

Phlean Forbartha Áitiúla 2035 **Dréacht-Straitéis an Phlean** **Local Development Plan 2035** **Draft Plan Strategy**

Measúnú ar rialú maidir le gnáthóga
Habitat Regulations Assessment
June 2025



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down
District Council

Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down and South Armagh

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Local Development Plan 2035

Draft Plan Strategy

June 2025

Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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Contents

Contents	i
Non-Technical Summary	ii
List of Abbreviations	iii
1 Introduction	1
2 Identification of European sites potentially affected	5
3 Potential Impacts of Development	4
4 Screening draft Plan Strategy for Likely Significant Effects	9
5 Appropriate Assessment	22
6 Conclusions	43
Glossary	44
Appendix 1: References & Evidence Sources	46
Appendix 2: The Approach to Habitats Regulations Assessment for Plans	47
Appendix 3: Site information	58
Appendix 4: Maps	68
Appendix 5: Review of draft Plan Strategy Proposals and Policies	74

Annex A Conservation Objectives (Separate Document)

Non-Technical Summary

Habitats Regulations Assessment

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 a European 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 European sites in view of their conservation objectives. For the purpose of this report 'European sites' collectively may include existing or proposed Special Protection Areas (SPAs), existing or candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Community Importance (SCI), and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

This draft HRA Report is prepared in support of the draft Plan Strategy for Newry, Mourne and Down District Local Development Plan (LDP). It records the assessment of the draft Plan Strategy and its potential impacts on European sites. The draft HRA will be finalised following public consultation, Independent Examination (IE) and any modifications as directed from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) required for the draft Plan Strategy. The Council will adopt the final HRA which will be published alongside the adopted Plan Strategy.

Overview of draft Plan Strategy

The draft Plan Strategy provides a plan-led policy framework for making day-to-day decisions to help Newry, Mourne and Down 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 2035. The nature of the Plan Strategy is that it has the potential to have a significant effect on some European sites, therefore the Council is undertaking a HRA in its role as a competent authority to ensure the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations are fully met.

European sites Overview

A total of 39 European sites that have a confirmed or theoretical connection to the plan area were identified. Sites beyond the Council area with an ecological connection were included, for example those which are connected by marine mammals relevant to appropriate hydrological screening distances. All sites within 15km of the plan area were also considered for potential effects from aerial emissions. On further review it was found that 37 of these sites might be affected by the Plan Strategy. Appendix 4, Maps 1 to 4 illustrate these sites in relation to the Council area.

Screening of the Plan

All of the draft Plan Strategy proposals were reviewed from the Vision and Plan Objectives, Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies, through to the General Policy and Operational Policies 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 102 Policies. These were all screened in for appropriate assessment.

Appropriate Assessment

Those policies screened in were assessed in Section 5. It was found that measures were incorporated which can be considered to be mitigation to avoid the draft Plan Strategy having adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

Conclusions of the HRA

On the basis of the analysis set out below, the Council can conclude the draft Plan Strategy will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

List of Abbreviations

ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
CMS	Construction Method Statement
CSM	Common Standards Monitoring
DAERA	The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Dfi	Department for Infrastructure
DPS	Draft Plan Strategy
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FCS	Favourable Conservation Status
GB	Green Belt
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LDP	Local Development Plan
LPP	Local Policies Plan
NA	Not Applicable
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NIW	Northern Ireland Water
POP	Preferred Options Paper
PS	Plan Strategy
RBD	River Basin District
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RoI	Republic of Ireland
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SES	Shared Environmental Service
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SPPS	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WwTW	Waste Water Treatment Works
WR&SR	Water Resource & Supply Resilience Plan

1 Introduction

Local Development Plan 2035

The draft Plan Strategy for Newry Mourne and Down District Council Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out how the area will change and grow over the period up to 2035. It provides an overall vision for the District, namely:

“Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high-quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people’s needs.”

The Plan Strategy is the first of two development plan documents which will comprise the LDP. The Plan Strategy provides a plan-led policy framework for making day-to-day decisions to help Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (herein referred to as ‘the Council’, ‘Council area’ or ‘District’) deliver sustainable development including future housing, employment, retail and infrastructure provision across the District.

The draft Plan Strategy is the first document in a two-stage process, the second being the Local Policies Plan (LPP). 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) published in 2018. In preparing it, the Council has taken account of the representations received on the POP, further input 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.

Structure of the draft Plan Strategy

The Plan Strategy is set out in two parts as follows:

Part 1

- 1 – Introduction
- 2 – District Profile
- 3 – Policy Context
- 4 – Vision and Plan Objectives
- 5 – Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies

Part 2

- 6 – General Policy and Operational Policies
- 7 – Monitoring and Review

Glossary

Appendices

Overview of Newry Mourne and Down District Council area

The draft Plan Strategy indicates that the total population of the District is estimated to be 189,000 in mid-2028 and has a land area of approximately 1,700 square kilometres. It shares a common boundary with five council areas: Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Louth County Council and Monaghan County Council.

Existing Plans and Local Policies Plan

Extant development plans will continue to have effect until the next stage i.e. LPP is adopted. This is set out in the transitional arrangements in The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015¹. The legacy development plans that apply to the District are:

- Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP) adopted October 2013
- Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP) adopted March 2009.

Once both the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan are adopted (i.e. the 'Local Development Plan in its entirety') they will replace the existing area plans.

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 and plan objectives. Another HRA will be prepared to assess the potential impacts of the LPP on European sites. The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 state that the legacy Development Plans will cease to have effect upon adoption of the new LDP at LPP stage.

Requirement for HRA

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations, implemented the requirements of the Habitats² and Birds Directives³. 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 a European 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 European sites in view of their conservation objectives where relevant. Regulation 64B applies the assessment provisions to land use plans as defined in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. For this report, European sites include existing or proposed SPA, existing or candidate SAC, Sites of Community Importance, and listed or proposed Ramsar Sites as relevant. This 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 European sites.

Approach to HRA

The overall approach for this HRA has been developed in accordance with the Habitats Regulations. The HRA follows the guidance set out in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook (the HRA Handbook) and is also informed by the reference material in Appendix 1. Current subscribers to the Handbook include the Department of Agriculture, 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.

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

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2015/62/schedule/made>

² Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

³ Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version)

exempted, eliminated or excluded from the need for HRA. The draft Plan Strategy does not directly relate to the management of any European 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.

The nature of the draft Plan Strategy is that it has the potential to have a significant effect on the selection features of some European sites and therefore we are undertaking a HRA in our role as a Competent Authority. Shared Environmental Service (SES) provides support to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and all other Councils in NI 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. The Council will adopt the final HRA which will be published alongside the adopted Plan Strategy.

Context for 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 Plan Strategy.

Other Regulations

An assumption is made that existing regulations and legislation that are independent of planning are implemented and enforced by the relevant authority. Relevant examples are the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (NI) 2013 and the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973, all as amended.

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 European 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 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.

2 Identification of European sites potentially affected

'Long-list' of European sites

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

European sites that are connected with the Council area were firstly identified. These include sites within or immediately adjacent to the Council area; those within 15 km of the Council Boundary; those that are connected by infrastructure; and those with an ecological connection such as a hydrological link. The sites within 15km of the District Boundary were included to consider potential impacts of aerial emissions. Ecological connections include pathways through rivers or marine waters, additionally, areas of land and sea occurring outwith a site, but of ecological importance to qualifying features, that is – functionally linked lands - were also identified based on current knowledge. 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 39 sites that are in or potentially connected to the Council area. Appendix 4, Maps 1 to 4 illustrate these sites in relation to the Council area.

Table 1: Long-List of European Sites Connected with Council Area

European Site Name	Connection with Plan area			
	Within or Adjacent	Within 15 km ZOI	Ecological	By Infra-structure
Aughnadarragh Lough SAC	•		•	
Ballykilbeg SAC	•		•	
Belfast Lough Ramsar Site			•	
Belfast Lough SPA			•	
Belfast Lough Open Water SPA			•	
Carlingford Lough SPA	•		•	
Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension	•		•	
Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site	•		•	
Derryleckagh SAC	•		•	
Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site	•		•	
Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar Site	•		•	
East Coast Marine Proposed SPA	•		•	
Eastern Mourne SAC	•		•	•
Hollymount SAC	•		•	
Killough Bay SPA	•		•	
Killough Bay Ramsar Site	•		•	
Lecale Fens SAC	•		•	
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Ramsar Site				•
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA				•
Murlough SAC	•		•	
North Channel SAC		•	•	
Outer Ards Ramsar Site		•	•	
Outer Ards SPA		•	•	
Rostrevor Wood SAC	•		•	
Slieve Gullion SAC	•		•	

Strangford Lough Ramsar Site	•		•	
Strangford Lough SAC	•		•	
Strangford Lough SPA	•		•	
The Maidens SAC			•	
Turmennan SAC	•		•	
Turmennan Ramsar Site	•		•	
Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI)		•	•	
Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI)	•		•	
Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI)		•	•	
Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI)		•	•	
Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI)		•	•	
Lambay Island SAC (ROI)			•	
Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI)			•	
North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)			•	

'Short-list' of European sites

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

As the 'long-list' of sites remain precautionary, detailed screening was undertaken to determine those sites likely to be significantly affected due to the implementation of the draft Plan Strategy. This step is recorded in Appendix 3, Table A.3.1. No further sites were identified through the scan in A.3.1. and 2 sites were eliminated from further assessment as the Plan could not undermine the sites conservation objective (see Table A.3.2). This results in a short-list of 37 sites to be further assessed identified in Table 2.

In summary, the screening approach, having regard to the source-pathway-receptor model, considered the realistic risk of effects manifesting rather than any hypothetical risks.

Given the broad definition of direct effects used in the HRA Handbook, there is the potential for a direct effect on all sites which have been screened in for further assessment. Table 2 identified the nature of the environment and the potential mechanisms through which impacts could affect the European 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
- Aerial Emissions (All)
- Disturbance
- Introduced Species

Table 2 Potential Effects on European sites

Site Name	Aquatic Environment	Marine Environment	Coastal Processes	Mobile Species	Recreational Pressure	Growth - Water Supply	Growth - Wastewater	Aerial Emissions (All)	Disturbance	Introduced Species
Aughnadarragh Lough SAC				•				•		
Ballykilbeg SAC				•				•		
Belfast Lough Ramsar		•		•	•		•	•	•	
Belfast Lough SPA		•		•	•		•	•	•	
Belfast Lough Open Water SPA		•		•	•		•	•	•	
Carlingford Lough SPA		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Derryleckagh SAC								•		
Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site				•				•		
Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site		•	•		•		•	•	•	•
East Coast Marine Proposed SPA		•		•	•			•	•	
Eastern Mourne SAC					•	•		•		•
Hollymount SAC								•		
Killough Bay SPA		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Killough Bay Ramsar Site		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Lecale Fens SAC								•		
Murlough SAC		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
North Channel SAC		•		•	•				•	
Outer Ards Ramsar Site		•		•	•			•	•	
Outer Ards SPA		•		•	•			•	•	
Rostrevor Wood SAC					•			•		•
Slieve Gullion SAC					•			•		•
Strangford Lough Ramsar Site		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Strangford Lough SAC		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Strangford Lough SPA		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
The Maidens SAC		•		•	•				•	
Turmennan SAC								•		
Turmennan Ramsar Site								•		
Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI)		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI)					•			•	•	•
Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI)		•	•		•		•	•	•	•
Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI)		•			•			•	•	
Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI)		•		•	•			•	•	
Lambay Island SAC (ROI)		•		•	•				•	

Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI)		•		•	•				•	
North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)		•		•	•				•	

Step 3: Gathering information about the European 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 in Appendix 3 with the conservation objectives for each site provided as separate Annex A.

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

The Statutory Nature Conservation Body for sites in Northern Ireland is represented by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) who have published the Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs. DAERA are invited to comment on this draft HRA during the draft Plan Strategy consultation period and any representations received will be considered and inform the final HRA. The Statutory Nature Conservation Body for sites in Ireland is represented by the National Parks and Wildlife Service who hold published Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs, which have been taken into account.

