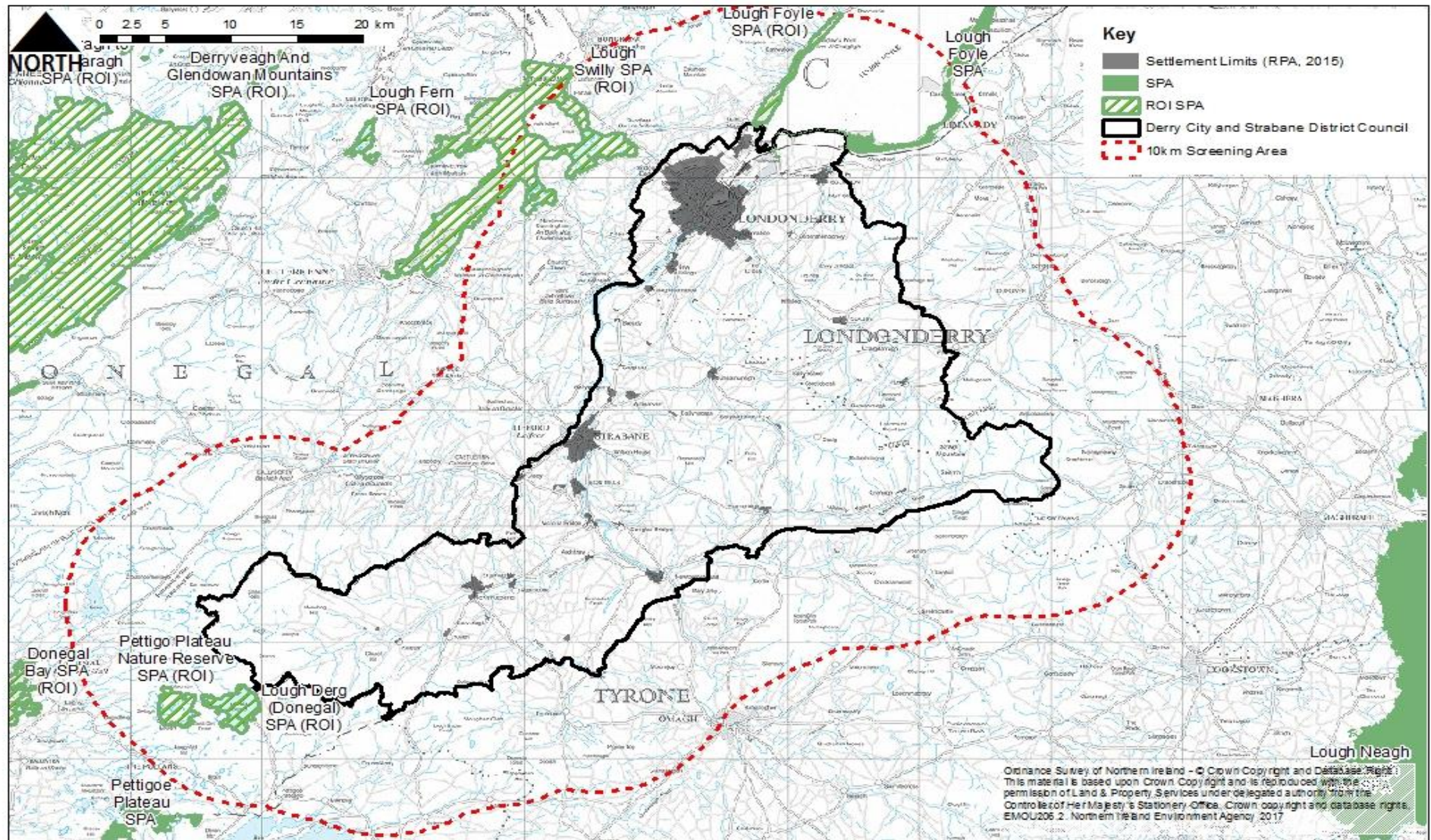
Map 1: The Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan Area – Settlements



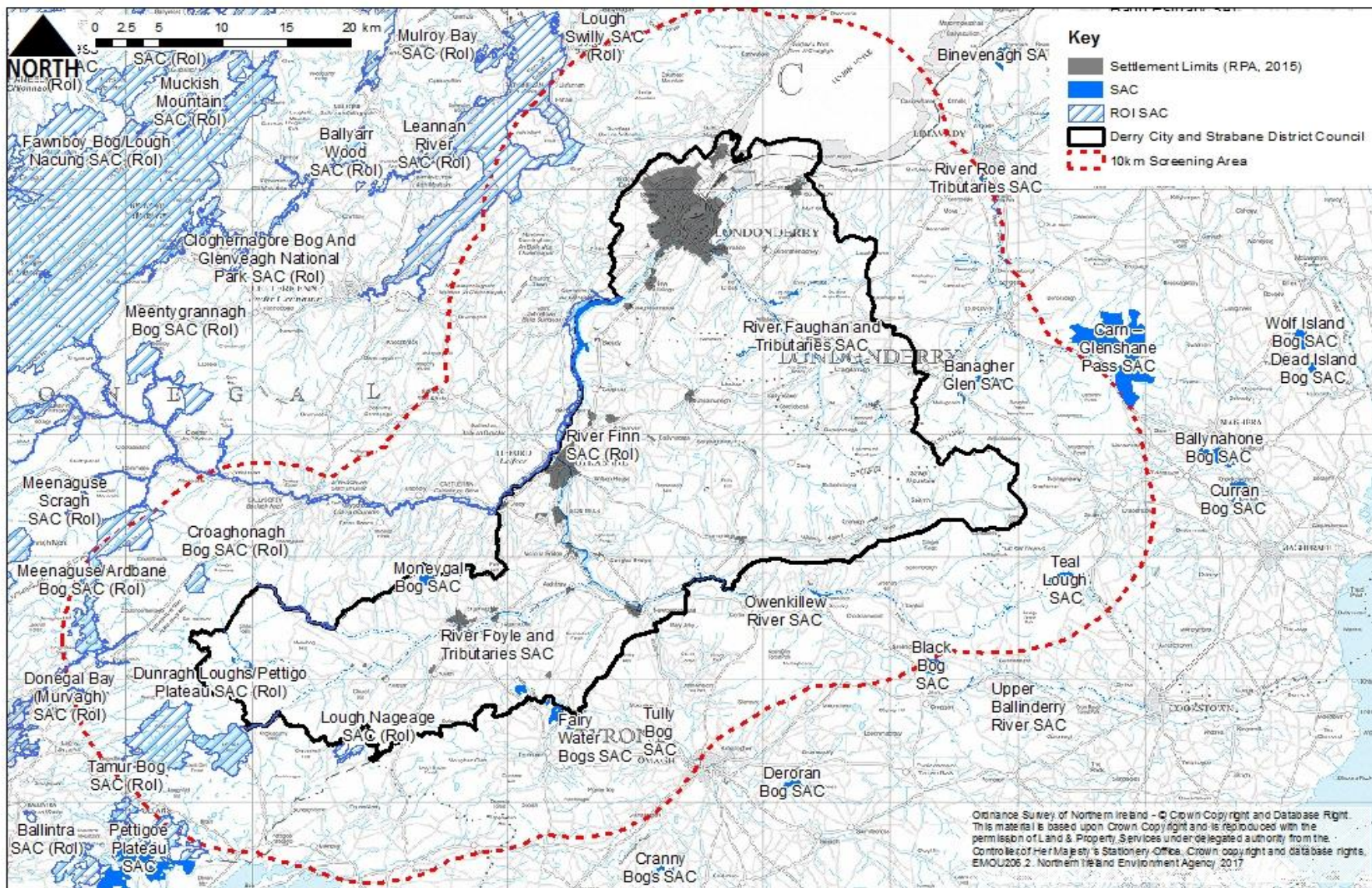
Map 2: The Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan Area – Environmental



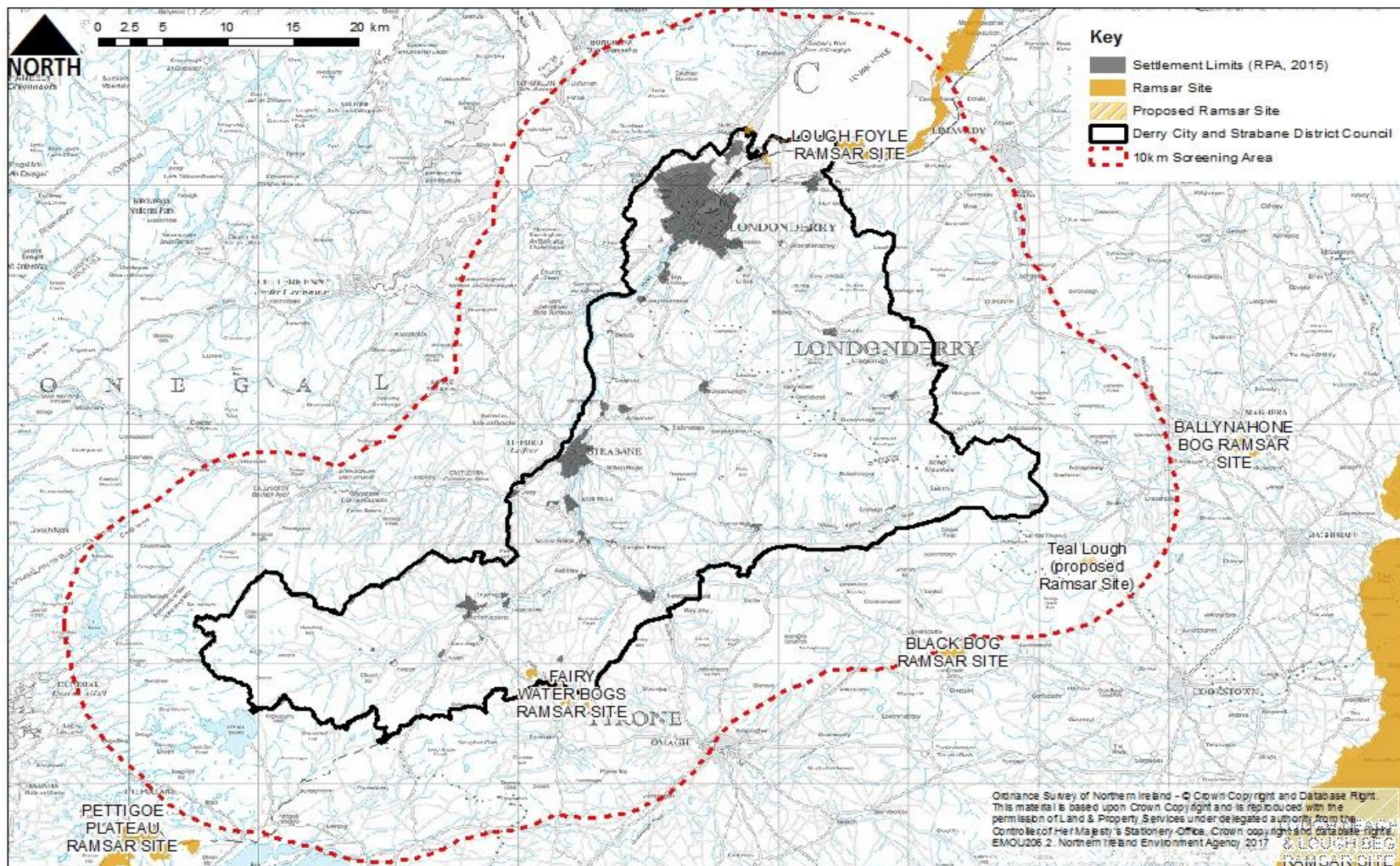
Map 3: SPAs in relation to Derry City and Strabane District



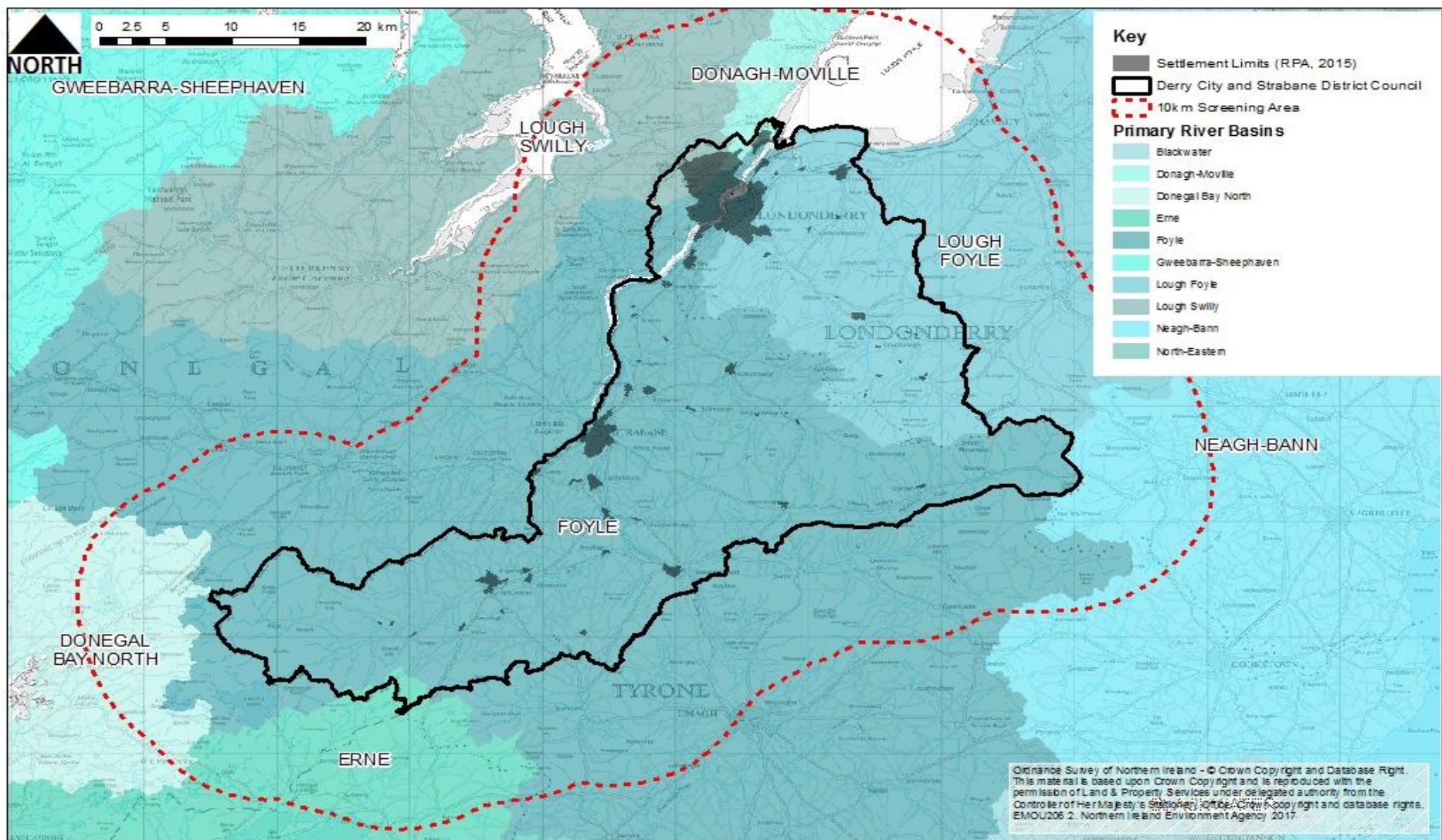
Map 4: SACs in relation to Derry City and Strabane District



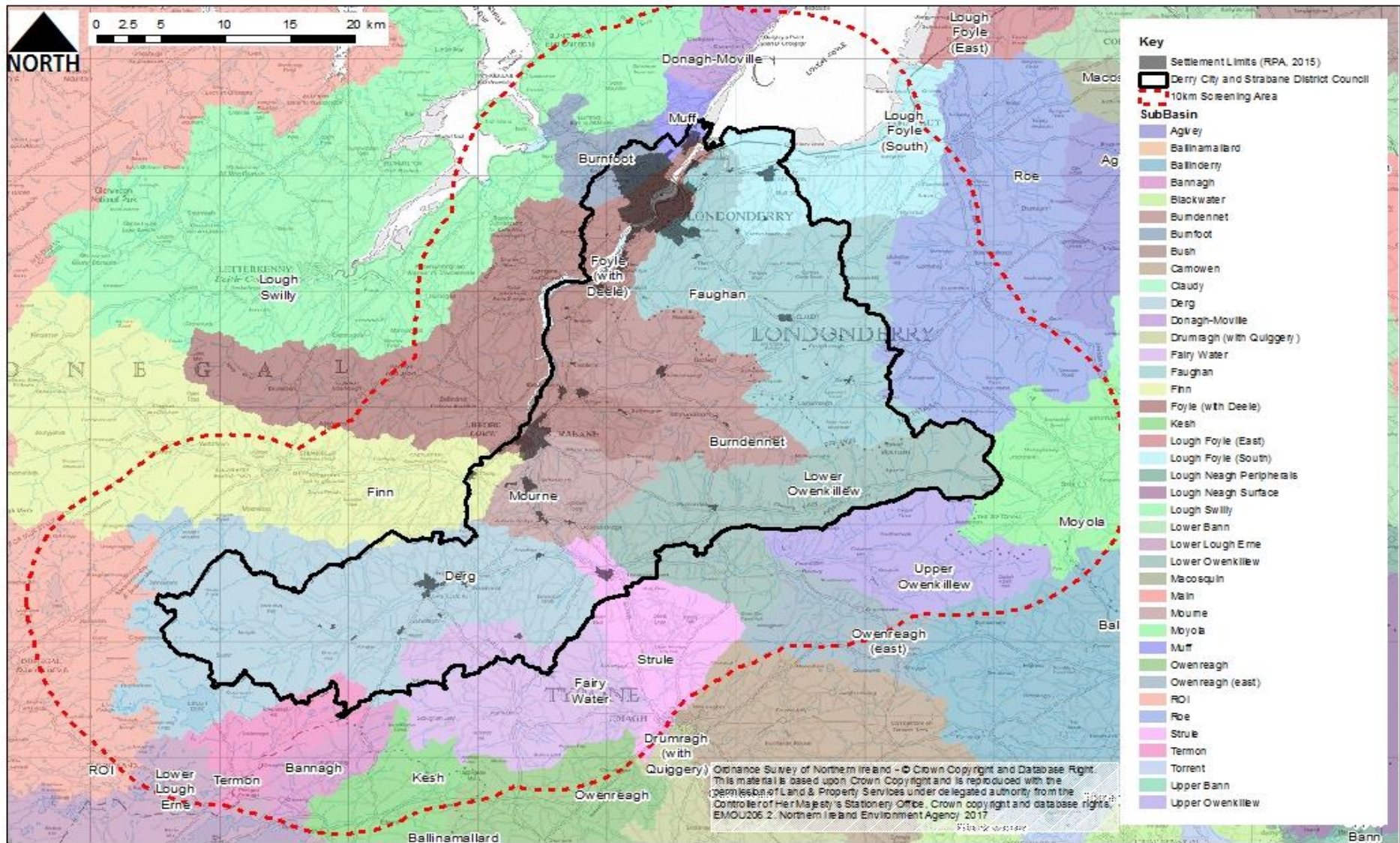
Map 5: Ramsar Sites in relation to Derry City and Strabane District



Map 6: Major Catchments within the Derry City and Strabane District area



Map 7: River Sub-basins within the Derry City and Strabane District area



Appendix 5: Review of draft Plan Strategy Proposals and Policies

The following categories are used to assess whether an overall plan and its individual proposals require HRA as described in Appendix 2. These are taken from Part F of the HRA Handbook where they are explained in detail in the sections referenced. In some cases more than one category may apply.