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 European site. 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 15km Zone of Influence (Zoi) are potentially vulnerable to direct impacts. These can lead to degradation or loss of habitat or direct effects on species.

Direct effects on European 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/groundwater or changes in flow regime or hydrology/hydrogeological pathways for effects. Such effects are generally limited to proposals in close proximity to a European site. Indirect impacts from water supply or disposal of wastewater are considered separately below. A number of wetland and marine sites are within, adjacent to or hydrologically linked to the plan area.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council falls under two of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) published for Northern Ireland, i.e. the North-Eastern (NE) and the Neagh Bann (NB) River Basin District (RBDs). The boundaries of the Water Framework Directive Local Management Area River Catchments within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area are shown in Appendix 4 Map 5.

Within Newry, Mourne and Down the principal river systems are: The Ballynahinch, Quoile, Blackstaff, Moneycarragh, Shimna and Kilkeel Rivers and also an area of the Upper River Lagan in the NE RBD; and Parts of the Upper Bann and Cushier Rivers, the Newry River and Newry Canal, the Clanrye, Bessbrook, Forkhill and Fane Rivers, all in the NB RBD. A small portion of the catchment of the River Lagan is also within Newry, Mourne and Down.

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.

With the exception of the de-designated settlements, which are shown within the draft Plan Strategy on the LDP Map Viewer under new proposals/designations, the current Settlement Development Limits within the BNMAP 2015 and ADAP 2015 will remain in place until such time as they are reviewed and adopted in the Local Policies Plan. This review will involve a detailed analysis of the settlement roles and functions, environmental issues, availability of services, community facilities, infrastructure and spare capacity, taking into account current development pressures and constraints.

The Council has identified a requirement for 11,000 new homes over the LDP period 2020-2035. The majority of new strategic growth in the settlements will be delivered through existing housing sites under construction, sites with current planning permission where development has not commenced or zoned housing land with no current planning permission. Housing growth will be focused at Newry and Downpatrick, with a proportion of new development directed to the local and small towns and villages to support rural housing needs, local services and facilities and the rural economy. A proportion of new development is also allocated to small settlements and in the countryside to sustain rural communities. There may be pathways from development of housing land during construction and operation for pollutant release to European sites via hydrological pathways.

The Council's LDP will ensure that an ample supply of land is available through zonings for economic development purposes in a wide range of suitable sites within Newry City and Downpatrick, and where appropriate, the District's towns and other settlements to meet the future demands of industrial, business, storage and distribution enterprises. It is suggested within the draft Plan Strategy Plan 'Economic Development Strategy' that between 50.4ha and 56.7ha of employment land will be required between 2022 and 2035. The scale, extent and location of all employment opportunity areas will be confirmed at the Local Policies Plan (LPP) Stage. There may be pathways from development of economic land during construction and operation for pollutant release to European sites via hydrological pathways.

Effects upon the aquatic and marine environment 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 coast

This includes direct impacts upon coastal processes. Such effects are generally limited to proposals in close proximity to a European site. The LDP area has an extensive coastline of approximately 150km stretching from Strangford Lough in the north to Carlingford Lough in the south. European marine sites that are immediately adjacent to the coast could theoretically be vulnerable. This potential risk is addressed through specific Policies CO1 and CO2.

Effects upon the coast 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 on mobile species

Most animal species range beyond the European 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 breeding and wintering seabirds such as breeding terns and wintering geese, features of Carlingford Lough Ramsar/SPA. Habitat outside the SPA and Ramsar site boundary may provide high tide roosts and additional supporting habitat. Wildfowl tend to roost on 'open water, while waders' tend to use islands or isolated headlands.

Both on-site and off-site activities can potentially affect mobile features associated with SPA and Ramsar sites. Adjoining habitat can be particularly important for 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. Flight paths for avian species could potentially be disrupted by development such as wind turbines and overhead electricity lines

There are four European sites identified within the hydrological screening distance for protection of harbour porpoise, North Channel SAC, Lambay Island SAC(RoI), Rockabiil to Dalkey Island SAC (RoI) and North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales). Harbour porpoise are found all around the coast of Ireland including Belfast Harbour and Strangford Lough, they can occur close to shore and in tidal rivers. DAERA advises that plans or projects within 100km of a site designated for grey seals and harbour porpoise or 50km for harbour seals should be assessed for impacts on the species (SES measure screening distance via marine waters). Grey seals and porpoise may range along the coastline from the sites for which they are designated and are potentially subject to direct disturbance. Harbour seal is a qualifying feature for Strangford Lough SAC and Murlough SAC.

The NI Marine Map Viewer identifies seal haul out locations within Northern Ireland. Information on known grey seal haul out sites will therefore be reviewed to inform HRA at LPP.

Effects on mobile species will be considered in screening the draft Plan Strategy in Section 4. Functionally linked land or pathways that may be used by mobile species 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 District is an area rich with tourism assets, natural beauty, cultural heritage and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Strangford Lough, Carlingford Lough and a number of beaches offer water-based activity opportunities. Strangford Lough is a popular tourist destination offering activities such as leisure sailing, kayaking, fishing, bird watching and diving. Beaches in the district include Murlough, Cranfield, Tyrella, Warrenpoint and Newcastle. Breeding birds are particularly vulnerable to disturbance. Cumulative disturbance impacts (e.g. boating, sand dredgers, wildfowling, walkers, dogs etc.) may also be a significant factor for wintering bird populations. Physical disturbance or mortality from recreational activity and vessel strikes could be an issue in coastal areas where high densities of porpoises have potential to coincide with high densities of boat traffic, particularly during the summer season. Hiking and walking trails within the Eastern Mourne SAC has potential to cause direct habitat loss.

Effects of recreational pressure will be considered in screening the draft Plan Strategy in Section 4 and will be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating 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 draft Plan Strategy is to provide enough land to accommodate and facilitate the requirement for 11,000 new homes and provide between 50.4ha and 56.7ha of employment land over the LDP period 2020-2035.

Water Supply

There is evidence that water supply will be sufficient for the life of the plan therefore there is not predicted to be a need to expand water supply sources to support proposed development. DAERA Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) regulate the use of non-mains water supplies (i.e. private water supplies typically in the form of a borehole, well or spring) used for human consumption. An abstraction licence is not required in this circumstance. If the non-mains water supply serves two or more domestic properties, is used in a commercial manner or provided to the public, it is subject to registration and monitoring by DWI, regardless of the volume used. Any development which intends to use a non-mains supply and its intended usage would abstract over 10m³/day then it will require further consultation with the NIEA Abstractions and Licencing Team as an abstraction and impoundment licence may be required.

It is the responsibility of NI Water to ensure that a safe supply of drinking water for the population is maintained. There are six water supply zones wholly or partially within the district at Clay Lake Keady, Drumaroad Lisburn, Drumaroad Ballynahinch, Drumaroad Downpatrick, Castor Bay Tandragee and Castor Bay Newry West.

NI Water Resource & Supply Resilience Plan (WR&SR Plan) was published in April 2025. This Plan shows how the company will manage and develop water resources to make sure there is enough water to meet future supply needs. The WR&SR Plan acknowledges the need to take account of adopted and emerging Local Development Plans to ensure it complies with the District's aims, objectives and long-term vision in terms of growth, constraints, and opportunities.

In light of the sufficiency of the water supply to the Council area over the plan period, effects that might undermine the conservation objectives can be excluded.

Wastewater Treatment

The provision of wastewater treatment within the District is the responsibility of NI Water. All planning applications that indicate mains sewage treatment is proposed are referred to NI Water to confirm whether capacity exists or identify any network capacity issues and provide any additional information.

NI Water issue a WwTW Capacity Report to all Council's on an annual basis; this information is kept up to date and it is essential that all planning applications that indicate mains sewage treatment are referred to NI Water to check and advise on the capacity of the WwTW and the sewage network, especially in areas experiencing significant growth. NI Water's sewer network capacity mapping tool and sewer network modelling activities have identified capacity issues in the District area.

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 WW1. 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 European site, 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.

The Water Utility Regulation Group of DAERA regulates discharges to the water environment and is a competent authority under the Habitats Regulations.

In light of the NIW capacity constraints in the Council area, it is considered that the demand for wastewater treatment arising as a result of the level of growth enabled by the draft Plan Strategy could result in such pressures that could undermine conservation objectives of a European site. Potential impacts of wastewater will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

Effects from Aerial Emissions (All Types of Development)

Certain aerial emissions can cause harm to habitats and species either through direct toxic effects or nutrient enrichment. DAERAs 'Revised Operational Protocol for assessing ammonia and air pollution impacts on the natural environment' provides guidance on the assessment of such harmful emissions.

The protocol establishes screening distances for many emission sources but also refers users to the Air Pollution Information System (APIS) where the maximum screening distance applied is 15km. Accordingly, all European sites within 15km of the Council boundary were considered. Developments with potentially harmful emissions will be subject to a project level HRA and assessed in accordance with the Operational Protocol.

Effects of aerial emissions on European site will be considered in screening the Plan Strategy in Section 4 and will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

Effects from Disturbance (Other)

Noise, light 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 European sites or functionally linked land. 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.

Potential effects of disturbance on European sites will be considered in screening the Plan Strategy in Section 4 and will also be a consideration at LPP when reviewing or allocating any zoned land.

Effects from Introduced Species

New development has the potential to introduce invasive or non-native species or cause their spread to other sites. The introduction of invasive species, non-native, competitive or predatory species can adversely affect habitats and species. Watercourses are prone to the spread of invasive species such as giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam which are easily transferred by water if released as a result of development. Invasive species may also be transported to new sites by machinery. Development that extends navigable waters or which introduces new boating may also increase the potential for spread of invasive species or waterborne diseases of protected species to waters where they are not currently present. Introduced species on peatlands can displace habitats for which a site has been designated.

Potential effects of introduced species on European sites will be considered in screening the Plan Strategy 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 plan for likely significant effects

All parts of the draft Plan Strategy were reviewed, the approach to screening is detailed in Appendix 2 while Appendix 5 presents the full screening review. The outcome of the screening of the Plan is summarised below and informed by the findings of Section 3 above.

Part 1

1-3 Screening Contextual Chapters

These Chapters, 1. Introduction; 2. District Profile; and 3. Policy Context, introduce the plan and present the profile of the 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.

Further assessment is not required.

4. Vision and Plan Objectives

The Vision is an overall aspiration for the Council area. Delivery of the Vision is through the social, economic and environmental objectives; the spatial growth strategy and strategic policies; and the general policy and operational policies. The Plan Vision does not direct development.

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 Objectives to deliver new jobs and businesses, tourism, renewable energy, and transport infrastructure and the Social Objectives to deliver new homes. For all Objectives the implications can be and are more appropriately assessed under related policies later in the document. The assessment is therefore undertaken through the consideration of related Strategic Policies and Operational Policies.

Further assessment is not required.

5. Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies

Overarching Strategic Policies (SP1-SP3)

These overarching high-level Strategic Policies set out criteria which all development requiring planning permission will seek to achieve. Their purpose includes promoting sustainable development, adapting to climate change and integrating into surroundings. They are all general statements of principles and direction, against which proposals will be assessed and alone, they cannot have any effect on a European site.

Further assessment is not required.

Spatial Growth Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. The proposed Spatial Growth Strategy, having regard to the LDP vision and objectives, will help achieve the RDS objectives of promoting growth and economic development opportunities in the 'hubs and clusters of hubs' provided for through its spatial framework. Implications of growth and settlement are more appropriately assessed under related policies. The assessment is therefore undertaken through the consideration of related Strategic Policies and Operational Policies.

Further assessment is not required.

SGS1

Policy SGS1 is the Spatial Growth Strategy for the district will guide the allocation of land for housing, economic, retail and leisure growth at the Local Policies Plan Stage. It is a general statement of strategy and will primarily be delivered through the Strategic Policies and proposals set out in Part 1 of the draft Plan Strategy. The implications of growth have been discussed in Section 3 and are more appropriately assessed under related policies. The assessment is therefore undertaken through the consideration of related Strategic Policies and Operational Policies.