- A. General statement of policy / general aspiration (screened out). F.6.3.1
- B. Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability / sustainability of proposals (screened out). F.6.3.2
- C. Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan (screened out). F.6.3.3
- D. General plan-wide environmental protection / site safeguarding / threshold policies (screened out). F.6.3.4
- E. Policies or proposals which steer change in such a way as to protect international sites from adverse effects (screened out). F.6.3.5
- F. Policy that cannot lead to development or other change (screened out). F.6.3.6
- G. Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site (screened out). F.6.3.7
- H. Policy or proposal the (actual or theoretical) effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects) (screened out). F.6.3.8
- I. Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone (screened in) F.6.3.9
- J. Policy or proposal with an effect on a site but unlikely to be significant alone, so need to check for likely significant effects in combination F.6.3.10
- K. Policy or proposal unlikely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination (screened out after the in combination test). F.6.3.11
- L. Policy or proposal which might be likely to have a significant effect in combination (screened in after the in combination test). F.6.3.11
- M. Bespoke area, site or case-specific policies or proposals intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on an international site (screened in) F.6.3.12

Derry-Strabane - LDP Draft Plan Strategy 2032 – Screening of draft Plan Strategy Proposals and Policies

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
PART A - CONTEXTUAL CHAPTERS		
1. Introduction to the Local Development Plan (LDP) Draft Plan A63Strategy (DPS)	NA Out	Administrative text - introduces plan and its preparation
2. Survey & Profile of the Derry City and Strabane District	NA Out	Administrative text - profile of Council area
3. Policy Context for the LDP	NA Out	Administrative text - policy context
PART B - OVERALL STRATEGY		
4. LDP Vision and Objectives		
The LDP Vision		
To make Derry City and Strabane District a thriving, prosperous and sustainable area – Planning for balanced and appropriate high-quality development, whilst protecting our environment, and also promoting well-being with equality of opportunity for all.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
Spatial & Cross-Cutting Objectives - (a) Planning for a sustainable District, with a strong Derry, Strabane and vibrant rural areas, as the focus of the North West Region		
(i) To put in place the Council's sound Planning framework of policies and land uses, aligned with the Strategic Growth Plan and taking account of regional priorities, that will deliver high-quality, sustainable developments across the City and District to 2032, contributing to climate-change prevention / adaptation, protecting the environment and meeting the needs (including health, well-being and amenity) of residents and visitors.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(ii) To develop and reinforce Derry City as the core settlement, regional gateway and principal city of the North West – providing employment, administration, commerce, specialised services, cultural amenities and tourism / visitor facilities as well as shopping health, education and leisure services, particularly for the cross-border population within the one-hour drive time across the North West Region.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(iii) To further develop and grow Strabane as the main hub, as a prosperous and regenerated town linked to Derry, Tyrone and the rest of the North West, particularly benefitting from its close proximity to Lifford, a key administrative centre for Donegal County. Strabane will be the focus for employment, administration, shopping, health, education and commerce for its local and cross-border hinterland.	A Out	General statement of objectives.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
(iv) To protect and consolidate the role of local towns and villages spread across the District so that they act as local centres for appropriate-scale shops, employment, houses and community services, meeting the daily needs of their rural hinterlands.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(v) To provide for vital and vibrant rural communities elsewhere, including in our small settlements, whilst protecting the countryside in which they live by accommodating appropriate development so as to sustain and service these rural communities.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
Economic Development Objectives - (b) Creating Jobs and Promoting Prosperity		
(i) To facilitate the creation of approximately 15,000 new jobs by 2032, based upon projected population increase, reduced unemployment rates and investment-driven growth, focussed on the identified growth sectors, at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car.	A Out	General statement of policy however allows for 28% growth in jobs over the life of the plan from 2017 levels. Likely driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies and in Section 3.
(ii) To recognise and accommodate entrepreneurship and innovation for large, medium and small firms by attracting new firms, facilitating new business start-ups and accommodating expanding businesses, in urban areas and also in rural areas where appropriate location, type and scale.	A Out	General statement of policy. Possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies.
(iii) To recognise the importance of, and to accommodate, self-employment and home working, in both urban and rural locations.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(iv) To recognise the North West's significant renewable energy resource and encourage the use of sustainable energy both as a means of generating money for the local economy, attracting investment in enterprise and providing sustainable and affordable electrical power for the population.	A Out	General statement of policy. Possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies.
(v) To manage the utilisation of the District's mineral resources in a responsible and sustainable manner that meets the developmental needs of the District and wider region, yet protecting the landscape quality and natural environment of the District.	A Out	General statement of policy. Possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies.
(vi) To facilitate the City to capitalise on its role as a key cross-border and international gateway providing access by road, air, rail, and sea, while similarly maximising the economic corridor potential for Strabane and the rest of the District of the cross border and A2, A5 and A6 improvement schemes to the North West.	A Out	General statement of policy. Possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies.
(vii) Continue the high levels of co-operation between Letterkenny, Derry and Strabane as pursued by the Northwest Regional Development Group, to unlock the potential of the North West and consider opportunities to improve transport / accessibility and public services in sectors such as health and education.	A Out	General statement of objectives.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
(viii) Retailing and Centres – to achieve a strong, vibrant and multi-use City Centre and Town Centres supported by a hierarchy of other centres that sustainably meets the shopping, working and leisure needs of all the people.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(ix) Tourism – to increase the visitor numbers, spend and economic benefit of tourism for the District. To continue the regeneration of the City and its promotion as a major tourist destination while respecting its heritage assets, exceptional landscape setting and unique walled core through sensitive development. The city-based tourism success will be complemented by sustainable, focused rural tourism across the District especially through assets such as the Sperrin AONB and Foyle / Faughan valleys.	A Out	General statement of policy. Possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies.
Social Development Objectives - (c) Accommodating People and Facilitating Communities		
(i) To provide for approximately 9,000 new, quality homes by 2032, in private and social housing, in a variety of formats designed to meet the needs of families, including single-parent families, small households, the elderly and disabled and single people, at sustainable locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities, for those people with and without a car. Housing schemes in Derry city, Strabane and the smaller settlements will require imaginative and innovative design, including mixed use schemes, and possibly mixed tenure, to ensure that they link into the existing urban fabric. Rural houses also need to be of quality design and siting, with a focus on sustainable development to provide homes to sustain vibrant rural communities.	A Out	General statement of policy however allows for 14 % - 17% growth in homes over the life of the plan from 2017 levels. Possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies and in Section 3.
(ii) 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 while not adversely impacting on neighbours or the environment.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(iii) To facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of efficient public transportation in accordance with the community plan.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(iv) To achieve balanced communities and to accommodate cultural differences between communities of all religious backgrounds, whilst promoting “shared spaces” to bring people together with equality of opportunity.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(v) To close the gap in quality of life for those living in deprived areas.	A Out	General statement of objectives.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
(vi) Open Space – to provide a network of ample, good quality open spaces, sports and recreation facilities to give the District’s people a healthy well-being and high quality of life.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(vii) Waste – to minimise our waste products and to sustainability provide facilities to manage / reuse any such products in a sustainable manner – as a ‘Zero Waste-Circular Economy’ approach.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
Environment-Focused Objectives - (d) Enhancing the Environment, Creating Places and Improving Infrastructure		
(i) To protect and enhance the natural and historic built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and well-being. Protecting ecosystem services of fauna and flora, as well as achieving significantly more tree-cover, energy efficiency, less pollution and other measures to tackle climate change.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(ii) To build upon the existing urban assets / built heritage value, but also improving connectivity to existing and new urban soft and hard spaces, so as to achieve enhanced place-making. High standards of design and materials will help to develop / protect the distinctive character of each of the District’s settlements, and the countryside. In particular, Derry city is to grow to look and function as a modern, cosmopolitan, people-focussed university and riverfront city. Strabane is to regenerate with improved internal accessibility, a strong unified commercial heart and Riverine-linked green edge.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(iii) To accommodate investment in power, water and sewerage infrastructure, and waste management, particularly in the interests of public health.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(iv) To prevent future development of areas of flood risk, mitigating where necessary, and prevent inappropriate development that would cause or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(v) 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, rail, walking and cycling.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(vi) To improve connectivity, though developments for telecommunications - especially broadband, which both meets the needs of business and private households whilst reducing the need to travel.	A Out	General statement of objectives.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
(vii) To enhance transport linkages across the North West particularly between Derry, Strabane and Donegal, to and from the air and sea ports and the distribution of traffic from and between transport corridors.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(viii) To contribute towards a 'modal shift' away from dependence on private cars and minimising traffic-generation, enabling 'places for people', relying more on improved public transport services and achieve the more efficient integration of land use and transportation. Planning for new developments in locations well-served by public transport will provide more accessibility to sustainable choices of transport.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(ix) Protect areas of high landscape quality / scenic value, undeveloped coastline and wetlands from inappropriate development, particularly recognising the attractive natural and historic setting of the City and the Sperrins, which also bring benefits to the economy and society.	A Out	General statement of objectives.
(x) Protect and enhance the network of open spaces and greenways in the North West. Opportunities should be taken for connections to an enhanced network of pedestrian paths, cycle-ways and ecological corridors.	A Out	General statement of objectives.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
5. Growth Strategy for the Derry City and Strabane District		
Strategy to Deliver the Growth Levels	A Out	General statement of objectives to deliver 9,000 new homes for 10,000 more people and 15,000 more jobs managed sustainably. Likely driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the LDP policies and in Section 3.
6. SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE DERRY CITY AND STRABANE DISTRICT		
Spatial Strategy for The Derry City and Strabane District	A Out	This is a general statement of policy. It is a strategic high level spatial strategy setting out our settlement hierarchy, the main environmental areas, transport corridors and other main infrastructure features, as well as the general spatial strategy for Derry city and Strabane town. The spatial strategy will determine where planned growth will be directed, balanced with the priority areas for environmental protection and enhancement. It is a likely driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the Settlement Hierarchy, Designations and LDP policies below and in Section 3.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
Overview of Settlement Hierarchy	A Out	This is a general statement of policy setting out the settlement hierarchy with the focus of development in Derry as the principal city and Strabane as the main town supported by local towns, villages and small settlements. Each settlement will have a defined development limit, beyond which there will be presumption against further urban development. The current development limits in the DAP 2011 and SAP 2001 will continue to guide development until they are reviewed and adopted in the LPP which will be subject to HRA. The plan does allow for considering the feasibility of a pilot 'resilient settlement' project, to fit in the appropriate tier within the LDP's settlement hierarchy, at LPP stage.
SETT 1 Settlement Hierarchy for DC&SDC, LDP 2032	A Out	This is a general statement of policy. It is a strategic high level policy setting out the settlement hierarchy and providing a framework for delivering growth, the policies to deliver within this framework are assessed. No new settlements have been designated.
SETT 2 Development within Settlement Development Limits	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. Allows for review of settlement limits at LPP and land use zonings which would be subject to HRA. The current development limits in the DAP 2011 and SAP 2001 will remain in place and continue to guide development until they are reviewed and adopted in the LPP.
SCA 1 Special Countryside Area (SCA)	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. It introduces an SCA in the Sperrins high summits (approximately above 310m). The SCA is indicated for strategic purposes only and boundaries will be fully defined at LPP. Policy NE 6, Development within Special Countryside Areas (SCA), and other policies that refer to SCAs are assessed below.
AHLI 1 Areas of High Landscape Importance (AHLIs)	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. It allows for designation of AHLIs. 11 AHLIs, largely following the CPA / AoHSV boundaries in the transitional period, are indicated on dPS Proposals Map 2. Boundaries will be fully defined at LPP. The policy for development in AHLIs, NE 7, and other policies that refer to AHLIs are assessed below.
GB 1 Green Belts (GBs)	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. It allows for designation of Green Belts around Derry and Strabane at LPP. There are several policies that refer to Green Belt e.g. in tourism, renewable energy and economic development; these policies are assessed below.
DPA 1 Development Pressure Areas (DPAs)	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. It allows for designation of DPAs in the countryside. DPAs will be subject to the same policy tests as Green Belts and those are assessed below.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
WECA 1 Wind Energy Capacity Areas (WECAs)	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site. It allows for designation of WECAs to reflect areas that are considered to be at, or reaching, capacity for wind turbines / wind farms. These are indicated for strategic purposes only on dPS Proposals Map 2 and boundaries will be fully defined at LPP. The policy for development in WECAs, RED 1, is assessed below.
7. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES & POLICIES		
GDP 1 Sustainable Development	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 2 Climate Change	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 3 Improving Health and Well-Being	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 4 Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 5 Creating and Enhancing Shared Space	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 6 Importance of Ecosystem Services	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 7 Preserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
GDP 8 Preserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	A Out	General statement of objectives. While this lists criteria these are applied through the LDP policies below.
Implementation of General Development Principles	A Out	This is a general statement which explains how the General Development Principles will be delivered. It cannot have any effect on an international site.
GDPOL 1 General Development Management Policy	D Out	This policy is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy which will apply to all development. Planning permission is subject to meeting a number of criteria summarised as follows: iii incorporation of SuDS; viii no significant adverse effect on human health and the environment; and xi development relying on non-mains sewerage, all provide for environmental protection. Criterion vii provides further protection to international sites requiring that <i>'the proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter'</i> .

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
GDPOL 2 Design Policy in Settlements	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
8. ENFORCEMENT	NA Out	Administrative text setting out the legislative and policy context for enforcement and how enforcement relates to the LDP.
PART C - ECONOMY – STRATEGY, DESIGNATIONS & POLICIES		
9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
LDP Strategy for Economic Development	A Out	General statement of strategy however plans for 28% growth in jobs over the life of the plan from 2017 levels. Likely driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under related policies and in Section 3. The scale, extent and location of all employment opportunity areas below will be confirmed at the LPP stage which will be subject to HRA.
<i>Designations - Employment Opportunity Areas</i>		
Tier 1 Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRAs)	A Out	General statement of objectives for Derry city centre and Strabane town centre. Strabane is immediately adjacent to River Foyle and Tributaries SAC. Derry lies between the SAC 5km upstream and Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site. SRAs are subject to, and will be considered under, policies ED 1 and ED 3 and also to HRA at LPP.
Tier 2 Special Economic Development Areas (SEDAs)	A Out	General statement of objectives for Ebrington, Fort George, Foyle Port, University of Ulster, Magee and Altnagelvin Campus. These are adjacent to or hydrologically connected to the Foyle estuary. This in turn has a hydrological pathway to the River Foyle and Tributaries SAC and Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site as well as adjoining sites in Ireland. SEDAs are subject to, and will be considered under, policies ED 1, ED 2, ED 3 & ED 4 and also to HRA at LPP.