Further assessment is not required.

SETT1, SETT2

The settlement hierarchy places the focus of development in Newry and Downpatrick as the main settlement hubs supported by local and small towns, villages and small settlements. Through SETT 1 and SETT 2 the settlement hierarchy provides a framework for delivering growth. Each settlement will have a defined development limit, beyond which there will be a presumption against further development to prevent urban sprawl. With the exception of the de-designated settlements, which are identified in the draft Plan Strategy the current Settlement Development Limits within the BNMAP 2015 and ADAP 2015 will remain in place until such time as they are reviewed and adopted in the LPP which will be subject to HRA.

Further assessment is not required.

SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Housing Strategy

The LDP Strategy for Housing is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. The draft Plan Strategy objective related to housing includes the provision for approximately 11,000 new homes by 2035 across a mix of housing type, size and tenure in accessible locations. Implications of population and housing growth are more appropriately assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policies HS1, HS2 and HS3

HS1, HS2 and HS3 all enable development and depending on the location have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

HS1, HS2 and HS3 have been screened in for further assessment.

Countryside Strategy

The LDP Countryside Strategy is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. It is a possible driver of potential effects, however, implications are assessed under relevant development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy CS1

CS 1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

CS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Open Space Strategy

The LDP Open Space Strategy is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy OSS1

OSS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

OSS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Economic Development Strategy

The LDP Economic Development Strategy is a general statement of strategy setting out how much land is needed for economic development and where it is to be located. Its implications as a driver of growth are discussed in Section 3 and will be assessed under related development enabling policies. The scale, extent and location of all the economic land allocation will be confirmed at the LPP stage which will be subject to HRA.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policies EDS1 and EDS2

EDS1 and EDS2 both enable development and depending on the location have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. EDS2 is largely protective to avoid conflicting land use, however exceptions may be permitted, therefore potential effects cannot be ruled out.

EDS1 and EDS2 have been screened in for further assessment.

Retail Strategy

The Council's LDP Retail Strategy is a general statement of strategy which seeks to promote a town-centre-first approach. It provides a framework to allow a sequential test to be applied to planning applications relating to main town centre uses, ensuring they are directed to the most appropriate locations. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy RS1

RS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

RS 1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Tourism Strategy

The Council's LDP Tourism Strategy is a general statement of strategy which seeks to manage the provisions of sustainable tourism in appropriate locations whilst taking account of the historic environment and natural heritage. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy TS1

TS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

TS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Minerals Strategy

The Council's LDP Minerals Strategy is a general statement of strategy which promotes the sustainable development of mineral resources in such a way that protects the environment and supports economic growth. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy MS1

MS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

MS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Transport Strategy

The Council's LDP Transport Strategy is a general statement of strategy and a key component underpinning the Spatial Growth Strategy. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy TRS1

TRS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

TRS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Telecommunications and Other Utilities Strategy

The Council's LDP Telecommunications and Other Utilities Strategy is a general statement of strategy that seeks to develop such infrastructure in a matter that balances the need for the facility against the objective of conserving the environment and protecting amenity. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy TUS1

TUS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

TUS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Waste Management Strategy

The Council's LDP Waste Management Strategy is a general statement of strategy that seeks to support the development of sustainable waste management, recycling and disposal facilities in appropriate locations as part of the wider Council Strategy to reduce, reuse and recycle the district's waste. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy WMS1

WMS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

WMS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Renewable Energy Strategy

The Council's LDP Renewable Energy Strategy encourages greater use of renewable energy technologies to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuel and bring diversity and security of supply to energy infrastructure. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy RES1

RES1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

RES1 has been screened in for further assessment.

Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy

The Council's LDP Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy is a general statement of strategy which provides a framework for the delivery of sustainable development and helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change by avoiding development in areas at significant risk from flooding. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy FRDS1

FRDS1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

FRDS1 has been screened in for further assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Historic Environment and Natural Heritage Strategy

The Council's LDP Historic Environment and Natural Heritage Strategy is a general statement of strategy that cannot have any impact on a European site.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policies ENVS1 and ENVS2

ENVS1 and ENVS2 overall seek to be protective of the Historic Environment and Natural Heritage. These policies cannot have any effect on a European site.

ENVS1 and ENVS2 do not require further assessment.

Coastal Development Strategy

The Council's LDP Coastal Development Strategy is a general statement of strategy that recognises the inherent integration between marine and land use (terrestrial) planning as activities taking place on land can have impacts on the marine environment. Implications will be assessed under related development enabling policies.

Further assessment is not required.

Strategic Policy CDS1

CDS1 overall seek to be protective of coastal development and coastal settlements. This policy cannot have any effect on a European site.

CDS1 does not require further assessment.

PART 2

6 General Policy and Operational Policies

GP1 General Policy

GP1 will apply to all development coming forward under the draft Plan Strategy. Planning permission will be granted subject to accordance with the relevant policy and meeting the criteria of GP1 summarised as follows: 1. Quality of the Environment and Amenity; 2. Access, Movement and Parking; 3. Safety and Safeguarding of Human Health, Wellbeing and the Environment; 4. Landscape, Seascape and Townscape Character; 5. Historic, Environment and Natural Heritage; and 6. Infrastructure. The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.

GP1 has been screened in for further assessment.

SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1. Housing in Settlements (HOU1 – HOU9)

HOU2 lists general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. This policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

HOU2 does not require further assessment.

All other policies in this grouping enable development and have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

HOU1, HOU3, HOU4, HOU 5, HOU6, HOU7, HOU8 and HOU9 have been screened in for further assessment.

2. Housing in the Countryside (COU1 – COU8)

All policies in this grouping enable development and have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

COU1, COU2, COU3, COU4, COU5, COU6, COU7 and COU8 have been screened in for further assessment.

3. All Development in the Countryside (COU9 – COU11)

COU9, COU10 and COU11 all provide general statements of policy or list the general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. These policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

COU9, COU10 and COU11 do not require further assessment.

4. Health, Education and Community Facilities (CF1)

CF1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

CF1 has been screened in for further assessment.

5. Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (OS1 – OS10)

OS8 is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site.

OS8 does not require further assessment.

All other policies in this grouping enable development and have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5, OS6, OS7, OS9 and OS10 have been screened in for further assessment.

ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

6. Economic Development in Settlements (ED1)

ED1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

ED1 has been screened in for further assessment.

7. Economic Development in the Countryside (ED2 – ED7)

This grouping of policies all enable development and depending on the location have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6 and ED7 all have been screened in for further assessment.

8. All Economic Development (ED8)

ED8 constrains alternative uses on zoned land. The policy is therefore solely about protecting existing economic uses – no wider remit and cannot have an effect on a European site.

ED8 does not require further assessment.

9. Town Centres and Retailing (RET1 – RET7)

RET3 lists general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. This policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

RET3 does not require further assessment.

All other policies in this grouping enable development and have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

RET1, RET2, RET4, RET5, RET6 and RET7 have been screened in for further assessment.

10. Advertisements (AD1)

AD1 enables development which may include illumination which could negatively impact mobile species, therefore depending on scale and location the potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site cannot be ruled out.

AD1 has been screened in for further assessment.

11. Tourism Development in Settlements (TOU1)

TOU1 is development enabling and has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site.

TOU1 has been screened in for further assessment.

12. Tourism Development in the Countryside (TOU2 – TOU7)

TOU 2 to TOU 7 are development enabling and could be relevant to schemes which might impact upon European sites, directly or indirectly through increased visitor pressure.

TOU2, TOU3, TOU4, TOU5, TOU6 and TOU7 have been screened in for further assessment.

13. All Tourism Development (TOU8)

TOU8 is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and cannot lead to development or other change. This policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

TOU8 does not require further assessment.

14. Minerals Development (MIN1 – MIN7)

MIN5 is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and cannot lead to development or other change. This policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

MIN5 does not require further assessment.

MIN1, MIN2, MIN 3, MIN4, MIN6 and MIN7 enable mineral development, peat extraction and site restoration which have potential for impacts on European sites, although MIN2 constrains development exceptions apply therefore there is potential for impacts from all these policies depending on location, scale and nature of development

MIN1, MIN2, MIN 3, MIN4, MIN6 and MIN7 have been screened in for further assessment.

15. Transportation (TRA1 – TRA11)

TRA1, TRA4, TRA5, TRA6 and TRA7 are either general statements of policy or policies which list the general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. These policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

TRA1, TRA4, TRA5, TRA6 and TRA7 do not require further assessment.

TRA2, TRA 3, TRA8, TRA9, TRA10 and TRA11 are all development enabling, related to transport or transport facilities, therefore depending on scale and location the potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site cannot be ruled out.

TRA2, TRA 3, TRA8, TRA9, TRA10 and TRA11 have been screened in for further assessment.

16. Telecommunications and Other Utilities (TCU1 – TCU3)

This grouping of policies all enable development and depending on the location and scale have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

TCU1, TCU 2 and TCU3 have been screened in for further assessment.

17. Waste (WM1 – WM5)

This grouping of policies all enable development and depending on the location and scale have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

WM1, WM2, WM3, WM4 and WM5 have been screened in for further assessment.

18. Renewable Energy (RE1 – RE2)

RE1 and RE2 relate to renewable and low carbon energy development. Depending on the scale, nature and location of the development potential effects on European sites cannot be ruled out.

RE1 and RE2 have been screened in for further assessment.

19. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure (WW1)

This policy sets out the requirements for development relying on non-mains sewerage. While it is broadly related to criteria, there is potential for development coming forward under this policy to generate pathways for effects on European sites.

WW1 has been screened in for further assessment.

20. Flood Risk and Drainage (FRD1 – FRD 6)

FRD2, FRD3 and FRD 6 are either general statements of policy or policies which list the general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals. These policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

FRD2, FRD3 and FRD 6 do not require further assessment.

FRD1, FRD4 and FRD 5 generally seek to be protective in respect of flood risk and drainage, however, do permit development which meets policy criteria, therefore the potential for effects on European sites cannot be ruled out.

FRD1, FRD4 and FRD5 have been screened in for further assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HERITAGE

21. Historic Environment (HE1 – HE 15)

HE1, HE2, HE3, HE4 and HE6 either list criteria for testing the acceptability of the proposal or are general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policies. These policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

HE1, HE2, HE3 and HE6 do not require further assessment.

All other policies in this grouping are development enabling, some are largely protective, however exceptions may apply, potential effects on a European site cannot be ruled out.

HE5, HE7, HE8, HE9, HE10, HE11, HE12, HE13, HE14 and HE15 have been screened in for further assessment.

22. Natural Heritage (NH1 – NH7)

NH2 to NH7 are all general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policies. Some of these policies may afford additional protection to European sites and their selection features; however, they were not included for this specific purpose and therefore do not represent mitigation for impacts on European sites.

NH2, NH3, NH4, NH5, NH6 and NH7 do not require further assessment.

NH1 restates the legal and policy requirements of the Habitats Regulations and the SPPS in relation to European sites and listed or proposed Ramsar sites. This policy is intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on European sites (as collective terminology) and must be considered further.

NH1 has been screened in for further assessment.

23. Landscape Assets (LA1 - LA4)

This grouping of policies are all general plan-wide environmental / site safeguarding policies related to landscape. These policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

LA1, LA2, LA3 and LA4 do not require further assessment.

24. Coastal Development (CO1 - CO2)

CO1 and CO2 are largely protective to constrain coastal development. The policy includes criteria and caveats that may be protective of European sites and could be construed to be mitigation.

CO1 and CO2 have been screened in for further assessment.

25. Land Instability or Coastal Erosion (DAR1)

DAR1 is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and cannot lead to development or other change. This policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European sites.

DAR1 does not require further assessment.