Tier 3 General Economic Development Areas (GEDAs)	A Out	General statement of objectives for GEDAs which comprise existing zoned economic development land; existing economic development land; and potential urban capacity sites / whiteland suitable for economic development land. GEDAs apply to the City, Main Town and Local Towns. There is no need to expand GEDAs through the LDP, however it may be necessary at LPP stage to define the extent and purpose of individual GEDAs to ensure that we retain the most viable economic land and set out key site requirements where appropriate. GEDAs are subject to, and will be considered under, policies ED 1, ED 3 & ED 4 also to HRA at LPP.
Tier 4 New Economic Development Area (NEDA)	A Out	General statement of objectives for Bunrana Road, Derry. This area is hydrologically connected to Lough Swilly SPA and SAC. The NEDA is subject to, and will be considered under, policies ED 1, ED 3 & ED 4 and also to HRA at LPP.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
Tier 5 Economic Development in Countryside	A Out	General statement of objectives for economic development in the countryside. This will not be zoned but will be subject to, and will be considered under policies ED 1, ED 5, ED 6 & ED 7.
<i>Policies</i>		
ED 1 General Criteria for Economic Development	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals and applies to ED 2 to ED 7. It cannot affect any international sites. It indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development.
ED 2 Office Development	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Subject to ED 1 which highlights environmental considerations and indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development.
ED 3 Economic Development in Settlements	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Subject to ED 1 which highlights environmental considerations and indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development. Refers to LUPAs being designated at LPP. This will be subject to HRA.
ED 4 Protection of Zoned and Established Economic Development Land and Uses	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Subject to ED 1 which highlights environmental considerations and indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development. It constrains alternative uses on zoned or other land. It cannot affect any international sites.
ED 5 Small Scale Economic Development in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Subject to ED 1 which highlights environmental considerations and indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development.
ED 6 Expansion of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Subject to ED 1 which highlights environmental considerations and indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development.
ED 7 Major Industrial Development in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Subject to ED 1 which highlights environmental considerations and indicates that the Natural Environment policies will apply to all economic development.
10. CITY / TOWN CENTRES, RETAILING, OFFICES, LEISURE AND OTHER USES		
HC 1 Proposed Hierarchy of Centres	A Out	General statement of policy. This sets out the hierarchy of centres but, in itself, will not lead to development or other change.
DOS 1 Development Opportunity Sites within Derry City Centre and Strabane Town Centre	A Out	General statement of policy which allows for sites to be identified within Derry City Centre and Strabane Town Centre at LPP. This will be subject to HRA.
RP 1 Town Centre First	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
RP 2 Derry Primary Retail Core (PRC) and City Centre	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 3 Strabane Primary Retail Core (PRC) and Town Centre	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 4 Other Town and District Centres	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 5 Local Centres	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 6 Villages and Small Settlements	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 7 Retail Development in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Allows for limited retail development and roadside service facilities however the constraints are such that there will be limited opportunity for such development. Given the low levels of risk, policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and the policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
RP 8 Alternative Use of Shops in Primary Retail Cores and Other Centres	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 9 Out of Centre Development	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RP 10 Other Main Town Centre Uses	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
11. TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT		
Local Transport Study (LTS) Transport Measures	C Out	The LDP Transport Strategy is encapsulated in the Local Transport Study (LTS) undertaken as part of North West Transport Plan (NWTP). It has been undertaken by DfI in conjunction with the Council.
Strategic Planning Objectives for Delivery of Transport Strategy and Measures	A Out	General statement of policy.
TAM 1 Creating an Accessible Environment	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
TAM 2 Access to Public Roads	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
TAM 3 Access to Protected Routes	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
TAM 4 Protection for New Transport Schemes	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
TAM 5 Disused Transport Routes	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
TAM 6 Transport Assessment	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
TAM 7 Walking & Cycle Provision	A Out	This is a general statement of policy promoting provision of active travel opportunities which cannot have any effect on an international site.
TAM 8 Provision of Public and Private Car Parks	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
TAM 9 Car Parking and Servicing	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
TAM 10 Design of Car Parking	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
TAM 11 Temporary Car Parks	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
TAM 12 Transport Facilities	B/I In	This allows for development, either to improve strategic transportation facilities such as regional ports and airports, or that is related to and dependent on siting adjacent to the port or airport. The port and airport are adjacent to international sites or supporting habitat for those sites. The policy includes, for proposals to improve transport facilities, <i>'Such proposals should be directly related to the transportation function of the site and meet all other relevant LDP policies.'</i> It adds <i>'Development which is related to, and dependent on, siting adjacent to the port or airport will normally be considered acceptable unless it would result in an unacceptable loss of safety or amenity for adjacent communities or does not meet the requirements of GDPOL 1.'</i> This policy specifies a measure (referral to GDPOL 1) that might be construed to be mitigation given the proximity of international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
12. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT		
LDP Strategy for Tourism	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The preamble states that <i>"European and international designated sites for nature conservation extend through much of our Council from lowland raised bogs in the south west, along our rivers and to Lough Foyle. There is potential for tourism to have a direct impact on these sites, or an indirect effect on supporting habitat or through increasing recreational pressure. Therefore assessment of the impact of all tourism proposals on these sites will be an important consideration in their assessment to maintain their conservation value.'</i> The potential for impacts on international sites is therefore highlighted.
TOU 1 Safeguarding of Tourism Assets	D/F Out	This policy is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and one that cannot lead to development or other change.
TOU 2 Tourism Development in Settlements	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Allows for tourism development in settlements. The policy states <i>'All proposals must meet the General Development Principles & Policies set out in Chapter 7, in terms of Sustainable Development and also the normal Operational Planning criteria including residential amenity, traffic generation, etc.'</i> Given this caveat and the low levels of risk, NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites and the policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
TOU 3 Tourist Amenities in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It is not spatially specific and could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites, directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure. The policy states that any proposal must demonstrate that ' <i>c) it meets the requirements of GDPOL 1.</i> ' This will ensure that all development must comply with GDPOL 1 and with NE 1 and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
TOU 4 Hotels, Guest Houses, B&Bs and Tourist Hostels in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It is not spatially specific and could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites, either directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure. The policy states that ' <i>All development must meet the requirements of GDPOL 1.</i> ' There is also some reference in the J&A to environmental considerations. In view of the policy caveat and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
TOU 5 Major Tourism Development in the Countryside – Exceptional Circumstances	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It is not spatially specific and could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure. It includes ' <i>All proposals must meet the relevant General Development Principles & Policies set out in Chapter 7 and also the normal Operational Planning criteria including residential amenity, traffic generation, etc.</i> ' There is reference in the J&A to ' <i>The impact of proposals on rural character, landscape and natural / built heritage is an important consideration in their assessment, particularly within areas designated for their landscape, natural or cultural heritage qualities.</i> ' In view of the reference to Chapter 7, which includes GDPOL 1, and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
TOU 6 Self-Catering Accommodation in the Countryside	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It is not spatially specific and could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure. It includes ' <i>All development must meet the requirement of GDPOL 1.</i> ' In view of this caveat and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
TOU 7 New and Extended Holiday Parks	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It is not spatially specific and could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure. The policy does include ' <i>The location, siting, size, design, layout ... must be based on an overall design concept that ... does not impact on any adjacent and designated built or natural heritage features. Proposals for holiday park development must...meet the requirements of GDPOL 1...</i> ' and this is expanded on a little in the J&A. In view of this caveat and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
13. MINERALS DEVELOPMENT		
LDP Strategy for Minerals Development	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. Allows for potential identification of Minerals Reserve Areas (MRA's) and for Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development (ACMD) in the high Sperrins, Glenelly valley, Faughan valley and Foyle river corridor. It will be delivered through the following MIN policies. The following paragraph includes ' <i>European and international designated sites for nature conservation extend through much of our Council from lowland raised bogs in the south west, along our rivers and to Lough Foyle. There is potential for minerals development to have a direct impact on these sites, or an indirect effect on supporting habitat for example by impacting on water quality.</i> ' The potential for impacts on international sites is therefore highlighted.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
MIN 1 Minerals Development	B/I In	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It applies to all minerals development and is explicitly referred to in MIN 3 and MIN 4. MIN 1 only permits minerals development where <i>'it meets the requirements of GDPOL 1'</i> and is demonstrated that the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on: <i>'the natural environment, including earth science features; ... water environment.'</i> The J&A states <i>'Minerals development within, in close proximity or with a pathway to areas such as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) ... will not normally be given permission where they would prejudice the essential character of such areas (see chapter 21 Natural Environment).'</i> All international sites in the council area are underpinned by ASSIs. The J&A also states that <i>'Minerals development that will have demonstrable unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment will not be acceptable'</i> and <i>'The provision of reliable protective measures will be an important factor in assessing the acceptability of the extraction proposal.'</i> This policy might be construed to be mitigation given the extent of international sites in the District and the uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
MIN 2 Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development (ACMDs)	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy to protected areas from minerals development because of their intrinsic landscape, amenity, scientific or heritage value (including natural, built and archaeological heritage). ACMDs include AHLIs and SCAs and are also proposed for the high Sperrins, Glenelly valley, Faughan valley and Foyle river corridor. Boundaries are to be defined at LLP and will be subject to and informed by HRA.