7 Monitoring and Review

This is administrative text setting out monitoring and review arrangements. The Council has developed a Monitoring Framework which measures the Plan objectives and policies against a range of indicators and targets which will inform the effectiveness of the Policy. The Council may consider if ongoing monitoring is sufficient or whether a review of the Plan Strategy is required.

The Monitoring and Review section does not require further assessment.

Appendices 1-10

Appendix 1 to 10 provide additional information used to inform the Plan Strategy and inform users of the Plan Strategy. The Appendices cannot have any effect on a European site.

All Appendices have been screened out from further assessment.

Outcome of Screening

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. They are aspirational text, advice providing or represent general criteria for testing the acceptability of a proposal which may come forward under the draft Plan Strategy, they do not promote or support developments or environmental changes that could affect a European site.

The policies screened in are identified in Table 3, the purpose for screening in is not intended to constrain any particular type of development, it is however on the basis that they enable development or activities which could generate pathways for effects or include protective measures which might be construed to be mitigation and in accordance with the regulations, case law and best practice require consideration at appropriate assessment. In combination effects are not considered at this stage as screening has concluded that the draft Plan Strategy 'alone' has the potential to generate likely significant effects. Identified plans and projects likely to give rise to developments causing effects that could combine or interact with those of the draft Plan Strategy will be considered as part of the appropriate assessment.

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

POLICY
PART 1
5 Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies
HS1 Housing Land Allocation
HS2 Protection of Zoned Housing Land
HS3 Management of Housing Supply
CS1 Development in the Countryside
OSS1 Protecting and Enhancing Open Space
EDS1 Employment Land Allocation

EDS2 Protection of Economic Development Land
RS1 Retail Hierarchy
TS1 Sustainable Tourism
MS1 Minerals Development
TRS1 Sustainable Transport
TUS1 Telecommunications and Other Utilities
WMS1 Waste Management
RES1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
FRDS1 Flood Risk and Drainage
PART 2
6 General Policy and Operational Policies
GP1 General Policy
1. Housing in Settlements
HOU1 Quality in Residential Development
HOU3 Residential Extensions and Alterations
HOU4 Conversion or Change of Use of Existing Building to Flats or Apartments
HOU5 Affordable Housing
HOU6 Housing Type, Size and Tenure
HOU7 Adaptable and Accessible Homes
HOU8 Specialist Residential Accommodation
HOU9 Accommodation for the Travelling Community
2. Housing in the Countryside
COU1 Dwellings in Existing Clusters
COU2 Replacement Dwellings
COU3 Affordable Housing in the Countryside
COU4 Personal and Domestic Circumstances in the Countryside
COU5 Dwellings for Non-Agricultural Rural Enterprises
COU6 Ribbon Development
COU7 Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes
COU8 Dwellings on Farms
4. Health, Education and Community Facilities
CF1 Community Facilities
5. Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation
OS1 Protection of open Space
OS2 Public Open Space in New Residential Development
OS3 Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside
OS4 Intensive Sports Facilities
OS5 Noise Generating Sport and Outdoor Recreational Activities
OS6 Development of Facilities Ancillary to Water Sports
OS7 Floodlighting of Sports and Outdoor Recreational Facilities
OS9 Community Growing Spaces and Allotments
OS10 Cemeteries and Burial Space
6. Economic Development in Settlements
ED1 Economic Development in Settlements
7. Economic Development in the Countryside
ED2 Expansion of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside
ED3 Redevelopment of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside
ED4 Major Industrial Development in the Countryside
ED5 Small Rural Projects
ED6 Farm and Forestry Diversification

ED7 Agricultural and Forestry Development
9. Town Centres and Retailing
RET1 Town Centre First
RET2 Primary Retail Core and Primary Retail Frontage
RET4 Retail Development Outside City and Town Centres
RET5 Local Centres
RET6 Retail Development in Villages and Small Settlements
RET7 Retail Development in the Countryside
10. Advertisements
AD1 Outdoor Advertisements
11. Tourism Development in Settlements
TOU1 Tourism Development in Settlements
12. Tourism Development in the Countryside
TOU2 Tourism Amenities in the Countryside
TOU3 Hotels, Guest Houses, B&Bs, Tourist Hostels and Bunkhouses in the Countryside
TOU4 Major Tourism Development in the Countryside - Exceptional Circumstances
TOU5 Self-Catering Accommodation in the Countryside
TOU6 New and Extended Holiday Parks in the Countryside
TOU7 New and Extended Glamping Accommodation in the Countryside
14. Minerals Development
MIN1 Minerals Development
MIN2 Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development
MIN3 Valuable Minerals
MIN4 Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction
MIN6 Peat Extraction
MIN7 Restoration and Aftercare
15. Transportation
TRA2 Access to Public Roads
TRA3 Access to Protected Routes
TRA8 Active Travel
TRA9 Design of Car Parking
TRA10 Provision of Public and Private Car Parking
TRA11 Temporary Car Parks
16. Telecommunications and Other Utilities
TCU1 Control of Telecommunications Development
TCU2 Future Proofing of New Developments for Telecommunications Infrastructure
TCU3 Public Services and Other Utilities
17. Waste
WM1 Waste Management Development
WM2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities
WM3 Waste Disposal
WM4 Land Improvement
WM5 Development in the Vicinity of Waste Management Facilities
18. Renewable Energy
RE1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
RE2 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Measures in all Development
19. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
WW1 Development Relying on Non-Mains Sewerage
20. Flood Risk and Drainage
FRD1 Development in Flood Plains

FRD4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses
FRD5 Development in Proximity to Reservoirs
21. Historic Environment
HE5 Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes
HE7 Extension or Alteration of a Listed Building
HE8 Advertisements on a Listed Building
HE9 Demolition of a Listed Building
HE10 Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building
HE11 New Development in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character
HE12 Advertisements in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character
HE13 Demolition in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character
HE14 The Re-Use of Non-Listed Vernacular and Locally Important Buildings
HE15 Enabling Development
22. Natural Heritage
NH1 European and Ramsar Sites – International
24. Coastal Development
CO1 The Undeveloped Coast
CO2 The Developed Coast

Consideration of in combination assessment with other plans and projects

In-combination effects are not considered at this stage as screening has concluded that the Plan Strategy ‘alone’ has the potential to generate likely significant effects.

Identified plans and projects likely to give rise to developments causing effects that could combine or interact with those of the Plan Strategy will be considered as part of the appropriate assessment in Section 5.

5 Appropriate Assessment

Step 6: The Appropriate Assessment

Following the screening of plan proposals, as summarised in Table 3, it has been found that there is potential for likely significant effects to arise from 102 Policies as identified in Table 3. In combination effects are also assessed.

Protective Measures in the draft Plan Strategy

The Council, when considering each development proposal, will determine which policies and criteria apply to that proposal. The draft Plan Strategy includes advice on ‘using the LDP Plan Strategy’ and makes it clear that all Strategic Policies and GP1 General Policy must be considered for all development proposals, the relevant Operational Policies should then be considered. Furthermore, applicants should have regard to other regional and local policy and guidance including the SPPS and SPG. The following overarching mitigation applies:

‘When considering development proposals, applicants should have regard to the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland including other relevant regional and local policy and guidance.

Development proposals must consider all Strategic Policies within Part 1 of the Plan Strategy and the GP1 General Policy, which sets out criteria applicable to all development. Applicants should then refer to all other operational policies relevant to the development proposal contained within Part 2 of the Plan Strategy. It is likely that multiple operational planning policies will apply to any given development proposal, and the Council will consider all the relevant policies and material considerations to make a balanced decision.’

‘Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) encompasses guidance to be used in conjunction with the operational policies of the Plan Strategy.’

GP1 will apply to all development under which planning permission is granted subject to meeting criteria which provides for environmental protection, details are discussed further below.

Section 22 Natural Heritage includes Policy NH1. Policy NH1 European and Ramsar Sites – International states the existing requirements of the Habitats Regulations and of the SPPS which reiterates those legislative requirements as follows:

NH1 states:

‘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, proposed Special Protection Area, Special Areas of Conservation, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Community Importance);*
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 will carry out 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 after 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 or 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 development coming forward under the draft Plan Strategy, the fact that NH1 must also apply, is sufficient to avoid adverse effects on European sites. This ensures that site selection features are a consideration when the proposal is being developed and reduces the potential for tensions between NH1 and other strategic and operational policies.

Mitigation measures

The consideration of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a draft plan on a European 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 European sites potentially affected. For this draft plan it was found that case-specific policy caveats will provide sufficient mitigation to ensure policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

This section therefore considers the policies identified in Table 3 above in light of potential mitigation measures which have been incorporated into the draft plan. With the approach in Appendix 2, Step 6 in mind the policies as grouped within their relevant topics which were identified as having a likely significant effect were considered further below. All policies considered to have potential to generate pathways for effects and those which include restrictions or specific caveats protective of European sites which could be construed as mitigation have been screened in for further assessment. Further reference to caveats is in the content of protective of European sites.

Section F10.1.2. of the HRA Handbook identifies mitigation measures that may be introduced to a plan which include but are not limited to a. Case-specific policy restrictions or b. Case-specific policy caveats however the following must apply:

'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.*

Mitigation Measures in the draft Plan Strategy Policies which can provide protection to European sites (reference to caveats is in the context of 'protective of European sites').

Part 1

Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies

SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

No further policy amendments are required to Social Strategic Policies HS1, HS2, HS3, CS1 and OSS1.

Summary

Strategic Policies HS1, HS2, HS3, CS1 and OSS1

HS1, HS2, HS3 and CS1 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

OSS1 states:

'The Plan will support development proposals that:

- Deliver new cemeteries and burial spaces, or extensions to such sites, to meet an identified need whilst also avoiding unacceptable adverse impact on the environment.*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Social Strategic Policies HS1, HS2, HS3, CS1 and OSS1.

ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic Policies EDS1, EDS2, RS1, TS1, MS1, TRS1, TUS1, WMS1, RES1 and FRDS1

EDS1, EDS2, RS1, TS1, TRS1 and FRDS1 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

MS1 states:

'The Plan will support proposals for minerals development where it is demonstrated that it will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on natural heritage, the historic environment, water environments or public safety and amenity.'

TUS1 states:

'The Plan will support the provision of new and upgraded telecommunications and utilities infrastructure where these demonstrate the following:

- The proposal seeks to minimise visual intrusion and does not have a significant adverse impact on local amenity and the environment.'*

WMS1 states:

'The Plan will support development proposals that:

Facilitate the delivery of appropriate waste management infrastructure in the most appropriate locations in accordance with the waste hierarchy to ensure adequate protection and conservation of the environment, whilst providing for the waste needs of the district’.

RES1 states:

‘The Plan will support proposals for renewable and low carbon energy technology where it is demonstrated that it:

- Supports the development of a diverse range of renewable energy sources in appropriate locations whilst protecting the historic environment and natural heritage from inappropriate development.’*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Economic Strategic Policies EDS1, EDS2, RS1, TS1, MS1, TRS1, TUS1, WMS1, RES1 and FRDS1.

PART 2

General Policy and Operational Policies

GP1 General Policy

GP1 will apply to all development proposals coming forward under the draft Plan Strategy. Planning permission will be granted subject to accordance with the policies and proposals as set out in the draft Plan Strategy and meeting the criteria of GP1, where relevant to environmental protection the policy states as follows:

1. Quality of the Environment and Amenity

Development should be compatible with surrounding land uses and there should be no unacceptable adverse impact on the environment and amenity as a result of:

- Light pollution;*
- Levels of noise and vibration;*
- Odour, fumes or dust;*
- Air or water pollution; and*
- Overlooking, overshadowing and loss of light.*

3. Safety and Safeguarding of Human Health, Wellbeing and the Environment

- There is no unacceptable adverse impact on human health and the environment as a result of the potential for release of contaminants from contaminated lands.*

5. Historic Environment and Natural Heritage

- Development proposals should seek to protect, conserve and where possible enhance the district’s historic environment assets and their settings;*
- Development proposals should protect, conserve, enhance and restore the district’s natural heritage features which support local biodiversity and comprise its habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features;*
- Measures to achieve biodiversity net gain should be identified at an early stage in the design process and incorporated into development proposals; and*
- Development proposals should not cause an unacceptable adverse impact on the district’s sensitive marine environment.*

In assessing how a development proposal addresses criteria 1-6 above, the Council will require developers to provide relevant impact assessments where this is necessary to allow proper consideration of the impacts of the development and any mitigation measures proposed.'

All Strategic Policies, relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to GP1.

SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1. Housing in Settlements HOU1, HOU3, HOU4, HOU5, HOU6, HOU7, HOU8 and HOU9

HOU1, HOU3, HOU5, HOU6, HOU7 and HOU8 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

HOU3 states:

'Planning permission will be granted for a proposal to extend or alter a residential property, including those located in the countryside, where all of the following criteria are met:

- (c) The proposal will not cause the unacceptable loss of, or damage to trees or other landscape features which contribute significantly to local environmental quality.'*

HOU 4 states:

'Planning permission will only be granted for the conversion or change of use of existing buildings to flats or apartments (including living over the shop and those for houses in multiple occupation) where all the criteria set out in Policy HOU1, and all the additional criteria below are met:

- There is no adverse effect on the local character, environmental quality, or residential amenity of the surrounding area.'*

HOU 9 states:

'...planning permission will be granted for a suitable facility which is provided through either a grouped housing scheme, a serviced site or a transit site where the following criteria are met:

- a) Adequate landscaping is provided that will ensure integration of the site into the landscape without harming the character of the area or important features of natural heritage;*
- b) The proposal is compatible with the existing surrounding context, protecting environmental amenity and protecting residential amenity;*
- d) The proposal meets environmental and other material considerations, including those for sewerage, drainage, access and road safety...'*

...Such proposals will be assessed on their own merits and will take full account of planning, environmental and other material considerations, including the availability of suitable infrastructure and services.'

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies HOU1, HOU3, HOU4, HOU5, HOU6, HOU7, HOU8 and HOU9.

2. Housing in the Countryside (COU1 – COU8)

COU1, COU2, COU3, COU4, COU5, COU6, COU7 and COU8 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

COU2 states:

'All Replacement Cases

In addition to the above, proposals for a replacement dwelling will only be permitted where all the following criteria are met:

(d) All necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality.'

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies COU1, COU2, COU3, COU4, COU5, COU6, COU7 and COU8.

4. Health, Education and Community Facilities (CF1)

CF1 has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included, it must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of restrictions on development through Policy NH1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policy CF1.

5. Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5, OS6 OS7, OS9 and OS10.

OS1 and OS2 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

OS3 states:

'The Council will permit the development of proposals for outdoor recreational use in the countryside where all the following criteria are met:

- a) There is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, biodiversity, archaeology or historic environment.'*

OS4 states:

'In all cases the development of intensive sports facilities will be required to meet all the following criteria:

- There is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, biodiversity, archaeology or historic environment.'*

OS5 states:

'The Council will only permit the development of sport or outdoor recreational activities that generate high levels of noise where all the following criteria are met:

- b) There is no unacceptable level of disturbance caused to farm livestock and wildlife;*
- d) There is no unacceptable adverse impact on the natural environment and local character.'*

OS6 states:

'The Council will permit the development of facilities ancillary to water sports adjacent to and/or associated with inland lakes, reservoirs and waterways where all the following criteria are met:

- b) There is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, biodiversity, archaeology or historic environment;*
- d) It will not result in water pollution or an unacceptable level of noise or disturbance;*
- h) It will not result in an unacceptable level of noise or other disturbance.'*

OS7 states:

'The Council will only permit the development of floodlighting associated with sports and outdoor recreational facilities where all the following criteria are met:

- b) There is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, biodiversity, archaeology or historic environment.'*

OS9 states:

'The Council will permit the development of community growing spaces/allotments where all the following criteria are met:

- (e) There is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, biodiversity, archaeology or historic environment.'*

OS10 states:

'A proposal for the provision of new cemetery/burial space or an extension to an existing facility will be permitted where the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse on:

- b) Features of importance to nature conservation, biodiversity archaeology or the historic environment.'*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5, OS6, OS7, OS9 and OS10.

ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

6. Economic Development in Settlements (ED1)

ED1 has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included, it must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of restrictions on development through Policy NH1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policy ED1.

7. Economic Development in the Countryside (ED2 – ED7)

ED2, ED3, ED4 and ED5 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

ED6 states:

‘Planning permission will be granted for a farm or forestry diversification proposal where it has been demonstrated that it is to be run in conjunction with the agricultural operations on the farm or operations on the forestry enterprise. The following criteria will apply:

- c) It will not have an adverse impact on natural heritage or the historic environment.’*

ED7 states:

‘Planning permission will be granted for development where it is demonstrated that:

- e) It will not have an adverse impact on natural heritage or the historic environment;*
- g) It will not result in adverse impacts on human health, as well as sensitive habitats, waterways and wider biodiversity and ecosystem resilience through increased ammonia emissions; and*
- h) It will not add to or create pollution and all waste will be managed in accordance with all relevant legislation.’*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6 and ED7.

9. Town Centres and Retailing (RET1, RET2, RET4, RET5, RET6 and RET7)

RET1, RET2, RET4, RET5, RET6 and RET7 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies RET1, RET2, RET4, RET5, RET6 and RET7.

10. Advertisements (AD1)

AD1 has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included, it must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of restrictions on development through Policy NH1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policy AD1.

11. Tourism Development in Settlements (TOU1)

TOU1 has potential to generate pathways for effects on a European site. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included, it must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policy TOU1.

12. Tourism Development in the Countryside (TOU2 – TOU7)

TOU2, TOU4, TOU5 and TOU7 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

TOU3 states:

‘A proposal to replace an existing building in the countryside with a hotel, guest house or tourist hostel will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- *Access, car parking and other necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment, the appearance and character of the locality and road safety.’*

TOU6 states:

‘Proposals for holiday park development must be accompanied by a layout and landscaping plan (see Appendix 7) and will be subject to the following criteria:

- *Environmental assets including features of the archaeological and historic environment, natural habitats, trees and landscape/seascape features are identified and, where appropriate, retained and integrated in a suitable manner into the overall design and layout.’*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies TOU2, TOU3, TOU4, TOU5, TOU6 and TOU7.

14. Minerals Development (MIN1, MIN2, MIN3, MIN4, MIN6 and MIN7)

MIN2, MIN6 and MIN 7 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

MIN1 states:

‘The Council will grant planning permission for minerals development where it is demonstrated that the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on:

- *Natural heritage, particularly sites of international/national or local nature conservation importance;*
- *The water environment.’*

MIN3 states:

‘Proposals for the exploitation of valuable minerals will be permitted where they comply with the criteria listed in Policy MIN1. Where the minerals site is within a landscape designated for their landscape quality, nature conservation importance or its historic environment, due weight will be given to the reason for designation.’

MIN4 states:

‘In relation to the unconventional extraction of hydrocarbons, the Council will apply a presumption against their exploitation until there is sufficient and robust evidence on all environmental effects.’

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies MIN1, MIN2, MIN3, MIN4, MIN6 and MIN7.

15. Transportation (TRA2, TRA3, TRA8, TRA9, TRA10 and TRA11)

TRA2, TRA 3, TRA8, TRA9 and TRA11 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

TRA10 states:

‘Planning permission will only be granted for the development or extension of public or private car parks, including park and ride and park and share where it is demonstrated that:

- They are not detrimental to local environmental quality.’*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies TRA2, TRA3, TRA8, TRA9, TRA10 and TRA11.

16. Telecommunications and Other Utilities (TCU1 – TCU3)

TCU1 states:

‘The Council will permit proposals for telecommunications development where such proposals, together with any necessary enabling works, meet the requirements of GP1 General Policy and other provisions of the LDP and will not result in unacceptable damage to visual amenity or harm to environmentally sensitive features, landscapes or locations.

Applicants will therefore be required to submit sufficient information to demonstrate that proposals for telecommunications development, having regard to technical and operational constraints:

- Have been sited and designed to minimise visual and environmental impact; and*
- Avoids environmentally sensitive features, landscapes or locations, unless it is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council, why this cannot be achieved and how the impacts have been thoroughly assessed and mitigated.’*

TCU2 states:

‘In all instances the proposals must not result in unacceptable damage or harm to environmentally sensitive features or locations.’

TCU3 states:

'Planning permission will be granted for the installation of new, or the upgrading/replacement of existing infrastructure for the supply of water, gas or electricity where it is demonstrated that the proposal:

- d) Will not adversely affect features of natural or historic environment, landscape or biodiversity.'*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies TCU1, TCU2 and TCU3.

17. Waste (WM1 – WM5)

WM3 has potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included it must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

WM1 states:

'Proposals for the development of a waste management facility will be permitted where it meets the requirements of the GP1 General Policy1 and other relevant provisions of the LDP and can also be demonstrated that all of the following criteria, specifically relating to waste management, can be met:

- The proposal will not cause demonstrable harm to human health or result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment and neighbouring land use that cannot be controlled through mitigation measures;*
- The types of waste to be deposited or treated and the proposed method of disposal or treatment will be managed in such a way to limit a serious environmental risk to air, water or soil resources that cannot be prevented or appropriately controlled by mitigating measures.'*

WM2 states:

'Sites and proposals for waste collection and treatment facilities will be permitted where they comply with Policy WM1 and:

- where the proposal is in the countryside, it involves the reuse of existing buildings or is on land within or adjacent to existing building groups. Alternatively, where it is demonstrated that new buildings/plant are needed these must not have an unacceptable visual and environmental impact.'*

WM4 states:

Development proposals for the disposal of inert waste by its deposition on land will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it will result in land improvement and all of the following criteria are met:

- It will not result in an unacceptable adverse environmental impact that cannot be prevented or appropriately controlled by mitigating measures (see Policy WM1 criteria i, ii, iii and vi).'*

WM5 states:

'Proposals involving the development of land in the vicinity of existing or approved waste management facilities and wastewater treatment works (WwTWs), will only be permitted where all the following criteria are met:

- *It will not give rise to unacceptable adverse impacts on people, transportation or the environment.'*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies WM1, WM2, WM3, WM4 and WM5.

18. Renewable Energy (RE1 – RE2)

RE2 has potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included it must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

RE1 states:

'General Criteria

Development that generates energy from renewable and low carbon resources will be permitted provided the proposal, and any associated buildings and infrastructure, are in accordance with the requirements of the GP1 General Policy and other relevant provisions of the LDP and will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on any of the following:

- c) Biodiversity, nature conservation or historic environment assets;*
- g) Flood risk.*

Where any project is likely to result in unavoidable damage during its installation, operation or decommissioning, the application will need to indicate how such damage will be minimised and mitigated, including details of any compensatory measures, such as a habitat management plan or the creation of a new habitat. These matters will need to be agreed before planning permission is granted.

The wider environmental, economic and social benefits of all proposals for renewable and low carbon energy projects are material considerations that will be given appropriate weight in determining whether planning permission should be granted.

Any development on active peatland will not be permitted unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest as defined under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 as amended.

Wind Energy

In addition to the requirements of the general criteria above, all applications for wind energy development, including proposals for repowering of existing developments, will also be required to meet all of the following criteria:

- *The development will not create a significant risk of landslide or bog burst.'*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies RE1 and RE2.

19. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure (WW1)

WW1 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.'

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 this policy cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies WW1.

20. Flood Risk and Drainage (FRD1, FRD4 and FRD5)

FRD1, FRD4 and FRD5 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies FRD1, FRD4 and FRD5.

ENVIRONMENTAL: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HERITAGE

21. Historic Environment (HE5, HE7, HE8, HE9, HE10, HE11, HE12, HE13, HE14 and HE15)

HE5, HE7, HE8, HE9, HE10, HE12, HE13 and HE15 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

HE11 states:

'In a Conservation Area, the Council will normally only permit new development where the proposal enhances the character or appearance of the area where an opportunity to do so exists, or preserves its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise.'