MIN 3 Mineral Reserve Areas (MRAs)	A/F Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
MIN 4 Valuable Minerals	I In	Policy states that <i>'There will not be a presumption against their exploitation in any area apart from within designated Special Countryside Areas. This however is subject to meeting the relevant requirements of GDPOL 1 and other policies including NE 1.'</i> It also goes on to say <i>'All applications for Valuable Minerals will have to comply with MIN 1.'</i> This policy specifies a measure (referral to GDPOL 1 and NE 1) that might be construed to be mitigation in light of the extent of international sites in the District and the uncertainty about the location, scale and nature of minerals development that might be proposed under this policy. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
MIN 5 Restoration	D/H Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy however the restoration proposals could theoretically be relevant to schemes which might impact upon international sites. The credible evidence of a real risk to international sites is low. It is therefore considered that policy NE 1 will provide sufficient protection to avoid proposals coming forward which represent a risk to international sites and therefore this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
14. SIGNS & OUTDOOR ADVERTISEMENTS		
LDP Strategy for Signage and Outdoor Advertisements	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
AD 1 Signage & Outdoor Advertisements	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
AD 2 Advertisements and Heritage Assets	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
15. AGRICULTURE & OTHER DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE		
LDP Strategy for Agriculture & Other Development in the Countryside	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies.
AGR 1 Farm and Forestry Diversification	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: '(c) it will not have an adverse impact on the natural environment or historic environment;' The J&A specifies that ' <i>This policy should be read in conjunction with a number of policies ...including the relevant... Natural Environment Policy...</i> ' In view of the policy caveat, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
AGR 2 Farm and Forestry Development	B/I In	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: '(d) it will not have an adverse impact on the natural environment or historic environment; (f) it will not result in damaging impacts on human health, as well as sensitive habitats, wider biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, through increased ammonia emissions;' This policy specifies criteria that might be construed to be mitigation as they specifically address an impact known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
AGR 3 The Conversion and Re-Use Of Existing Buildings for Agricultural and other Suitable Rural Uses	B/H Out	This is a policy which lists the general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: '(f) all necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality; ... (h) All proposals will be in accordance with the Natural Environment chapter.' In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy and specific reference to the Natural Environment chapter it is considered that NE 1 ensures that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
PART D - SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT – STRATEGY, DESIGNATIONS & POLICIES		
16. HOUSING IN SETTLEMENTS AND IN THE COUNTRYSIDE		
LDP Strategy for the Strategic allocation of Housing land	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The strategy aims to deliver 9,000 new homes by 2032 and focusses development on the largest settlements with two thirds allocated to Derry and Strabane. The allocation for housing in the countryside is 13.1%. It therefore is a possible driver of potential effects. Implications of population and housing growth are discussed in Section 3 of this report and delivery will also be assessed under the following policies.
HOU 1 Strategic Allocation and Management of Housing Land – Zoned Housing Land and LUPAs.	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which phases release of housing zones in the City, Main Town and Local Towns. Within the Villages and Small Settlements, the Council will identify Land Use Policy Areas (LUPAs) in the LPP. The LPP will be subject to HRA and zoning considerations will include sewerage capacity.
HOU 2 Strategic Allocation of Housing in Settlements – other than Zoned Housing Land and LUPAs	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It provides for housing development on specified unzoned land within settlement limits. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies.
LDP Strategy for Urban Housing	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It relates to the mix of housing rather than the amount of housing.
HOU 3 Density of Residential Development	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It relates to the density of urban housing rather than the amount of housing.
HOU 4 Protection of Existing Residential Accommodation	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 5 Affordable Housing in Settlements	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 6 House Types, Size and Tenure	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
HOU 7 Accessible Housing (Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Standards)	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 8 Quality in New Residential Developments	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 9 Design Concept Statements, Concept Master Plans and Comprehensive Planning	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 10 Residential Extensions and Alterations	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 11 Redevelopment of Existing Buildings, or Infilling of Sites for Housing	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 12 Flats and Apartments	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 13 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Management Areas	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 14 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 15 Specialist Residential Accommodation.	B/G Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It cannot affect any international sites.
HOU 16 Travellers Accommodation	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It directs development to settlements with limited exceptions for the countryside. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, and in view of other policies including HOU 21 and NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 17 Large-Scale Managed Student Accommodation	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals and is confined to Derry City. In view of other policies, including NE 1 which will control potential construction impacts, this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
POLICIES FOR HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE		
LDP Strategy for Housing in the Countryside	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. The LDP expects to deliver approximately 1,100 to 1,400 houses in the countryside over the LDP period; these will be delivered via policies HOU 18 – 26. It is therefore a possible driver of potential effects and will be assessed under the following policies.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
HOU 18 Dwellings on Farms	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Policy specifically refers to GDPOL 1 General Development Management Policy which requires that any proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, and in view of other policies including GDPOL 1 and NE 1, this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 19 Dwellings For Established Non-Agricultural Business Enterprises	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Policy specifically refers to GDPOL 1 General Development Management Policy which requires that any proposal meets the relevant requirements as set out in the Natural Environment chapter. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, and in view of other policies including GDPOL 1 and NE 1, this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 20 Restored and Replacement Rural Dwellings	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include ' <i>All necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality</i> '. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, and in view of other policies including GDPOL 1 and NE 1, this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 21 The Conversion and Re-use of Other Rural Buildings	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include ' <i>f. All necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality</i> '. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, and in view of other policies including GDPOL 1 and NE 1, this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 22 New Dwelling in Existing Cluster in the Countryside	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. These include the requirement that ' <i>7. It meets the relevant requirements of GDPOL 1 and other policies.</i> ' GDPOL 1 includes a criterion setting out the requirements where development is dependent on non-mains sewerage. In view of this policy caveat and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 23 New Single Dwelling in a Small Gap in Existing Built-up Frontage in the Countryside	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals and requires that any proposal ' <i>meets other planning and environmental requirements</i> '. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, and in view of the caveat and other policies including GDPOL 1 and NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
HOU 24 Personal and Domestic Circumstances in the Countryside	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, policies GDPOL 1 and NE 1 are sufficient to ensure that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 25 Affordable Housing in the Countryside	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. These include <i>'Proposals must meet the relevant requirements of GDPOL 1 and other policies.'</i> GDPOL 1 includes a criterion setting out the requirements where development is dependent on non-mains sewerage. In view of this policy caveat and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
HOU 26 Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. In light of the constraints on development allowed under this policy, policies GDPOL 1 and NE 1 are sufficient to ensure that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
17. OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND OUTDOOR RECREATION		
LDP Open Space Strategy	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies.
OS 1 Protection of Open Space	D/F Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy. It also constrains change of use therefore, in itself, it cannot lead to development or other change.