In addition to the above requirement, development proposals for new buildings, alterations, extensions and changes of use in, or which impact on the setting of a Conservation Area are required to meet all of the following criteria:

(c) The proposal does not result in environmental problems such as noise, nuisance or disturbance.'

HE14 states:

'Such proposals will be required to be of a high design quality and to meet all of the following criteria:

f) All necessary services are available or can be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality.'

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies HE5, HE7, HE8, HE9, HE10, HE11, HE12, HE13, HE14 and HE15.

22. Natural Heritage (NH1)

Details of Policy NH1 have been referred to above under protective measures in the Plan Strategy. NH1 restates the legal and policy requirements of the Habitats Regulations and the SPPS in relation to European sites and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

This policy is considered a measure intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on European sites (as collective terminology) and cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policy NH1.

24. Coastal Development (CO1 - CO2)

CO1 and CO2 have potential to generate pathways for effects on European sites. Although, no specific protective policy caveats are included they must be considered in accordance with the relevant strategic and operational policies.

CO1 states:

'Where a proposal constitutes an exception, it must not result in an adverse impact on the landscape or seascape character, including archaeological, historic environment, natural heritage or earth science features. Where development is permitted in sensitive locations, particularly in the undeveloped coast, any adverse impacts will be mitigated through the use of appropriate conditions.'

CO2 states:

'Proposals for development within an existing harbour, port or marina area must demonstrate that all of the following criteria can be met:

- c) There are no significant adverse impacts on the coastal landscape and seascape character, including archaeological, historic environment, natural heritage or earth science features or the development is of such economic importance as to outweigh any adverse impacts.'*

All Strategic Policies, GP1 General Policy and relevant Operational Policies must be considered for all development proposals and in view of policy caveats and restrictions on development through Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

No further policy amendments are required to Operational Policies CO1 and CO2.

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 TOPIC	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES	INTEGRITY TEST CONCLUSION
5 Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
6 General Policy and Operational Policies	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>1. Housing in Settlements</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>2. Housing in the Countryside</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>4. Health, Education and Community Facilities</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>5. Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>6. Economic Development in Settlements</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

<i>7. Economic Development in the Countryside</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>9. Town Centres and Retailing</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>10. Advertisements</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>11. Tourism Development in Settlements</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>12. Tourism Development in the Countryside</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>14. Minerals Development</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>15. Transportation</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>16. Telecommunications and Other Utilities</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
<i>17. Waste</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

18. <i>Renewable Energy</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
19. <i>Water and Wastewater Infrastructure</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
20. <i>Flood Risk and Drainage</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
21. <i>Historic Environment</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
22. <i>Natural Heritage</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
24. <i>Coastal Development</i>	No further policy amendments are required.	In view of constraints on development, policy caveats and Policy NH1 these policies cannot undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.

Consideration of in combination effects

It was found that there are protective measures and overarching policies in the draft Plan Strategy that will ensure that development causing an adverse effect on site integrity cannot be approved. It will be important that HRAs for individual developments also consider in combination effects before planning permission is granted.

Policy NH1 is explicit that, the Council will only support development that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on an existing or proposed SPA, existing or candidate SAC, Sites of Community Importance, or a listed or proposed Ramsar Site. Policy NH1 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 as identified in Table 5.

On the basis of the underlying reasoning supporting Principle 6 of Section C.8.1 of the HRA Handbook, reliance on Policy NH1 provides the basis upon which effects which might act in combination with other plans and projects including those considered below can be ruled out.

Table 5 Plan or Project Identified for consideration of in combination effects

Plan or Project	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Is there a risk of in combination effects	Possible significant effects in combination
Regional			
Regional Development Strategy 2035	Potential in combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	The RDS has been subject to Appropriate Assessment and mitigation measures recommended. It is not considered that there is potential for in combination effects to arise, however in the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European site, adverse in combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. The mitigation measures contained within individual plans prioritise the avoidance of effects where possible and provide measures to minimise effects. In combination effects from projects which arise from implementation of the RDS will not be significant, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.
Strategic Planning Policy Statement	Potential in combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	The SPPS has been subject to SEA. No significant adverse environmental effects were identified and mitigation was not required, therefore it is not considered that there is potential for in combination effects to arise.	No. No significant adverse effects were identified from the SPSS in the absence of mitigation measures. In combination effects from projects which arise from implementation of the SPPS will not be significant, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against Policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.
County			

Plan or Project	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Is there a risk of in combination effects	Possible significant effects in combination
Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015	Potential in-combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	ARDs and North Down Borough Council have yet to publish a draft Plan Strategy. When published, the Plan Strategy will have been subject to AA which incorporates robust mitigation measures into the plans to avoid effects. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European sites, adverse in-combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. The mitigation measures which are implemented at project level through these existing plans prioritise the avoidance of effects and provide measures to minimise effects. In combination effects from projects which arise from the implementation of these existing plans and the Plan Strategy when published will not be significant and will require Appropriate Assessment.
Armagh Area Plan 2004 & Alteration No. 1: Armagh Countryside Proposals 2004. Craigavon Area Plan 2010 Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designation Plan 2010 Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010.	Potential in-combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council have yet to publish a draft Plan Strategy. When published, the Plan Strategy will have been subject to AA which incorporates robust mitigation measures into the plans to avoid effects. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European sites, adverse in-combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. The mitigation measures which are implemented at project level through these existing plans prioritise the avoidance of effects and provide measures to minimise effects. In combination effects from projects which arise from the implementation of these existing plans and the Plan Strategy when published will not be significant and will require Appropriate Assessment.
Lisburn and Castlereagh Local Development Plan – Plan Strategy 2032	Potential in combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	This Neighbouring Council Plan has been subject to SA and AA which incorporates robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to avoid effects. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European Sites, adverse in combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. The mitigation measures contained within the projects prioritise the avoidance of effects and provide measures to minimise effects. In combination effects from projects which arise from the implementation of this plan will not be significant, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.

Plan or Project	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Is there a risk of in combination effects	Possible significant effects in combination
County Louth Development Plan 2021-2027	Potential in combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	This Neighbouring Council Plan has been subject to SA and AA which incorporates robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to avoid effects. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European Sites, adverse in combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. The mitigation measures contained within the projects prioritise the avoidance of effects and provide measures to minimise effects. In combination effects from projects which arise from the implementation of this plan will not be significant, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.
Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031	Potential in combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs, such effects may include: • Disturbance to habitats/species; • Species mortality; • Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; • Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff); and • Introduction or spread of invasive species.	This Neighbouring Council Plan has been subject to SA and AA which incorporates robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to avoid effects. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European Sites, adverse in combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. The mitigation measures contained within the projects prioritise the avoidance of effects and provide measures to minimise effects. In combination effects from projects which arise from the implementation of this plan will not be significant, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.
Local			
LA07/2025/0365/F Large recreational project.	Potential in combination effects may arise from this project on European sites located and connected with the Council area, such effects may include direct effects on mobile species	This project is a large-scale development for public recreational purposes. Watersports are proposed which can have negative impacts on mobile species. This project will require a HRA to be undertaken. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European sites, adverse in combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. This project is subject to HRA and should a robust AA conclude no adverse effects and that the decision-maker is subject to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995, then there can be no in combination effects with the Plan Strategy, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.

Plan or Project	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Is there a risk of in combination effects	Possible significant effects in combination
LA07/2025/0124/O Large-housing project	Potential in combination effects may arise on European sites from large housing development schemes. Such effects may include: Deterioration on habitat from airborne pollutants disturbance to habitats/species; Species mortality; Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and Release of contaminated material (soils, runoff).	All projects which come forward on housing development sites will have already had or will require a HRA to be undertaken. In the absence of mitigation or appropriate consideration of potential adverse effects upon European sites, adverse in combination effects may occur and cannot be excluded.	No. All projects on housing development site will be subject to HRA and should a robust AA conclude no adverse effects and that the decision-maker is subject to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995, then there can be no in combination effects with the Plan Strategy, especially when viewed in light of the mitigation in the Plan Strategy against Policy NH1 which will require Appropriate Assessment.

6 Conclusions

Outcome of HRA

Step 8: Preparing the HRA Record

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

Following the draft Plan Strategy screening exercise, 102 policies were identified as having a likely significant effect in the absence of mitigation. Mitigation measures, in the form of case-specific policy caveats, were incorporated in respect 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.

As individual projects come forward under the draft Plan Strategy, they will be subject to the rigorous assessment requirements to establish whether they, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, are likely to have significant effects on any European site. Such projects can only be permitted where the Council Planning Authority is certain as to the absence of adverse effects on any European site.

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 HRA will be prepared to assess the potential impacts of the LPP on European sites. The information about European sites in Appendix 3, which will be updated if required, will be important as a starting point for the HRA at LPP. Following Independent Examination of the LPP, that HRA will be finalised and adopted by the Council and published alongside the adopted LPP.

In conclusion, the draft Plan Strategy, taking account of mitigation measures will not undermine the conservation objectives of any European site. Rather the policy caveats amplify the requirements for a robust HRA coming forward at project level to be assessed on site specific, case-by-case basis. In light of the mitigation, there is not likely to be an adverse effect on the site integrity of any European site arising from any aspect of the LDP Plan Strategy.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council as the Competent Authority can conclude that the LDP draft Plan Strategy will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Glossary

Adverse effect on site integrity	An effect on the qualifying features of a European 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.
European sites	Collective term used within this report to include existing or proposed SPA, existing or candidate SAC, Sites of Community Importance, or a listed or proposed Ramsar Site (the latter is a wider international designation).
Global Status	The global status is an expert judgement of the overall value of the European site for the conservation of the relevant Annex I habitat. Sites have been graded A, B or C.
Habitats Regulations	The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) and The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) (Amendment) (Northern Ireland (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.
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 a European site’s conservation objectives.
Mitigation measures	Measures to avoid, cancel or reduce the effects of a plan or project on a European site.
National Site Network (NSN)	Sites designated to protect special habitats or species of European importance, as listed in The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), to ensure ‘the conservation of a wide range of rare, threatened or endemic animal and plant species.’
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 European 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)	Area classified under Article 4 of the EU Birds Directive 1979 and 2009.
The Directives	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

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 (Online) Conservation Objectives (Available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/protected-areas> [Accessed June 2025])

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 June 2025])

DAERA (2020). Guidance explaining The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. December 2020 (version 1).

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) (Online - Dates vary) Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS). (Available at <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/ramsar-sites/#northern-ireland> [Accessed June 2025])

JNCC (Online - Dates vary) Standard data forms generated from the Natura 2000 Database submitted to the European Commission. (Available at <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/list-of-spas/#northern-ireland> and at <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/northern-ireland> [Accessed June 2025])

NI Water (2025) Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan (Available at [Managing Northern Ireland's Water Resources - Northern Ireland Water](#) [accessed June 2025])

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 Handbook⁴ (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 a European site in Northern Ireland, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. For this report European 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 to be produced in two stages – the first being the Plan Strategy, followed upon adoption, by the Local Policies Plan.

⁴ Tyldesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*, June 2025 edition UK: DTA Publications Ltd.

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 Plan Strategy cannot result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site. However, this argument has been rejected by the Courts who have ruled⁵ 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 European 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 UK⁶ 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'.

Feeney⁷ (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.'

Boggis⁸ Court of Appeal & EC v UK C.7.5.2.

⁵ Refer para 55 in EC v UK Case C-6/04 (2005)

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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

⁸ 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

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 European site can actually be identified.
- Reliance should not simply be placed on a general European 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 European sites.
- Tensions in the plan must be resolved in favour of protecting the European sites from harm.
- Policies or proposals with a high potential for significant adverse effects on European sites should be removed or subject to mitigation measures.

Assessing and applying mitigation measures

CJEU Case C323/17 (People over Wind & Sweetman)⁹ 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 a European 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 European 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 European site.

Feeney v Oxford City Council¹⁰ 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)¹¹ F10.1.

⁹ Case C-323/17 Request for a preliminary ruling, *People Over Wind* and *Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta*, 12th April 2018

¹⁰ 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

¹¹ Abbotskerswell Parish Council v Teignbridge District Council [2014] EWHC 4166 (Admin)

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 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published guidance¹² 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

¹² [Defra guidance on competent authority co-ordination](#), July 2012

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.

Stage 1 involves firstly deciding whether a plan or project should be subject to HRA (Step 1). Steps 2, identifying European sites, and 3, gathering information about those sites, help to identify the European 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 a European 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 European 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 a European 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.

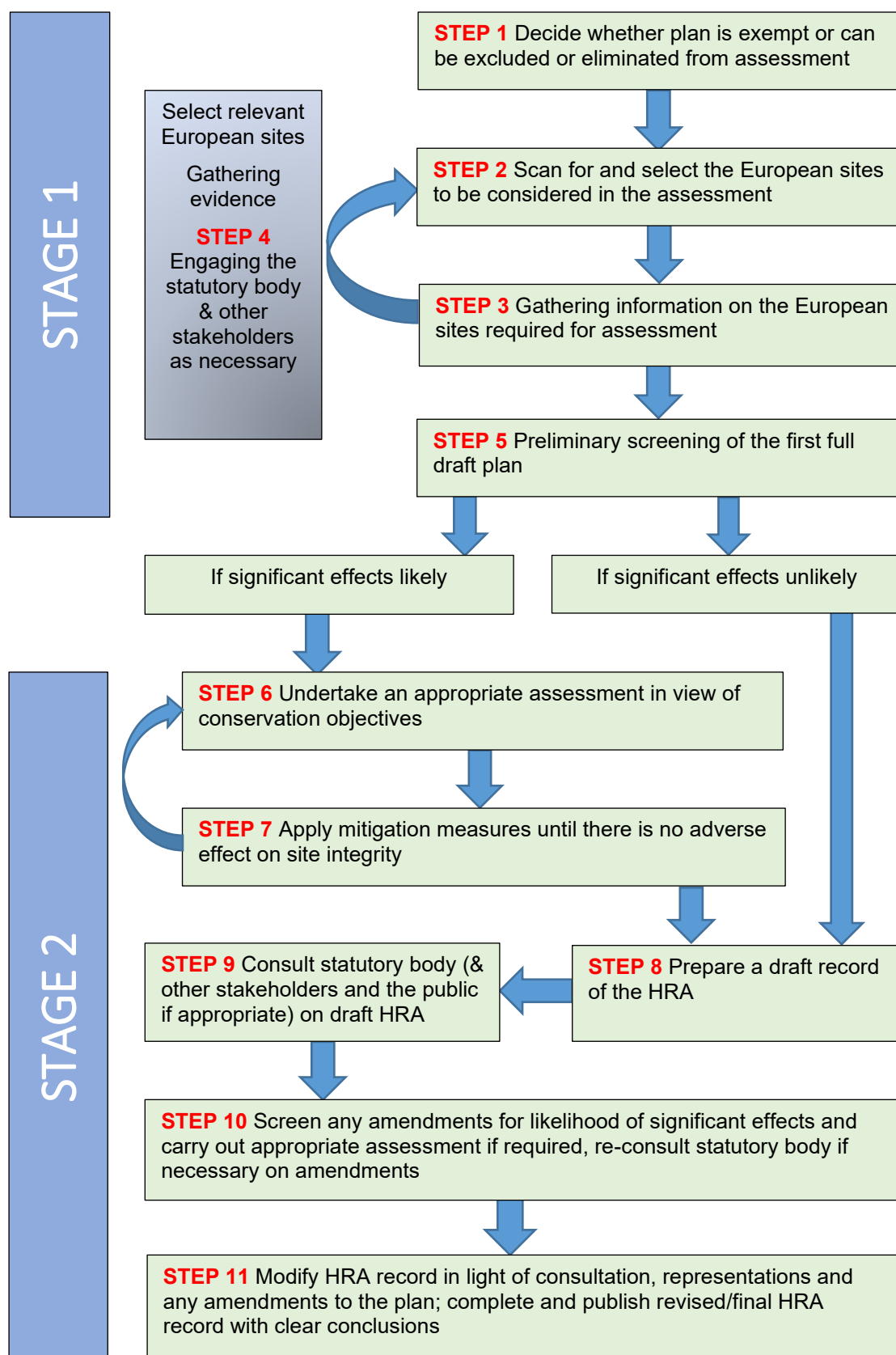
- Is the whole of the plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site for nature conservation purposes?
- Is the plan a strategic development plan, local development plan, supplementary guidance?
- Is the plan a general statement of policy showing only the general political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

European 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 European 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 European 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 European sites. This provides the opportunity to invite comment on the scope of the HRA and potential in combination considerations.

Step 5: Screening the 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).'

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 European 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 a European 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 the HRA Record

This report 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 European 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 European 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 European 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 European site under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).

Appendix 3: Site information

This appendix provides an overview of the European sites identified for consideration. 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 this HRA and will also provide baseline information for a further HRA to be carried out for the LPP. The conservation objectives to be considered at appropriate assessment for the short-list of sites is provided as separate Annex A.

Long-List of European Sites	Short-List of European Sites
Aughnadarragh Lough SAC	Aughnadarragh Lough SAC
Ballykilbeg SAC	Ballykilbeg SAC
Belfast Lough Ramsar	Belfast Lough Ramsar
Belfast Lough SPA	Belfast Lough SPA
Belfast Lough Open Water SPA	Belfast Lough Open Water SPA
Carlingford Lough SPA	Carlingford Lough SPA
Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension	Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension
Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site	Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site
Derryleckagh SAC	Derryleckagh SAC
Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site	Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site
Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site	Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site
East Coast Marine Proposed SPA	East Coast Marine Proposed SPA
Eastern Mourne SAC	Eastern Mourne SAC
Hollymount SAC	Hollymount SAC
Killough Bay SPA	Killough Bay SPA
Killough Bay Ramsar Site	Killough Bay Ramsar Site
Lecale Fens SAC	Lecale Fens SAC
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Ramsar site	
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA	
Murlough SAC	Murlough SAC
North Channel SAC	North Channel SAC
Outer Ards Ramsar Site	Outer Ards Ramsar Site
Outer Ards SPA	Outer Ards SPA
Rostrevor Wood SAC	Rostrevor Wood SAC
Slieve Gullion SAC	Slieve Gullion SAC
Strangford Lough Ramsar Site	Strangford Lough Ramsar Site
Strangford Lough SAC	Strangford Lough SAC
Strangford Lough SPA	Strangford Lough SPA
The Maidens SAC	The Maidens SAC
Turmennan SAC	Turmennan SAC
Turmennan Ramsar Site	Turmennan Ramsar Site
Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI)	Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI)
Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI)	Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI)
Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI)	Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI)
Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI)	Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI)
Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI)	Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI)
Lambay Island SAC (ROI)	Lambay Island SAC (ROI)
Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI)	Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI)
North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)	North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)

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 European 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 Viewer or downloaded from its digital datasets web page. Maps are also provided in Appendix 4 to illustrate the relationship between the plan area and European 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 Site 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 page. 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.

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 page.

Special Protection Areas Ireland

An overview of Ireland's SPA network can be found on the NPWS website at the page on Special Protection Areas. 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 Objectives.

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 European 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.

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 (June 2025) 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)	<p>Sites within or adjacent to the Council boundary relevant to the Plan area</p> <p>(ONLY include those in the council boundary or directly adjacent)</p>	<p>Aughnadarragh Lough SAC Ballykilbeg SAC Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Derryleckagh SAC Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site East Coast Marine Proposed SPA Eastern Mourne SAC Hollymount SAC Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Lecale Fens SAC Murlough SAC Rostrevor Wood SAC Slieve Gullion SAC Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC Strangford Lough SPA Turmennan SAC Turmennan Ramsar Site Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI)</p>
2. Plans that could affect the aquatic environment	<p>Sites upstream or downstream of the plan area in the case of river or estuary sites</p> <p>(All sites with theoretical relevant hydrological links to land within the plan area, irrespective of distance from the plan area. Exclude marine environment.)</p>	None
3. Plans that could affect the marine environment	<p>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 seabed, or marine species.</p> <p>(Marine sites with hydrological pathway from the plan area where realistic that water quality could be impacted such that it affects selection features.)</p>	<p>Belfast Lough Ramsar Belfast Lough SPA Belfast Lough Open Water SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site East Coast Marine Proposed SPA Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Murlough SAC North Channel SAC Outer Ards Ramsar Site Outer Ards SPA Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC</p>

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
		Strangford Lough SPA The Maidens SAC Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI) Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI) Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI) Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI) Lambay Island SAC (ROI) Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI) North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)
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. (Only sites on coast in or adjacent to plan area.)	Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Murlough SAC Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC Strangford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI) Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI)
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. (Includes sites with mobile species, or species dependent on mobile species, that could be found in the plan area and on which there is a realistic chance of impact.)	Aughnadarragh Lough SAC Ballykilbeg SAC Belfast Lough Ramsar Belfast Lough SPA Belfast Lough Open Water SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site East Coast Marine Proposed SPA Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Murlough SAC North Channel SAC Outer Ards Ramsar Site Outer Ards SPA Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC Strangford Lough SPA The Maidens SAC Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI) Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI) Lambay Island SAC (ROI) Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI) North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)
6. Plans that could increase recreational pressure on European sites potentially vulnerable or sensitive to such pressure	Such European site in the plan area (Includes sites with mobile species, or species dependent on habitat that could be found in the plan area)	Belfast Lough Ramsar Belfast Lough SPA Belfast Lough Open Water SPA Carlingford Lough SPA

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
	and on which there a realistic chance of impact. Also include habitat in the plan area which could be vulnerable to such pressures)	<p>Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension</p> <p>Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site</p> <p>Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site</p> <p>East Coast Marine Proposed SPA</p> <p>Eastern Mourne SAC</p> <p>Killough Bay SPA</p> <p>Killough Bay Ramsar Site</p> <p>Murlough SAC</p> <p>North Channel SAC</p> <p>Outer Ards Ramsar Site</p> <p>Outer Ards SPA</p> <p>Rostrevor Wood SAC</p> <p>Slieve Gullion SAC</p> <p>Strangford Lough Ramsar Site</p> <p>Strangford Lough SAC</p> <p>Strangford Lough SPA</p> <p>The Maidens SAC</p> <p>Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI)</p> <p>Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI)</p> <p>Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI)</p> <p>Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI)</p> <p>Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI)</p> <p>Lambay Island SAC (ROI)</p> <p>Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI)</p> <p>North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)</p>
7. Plans that would increase the amount of development	<p>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.</p> <p>(Applies if there is insufficient water supply for the plan period is identified by NI Water.)</p>	<p>None - evidence has been provided that there is sufficient water supply for the plan period therefore there cannot be pressures from water abstraction.</p>
	<p>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.</p> <p>(Sites in or downstream of the plan area which are connected to settlements within the plan area.</p>	<p>Belfast Lough Ramsar</p> <p>Belfast Lough SPA</p> <p>Belfast Lough Open Water SPA</p> <p>Carlingford Lough SPA</p> <p>Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension</p> <p>Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site</p> <p>Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site</p> <p>East Coast Marine Proposed SPA</p> <p>Killough Bay SPA</p> <p>Killough Bay Ramsar Site</p> <p>Murlough SAC</p> <p>North Channel SAC</p> <p>Outer Ards Ramsar Site</p> <p>Outer Ards SPA</p> <p>Strangford Lough Ramsar Site</p> <p>Strangford Lough SAC</p> <p>Strangford Lough SPA</p> <p>The Maidens SAC</p>

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
		<p>Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI) Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI) Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI) Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI) Lambay Island SAC (ROI) Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI) North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)</p>
	Sites that could be affected by the provision of new or extended transport or other infrastructure	None
	<p>Sites that could be affected by increased deposition of air pollutants arising from the proposals, including emissions from significant increases in traffic</p> <p>(E.g. transport/power lines. Road proposals that are necessary to access new developments arising from the plan e.g. link road for new housing.)</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>No new road proposals.</p>
8. Plans for linear developments or infrastructure	<p>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</p> <p>(Unlikely to apply unless plan generates need for infrastructure. Would apply to e.g. a transport plan identifying new roads.)</p>	None
9. Plans that introduce new activities or new uses into the marine, coastal or terrestrial environment	<p>Sites considered to have qualifying features potentially vulnerable or sensitive to the effects of the new activities proposed by the plan</p> <p>(Would only apply if the plan actively promotes new activities. Would apply for example to an offshore renewables plan.)</p>	None (No such 'new' uses introduced by the Plan Strategy).