OS 2 Public Open Space in New Developments	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
OS 3 Green and Blue Infrastructure	A/H Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It primarily protects green and blue networks however it also allows for access to them. It includes a requirement that <i>'Enhancements to the green network will be required to mitigate any impacts from development on existing wildlife habitats or potential connections between them, or other features of value to natural heritage, green space, landscape and recreation.'</i> The policy also refers to GDPOL 1. These caveats together with NE 1 are sufficient to ensure that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
OS 4 Outdoor Sport and Recreation in the Countryside	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Criteria include: <i>'(i) there is no significant detrimental impact on features of importance to the natural and historic environment.'</i> The J&A expands on this highlighting the need for special care in assessing proposals, taking account of the interests for which a site is designated and referring to the Natural Environment policies. In light of the way in which the requirement to protect international sites has been highlighted policy NE 1 is sufficient to ensure that this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
OS 5 Intensive Sports Facilities	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It directs development to settlements with the exception of a sports stadium which cannot be accommodated in a settlement. The criteria include ' <i>In all cases, the development of intensive sports facilities will be required to meet GDPOL 1 and all the following criteria:...there is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or built heritage</i> '. Given the constraints on development, policy caveats and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
OS 6 Noise-Generating Sports and Outdoor Recreational Activities	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Proposals for the development of sport or outdoor recreational activities that generate high levels of noise will only be permitted where all the criteria are met including: ' <i>(ii) there is no unacceptable level of disturbance to farm livestock and Wildlife</i> '. The J&A adds ' <i>The development of noisy sports or outdoor recreation activities will generally be inappropriate in or near environmentally sensitive features or locations, such as sites of nature conservation importance...</i> ' Given these caveats and application of NE 1 there is sufficient protection and the policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
OS 7 Development of Facilities Ancillary to Water Sports	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. Development of facilities ancillary to water sports adjacent to inland lakes, reservoirs and waterways will be permitted where all of the criteria are met including: ' <i>(ii) there is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation; ...(iv) it will not result in water pollution or an unacceptable level of noise or disturbance; ...(vii) there is no conflict with the provisions of any relevant local management plan e.g. River Basin Management Plans or Flood Risk Management Plans.</i> ' The J&A goes on to clarify: ' <i>Proposals for facilities must therefore demonstrate that they will not damage the wider environment. Noise, erosion of shorelines or river banks and the potential loss of amenity for other users will be considered.</i> ' There is no specific reference to the conservation objectives or management plans for international sites however these are also relevant local management plans and will be taken into account. Given these caveats NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection and the policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
OS 8 Floodlighting of Sports and Outdoor Recreational Facilities	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The Council will only permit the development of floodlighting associated with sports and outdoor recreational facilities where its design and operation meets all the criteria including '(ii) there is no adverse impact on ... natural and historic environment assets'. The J&A specifically refers to migration of salmon. Given these caveats NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection and the policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
18. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE		
LDP Strategy for Community Infrastructure	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies. Allows for designation of LUPAs at LPP for community infrastructure, the LPP will be subject to HRA.
CI 1 Community Infrastructure	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
19. UTILITIES DEVELOPMENT		
LDP strategy for Utilities developments	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies. Utilities include water supply, wastewater sewerage, and surface water sewerage, energy infrastructure including electricity and gas, as well as telecommunications infrastructure such as fixed lines, mobile connectivity and broadband.
UT 1 Electricity & Gas Infrastructure	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The policy encourages undergrounding however it does not exclude overhead infrastructure for electricity infrastructure. The policy specifies that it must be demonstrated that ' <i>The proposal does not adversely affect natural heritage features</i> '. The J&A includes ' <i>The potential of overhead lines to disrupt the flight paths of birds will also be a consideration.</i> ' In view of the policy caveat, further clarification in the J&A and other policies including NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
UT 2 Water Infrastructure	B/I In	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The implications of growth in relation to water infrastructure is discussed in Section 3 of this report. Criteria include: <i>'There is no unacceptable adverse effect on the environment, nature conservation...'</i> The J&A highlights that there is a potential risk of impacts on international sites <i>'Freshwater and marine habitats and species are important features in our Council and European and International designated sites extend along our rivers and to Lough Foyle.'</i> The policy enables adequate facilities for treatment of waste water, the provision of which may contribute to meeting the conservation objectives of international sites. Given the extent of aquatic international sites in our District this policy might be construed to be mitigation as it specifically addresses an impact known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
UT 3 Telecommunications & Connectivity, including Broadband	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. These include: <i>'It does not ...have an adverse effect on environmentally sensitive features...'</i> The J&A also refers to the Natural Environment policies. The risk from such development is low and in view of these caveats and NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
UT 4 Future-Proofing of Developments for Utility Services and Broadband	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
20. WASTE PLANNING		
LDP Strategy for waste management	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies.
WP 1 Environmental Impact of a Waste Management Facility	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It applies to all waste management development and is explicitly referred to in WP 2, 3 & 4. The criteria include: <i>'j) the development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the natural environment, areas of landscape value or the historic environment; k) 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.'</i> The J&A adds <i>'In assessing all proposals for waste management facilities, the Council will be guided by the precautionary approach i.e. 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.'</i> 20.15 expands on potential risks. In view of these caveats and NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
WP 2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities	B/I In	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It states ' <i>Sites and proposals for waste collection and treatment facilities will be permitted where they comply with policy MIN 1...</i> ' This is a typo and should have referred to WP 1. WP 1 applies to all waste management development and is referred to later in WP 2. In view of the caveats in WP 1, and of policy NE 1, it is unlikely that WP 2 could undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. However, for the purposes of clarity, it should be corrected.
WP 3 Waste Disposal	B/I In	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It states ' <i>Proposals for the development of landfill or land raising facilities for the disposal of waste will be permitted where they comply with policy MIN 1...</i> ' This is a typo and should have referred to WP 1. WP 1 applies to all waste management development and is referred to later in policy WP 2 as well as in the J&A. In view of the caveats in WP 1, and of policy NE 1, it is unlikely that WP 3 could undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites. However, for the purposes of clarity, it should be corrected.
WP 4 Land Improvement	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The disposal of inert waste by its deposition on land will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that ' <i>it will not result in an unacceptable adverse environmental impact that cannot be prevented or appropriately controlled by mitigating measures (see Policy WP 1)</i> '; In view of the constraints in development allowed and NE 1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
WP 5 Development in the Vicinity of Waste Management Facilities	B/F Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. In itself the policy cannot lead to any development or change.
PART E - ENVIRONMENT – STRATEGY, DESIGNATIONS & POLICIES		
21. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT		
LDP Strategy for the Natural Environment	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It will be further assessed under the following policies.
NE 1 Nature Conservation Sites	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any adverse effect on an international site. It restates the legal and policy requirements of the Habitats Regulations and the SPPS in relation to international sites. This policy also applies to ASSIs, which underpin all the international sites in our Council area.
NE 2 Protected Species and their Habitats	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy. Affords additional protection to some site selection features such as whooper swan.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
NE 3 Biodiversity or Features of Natural Heritage Importance	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy. May afford protection to supporting habitat for site selection features.
NE 4 Development adjacent to Main Rivers and Open Water Bodies	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental safeguarding policy. May afford additional protection to the Owenkillew, River Foyle and tributaries and Rivers Faughan and Tributaries SACs and to Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site.
NE 5 Development within or affecting the setting of the Sperrin AONB	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
NE 6 Development within Special Countryside Areas (SCA)	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
NE 7 Development within Areas of High Landscape Importance (AHLIs)	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy. Some AHLIs are adjacent to international sites such as Faughan River and tributaries SAC. The policy may afford further protection to site selection features as, for example, AHLIs will be treated as ACMDs.
NE 8 Development within Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)	D Out	This policy is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy. It constrains development in LLPAs within or adjoining settlements.
22. COASTAL DEVELOPMENT		
LDP Strategy for coastal development	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It will be further assessed under the following policy.
CD 1 Coastal Development	D/I In	This policy is a general environmental / safeguarding protection policy and it constrains coastal development. Lough Foyle SPA and Estuary is immediately adjacent to the coastal area and other sites are hydrologically connected to it. The policy states ' <i>Development proposals must comply with NE 1 and should not have an unacceptable effect, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively, on the coastal area and its setting.</i> ' It goes on to state ' <i>Proposals to extend access to the coastline or for the provision of associated facilities such as pathways or picnic areas, should not impact adversely on the natural, built or archaeological / defence heritage, geological or landscape value of the area.</i> ' ' <i>Where development within the 'undeveloped coast' is acceptable in principle, it must: Avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural environment...</i> ' This policy specifies measures that might be construed to be mitigation given the proximity of international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
23. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
LDP Strategy in relation to our District's historic environment	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policies.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
HE 1 Archaeology and Upstanding Remains	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 2 Archaeological Assessment, Evaluation and Mitigation	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 3 Development adjacent to the Walls	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 4 Listed Buildings and their Settings	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 5 Conservation Areas	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 6 Areas of Townscape / Village Character (ATCs / AVCs)	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 7 Historic Parks, Gardens, Demesnes and their Settings	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 8 Conversion and Re-Use of locally important Unlisted Vernacular Buildings	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy.
HE 9 Enabling Development	B/H Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. It sets out the exceptional circumstances where Enabling Development may be permitted and the J&A requires that applicants must <i>'seek early, pre-application consultation with all who are likely to have a significant interest; provide the planning authority with clear, detailed proposals, supported by relevant and adequate information on the likely impact of the information; propose an appropriate mitigation strategy to address any unavoidable Harm.'</i> Therefore potential impacts on international sites will be identified at an early stage and Policy NE 1 can be relied upon to afford sufficient protection to international sites such that it cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any international sites.
24. RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT		
LDP Strategy for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It is a possible driver of potential effects but implications will be assessed under the following policy.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
RED 1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development – General Criteria+A228	B/I In	<p>This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. The generation of energy from renewable resources will be permitted provided the requirements of any designations are met. Proposals will be permitted where they will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on: 'b) visual amenity, landscape character and designated / protected areas; c) biodiversity, natural and / or historic assets; d) local natural resources, such as air quality or water quality or quantity.'</p> <p>Proposals for anaerobic digesters will also be required to meet all the specific criteria including: 'iii. details of appropriate arrangements must be provided for the storage, transport and end use of all digestate / waste outputs of the AD process, taking account of the 'proximity principle', likely transportation requirements, safety, amenity, environmental and visual impact'. It also states 'The impact of proposals on designated natural and historic environment assets will also be a priority consideration.' 'Renewable energy development proposals require particular scrutiny through Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (AA) where applicable.' The J&A lists 'Some of the more common potential adverse impacts...' These include 'pollution of watercourses through unsuitable measures for managing run off and/or effluent leading to harm or destruction of biodiversity, including riverine ecology – particularly in relation to anaerobic digesters and from land spreading of digestate; changes to flows of watercourses through abstraction; disruption of bird flight paths.' This policy specifies measures that might be construed to be mitigation as they specifically address impacts known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.</p>
25. DEVELOPMENT AND FLOODING		
LDP Strategy for Development and Flooding	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It will be further assessed under the following policies.
FLD 1 Development in Fluvial (River) and Coastal Flood Plains	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
FLD 2 Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
FLD 3 Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
FLD 4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses	D/I In	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental safeguarding policy. It clarifies that, where exceptions are provided for, the Council ' <i>will discourage culverting or modification of watercourses in a SPA, SAC, Ramsar sites and supporting habitat. Where there is no alternative, the Council will seek to ensure that such artificial modification of a watercourse will not lead to a loss of supporting habitat, disrupt the passage of site selection features or adversely affect them during construction.</i> ' This policy specifies a measure that can be construed to be mitigation as it specifically addresses impacts known to affect international sites. Therefore it will be considered further through appropriate assessment.
FLD 5 Development in Proximity to Controlled Reservoirs	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
PART F - PLACE-MAKING AND DESIGN VISION		
26. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE DISTRICT		
Place-making & Design Objectives (PDOs)	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. PDO 2 and PDP 4 to PDP 6 seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.
27. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION / POLICY FOR DERRY-LONDONDERRY		
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 1 (DSDP 1) - ARRIVAL POINTS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 2 (DSDP 2) SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY FOR THE CITY	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. There is reference to potential bridges but this is qualified as being ' <i>Subject to compliance with other Planning policy within the LDP and other statutory permissions</i> '.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 3 (DSDP 3) MANAGE THE VISUAL CITYSCAPE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 4 (DSDP 4) RIVERFRONT	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 5 (DSDP 5) INNER HISTORIC CORE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 6 (DSDP 6) OUTER HISTORIC CORE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 7 (DSDP 7) UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 8 (DSDP 8) OUTER STRAND ROAD & WESTERN SLOPES	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 9 (DSDP 9) CREATING NEW APPROPRIATE DESIGNATED AREAS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 10 (DSDP 10) EXTERNAL SHUTTERS WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
DERRY STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 11 (DSDP 11) CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDES	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
28. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION / POLICY FOR STRABANE		
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 1 (SSDP 1) REDEVELOPMENT OF TOWN CENTRE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. Re-development sites may be identified within Strabane Town Centre through the LPP which will be subject to HRA.
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 2 (SSDP 2) ARRIVAL POINTS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 3 (SSDP 3) CONNECTIONS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 4 (SSDP 4) PROMOTE & PROTECT A SENSE OF PLACE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 5 (SSDP 5) CREATE KEY PUBLIC SPACES	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 6 (SSDP 6) CREATING NEW APPROPRIATE DESIGNATED AREAS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
STRABANE STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 7 (SSDP 7) EXTERNAL SHUTTERS WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
29. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION / POLICY FOR LOCAL TOWNS		
LOCAL TOWN STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 1 (LSDP 1) RESPECT AND PROMOTE PLACE QUALITY	A Out	This, and the following two LSDPs, apply to Castlederg, Newtownstewart and Claudy. This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
LOCAL TOWN STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 2 (LSDP 2) ENHANCE THE PUBLIC REALM	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
LOCAL TOWNS STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 3 (LSDP 3) CONNECTIONS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
LOCAL TOWNS STRATEGIC DESIGN POLICY 4 (LSDP 4) CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDES	A Out	This LSDP only applies to Newtownstewart. This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on an international site.
30. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION / POLICY FOR VILLAGES	A Out	This chapter relates to protecting and / or enhancing the character of the 23 villages. This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
31. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION / POLICY FOR SMALL SETTLEMENTS	A Out	This chapter relates to protecting and / or enhancing the character of 19 small settlements. This is a general statement of policy which will be delivered through the policies above and, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
32. PLACE-MAKING & DESIGN VISION / POLICY FOR COUNTRYSIDE		
LDP approach for Place-making and Design in the Countryside	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site. It will be further assessed under the following policies.
CY 1 Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside	D Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policy in terms of visual integration.
CY 2 Rural Character	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals in terms of rural character. In itself the policy cannot lead to any development or change.
CY 3 The Setting of Settlements	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on an international site.
CY 4 Design in Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	B Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals in terms of siting and design in the context of the AONB. In itself the policy cannot lead to any development or change.
PART G - SPECIALISED REQUIREMENTS ETC		
33. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES, COMAH & MAJOR ACCIDENTS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which restates the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations and sets out how the Council will support their implementation. The three identified COMAH sites in the Council Area are adjacent to Lough Foyle SPA and Ramsar site and connected to the River Faughan and tributaries SAC and will be subject to the COMAH Regulations. It will not, in itself, lead to development or other change.
34. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which sets out how the Council will manage development contributions and community benefits. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.
35. DEMOLITION / REDEVELOPMENT	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which sets out how the Council will manage demolition / redevelopment. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
36. REGENERATION/COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which sets out how the Council will manage regeneration / comprehensive redevelopment. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site. It refers to a number of major projects under the Council's Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) 2032 and City Deal: Derry~Londonderry City Region. <i>'The policies and development principles contained within the LDP are designed to support and facilitate the regeneration of the District in a sustainable manner and it may be that to do so comprehensively will necessitate the identification of further opportunity sites, spaces, buildings and other assets at LPP stage.'</i> The LPP will be subject to HRA. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.
37. OTHER SPECIALIST REQUIREMENTS	A Out	This refers to other regulatory requirements. It cannot have any effect on an international site.
38. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which, combined with Appendix 6, sets out how SPGs will be taken forward. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.
39. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	NA Out	Administrative text setting out transitional arrangements up to adoption of the Plan Strategy and LPP.
PART H - LDP MONITORING & REVIEW		
40. MONITORING CRITERIA AND REVIEW PROCESS	NA Out	Administrative text setting out monitoring arrangements which will be detailed in a Monitoring and Review Technical Paper.
41. NEXT STEPS – FROM DRAFT LDP PLAN STRATEGY ONWARDS	NA Out	Administrative text detailing how the LDP will progress.
APPENDICES		
Appendix 1: PLAN STRATEGY MAPS OF DISTRICT - SETTLEMENT & ENVIRONMENT	NA In	The Environment Map shows ASSIs but not international sites. It is recommended that international sites are indicated on maps at Plan Strategy adoption.
Appendix 2: TOURISM BENEFIT STATEMENT & SUSTAINABLE BENEFIT STATEMENT	A Out	This is a general statement of policy which sets out requirements for Tourism Benefit Statements & Sustainable Benefit Statements. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.
Appendix 3: OPEN SPACE ANNEX	A Out	This is a general statement which defines open space and its functions. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.
Appendix 4: DEVELOPMENT AND FLOODING ANNEXES	A Out	This sets out the requirements for: Annex A: Sustainable Drainage; Annex B: Assessing Flood Risk and Drainage Impact; Annex C: Flood Proofing - Resistance & Resilience Construction. In itself it cannot have any effect on an international site.
Appendix 5: HOUSING ALLOCATION TABLES	NA Out	Presents the evidence that informs the housing allocations

Plan Proposal / Policy	Screening	Screening Comment
Appendix 6: SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE	NA In	This sets out how Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will be taken forward. It included (Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance: Anaerobic Digestion June 2013 which is dated and does not fully reflect the potential impacts of ammonia impacts on international sites from an AD plant or potential impacts of the spreading of digestate on air and water quality. The comment in relation to the guidance states <i>'This document is to be retained as, despite being in draft form, it reflects most up to date guidance for it informs consideration of this type of development. However more recent guidance, including that published by DAERA, must also be taken into account and relied on where it is more up to date.'</i> Therefore there is a risk that outdated information in the draft SPG may be relied on. This should be reviewed and updated before the Plan Strategy is adopted to clarify that the draft guidance is not the most up to date and advise if / how it should be relied upon.
Appendix 7: GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ABBREVIATIONS	NA Out	Reference section

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