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
10. Plans that could change the nature, area, extent, intensity, density, timing or scale of existing activities or uses	<p>Sites considered to have qualifying features potentially vulnerable or sensitive to the effects of the changes to existing activities proposed by the plan</p> <p>Unlikely to apply (recreational uses covered at 6 above)</p>	None (recreational uses covered by 6 above).
11. Plans that could change the quantity, quality, timing, treatment or mitigation of emissions or discharges to air, water or soil	<p>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</p> <p>(All sites in or within 15 km of plan area included to capture those that may be sensitive to aerial emissions)</p>	<p>Aughnadarragh Lough SAC Ballykilbeg SAC Belfast Lough Ramsar Belfast Lough SPA Belfast Lough Open Water SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Derryleckagh SAC Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site Dundrum Bay proposed Ramsar site East Coast Marine Proposed SPA Eastern Mourne SAC Hollymount SAC Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Lecale Fens SAC Murlough SAC North Channel SAC Outer Ards Ramsar Site Outer Ards SPA Rostrevor Wood SAC Slieve Gullion SAC Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC Strangford Lough SPA The Maidens SAC Turmennan SAC Turmennan Ramsar Site Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI) Carlingford Mountain SAC (ROI) Carlingford Shore SAC (ROI) Dundalk Bay SAC (ROI) Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI) Lambay Island SAC (ROI) Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI) North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)</p>
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	Not applicable to land use plans.

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
	harvesting, extraction or consumption	
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
14. Plans which could introduce or increase, or alter the timing, nature or location of disturbance to species	<p>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</p> <p>(Those sites with bird, mammal or aquatic species that may be within plan area and are vulnerable to disturbance)</p>	<p>Belfast Lough Ramsar Belfast Lough SPA Belfast Lough Open Water SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site East Coast Marine Proposed SPA Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Murlough SAC North Channel SAC Outer Ards Ramsar Site Outer Ards SPA Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC Strangford Lough SPA The Maidens SAC Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI) Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI) Lambay Island SAC (ROI) Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI) North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)</p>
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	<p>Belfast Lough Ramsar Belfast Lough SPA Belfast Lough Open Water SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Proposed Marine Extension Carlingford Lough Ramsar Site Derryleckagh proposed Ramsar Site East Coast Marine Proposed SPA Killough Bay SPA Killough Bay Ramsar Site Murlough SAC North Channel SAC Outer Ards Ramsar Site Outer Ards SPA Strangford Lough Ramsar Site Strangford Lough SAC Strangford Lough SPA The Maidens SAC Carlingford Lough SPA (ROI)</p>

Types of plan	Sites to scan for and check	Names of sites selected
		Dundalk Bay SPA (ROI) Lambay Island SAC (ROI) Rockabil to Dalkey Island SAC (ROI) North Anglesey Marine SAC (Wales)
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). Would apply to e.g. a fisheries plan.

Sites considered but eliminated

As Step 2b takes account of the site selection features, pathways to sites and conservation objectives it found that 2 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
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Ramsar Site	Lough Neagh is located approximately 24.5km north-west of the Council boundary and is connected by infrastructure. Castor Bay WTW abstracts from Lough Neagh and supplies drinking water to a small portion of the LGD. While there is a theoretical pathway for impacts (any major increased demand for water abstraction may impact on habitats or prey species on which features depend) evidence has been provided that there is sufficient water supply for the plan period therefore there cannot be pressures from water abstraction.
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA	It is not conceivable that the draft Plan Strategy could undermine the conservation objectives or citation documents for these sites, therefore they can be excluded from further assessment.

Appendix 4: Maps

Map 1: SPAs in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down District

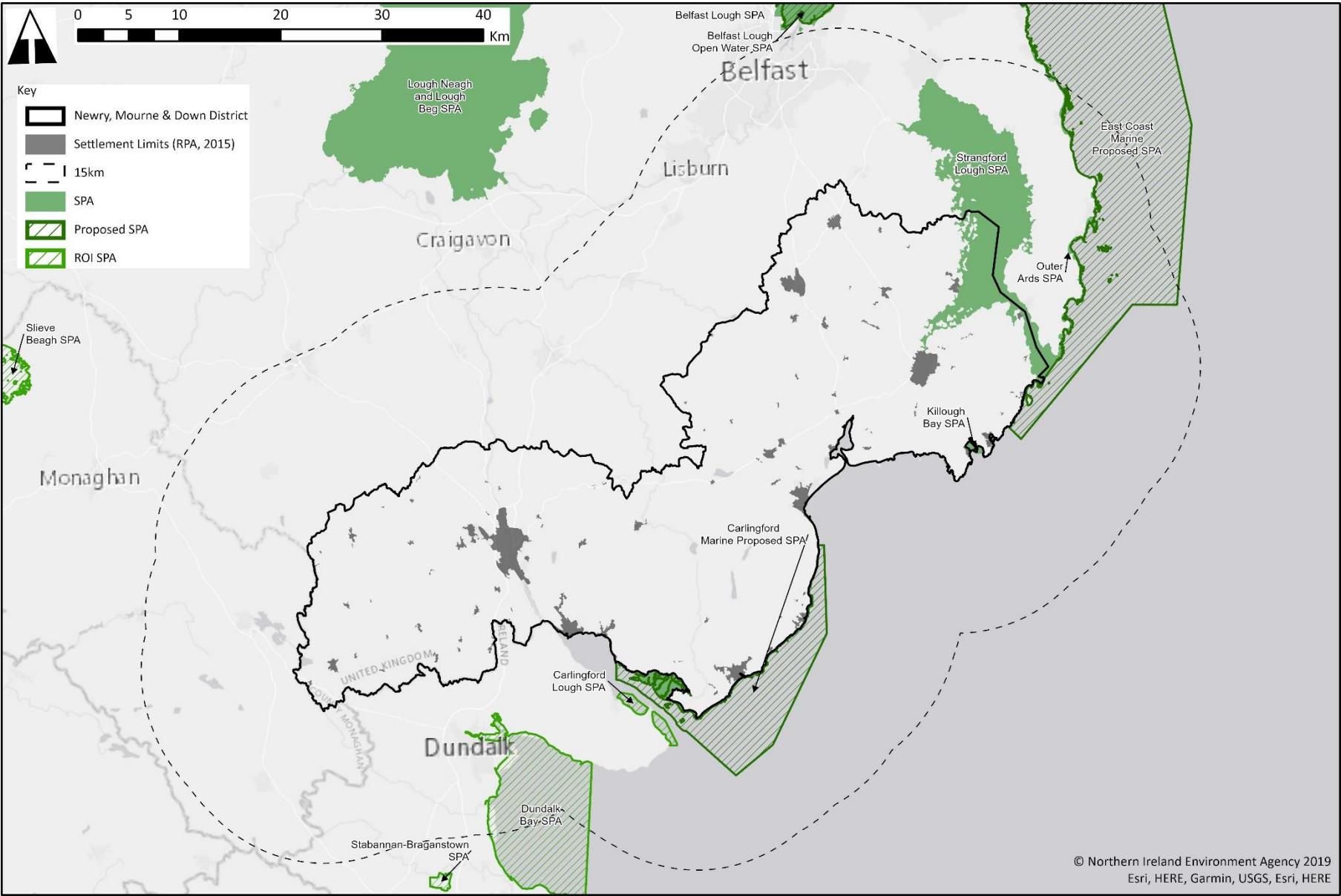
Map 2: SACs in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down District

Map 3: Ramsar Sites in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down District

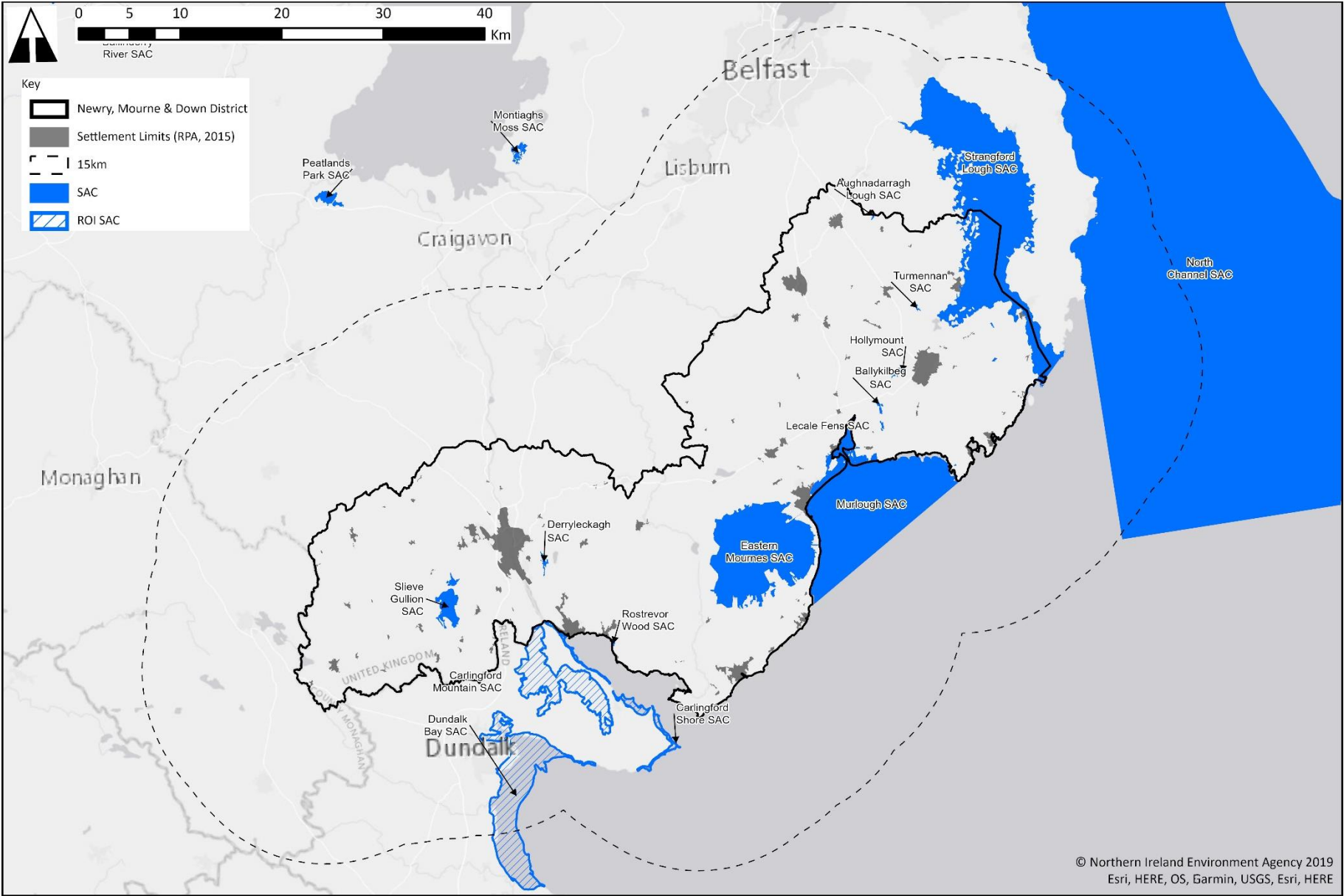
Map 4: Marine SACs within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area (DAERA screening distances applied)

Map 5: Water Framework Directive Local Management Area River Catchments within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area

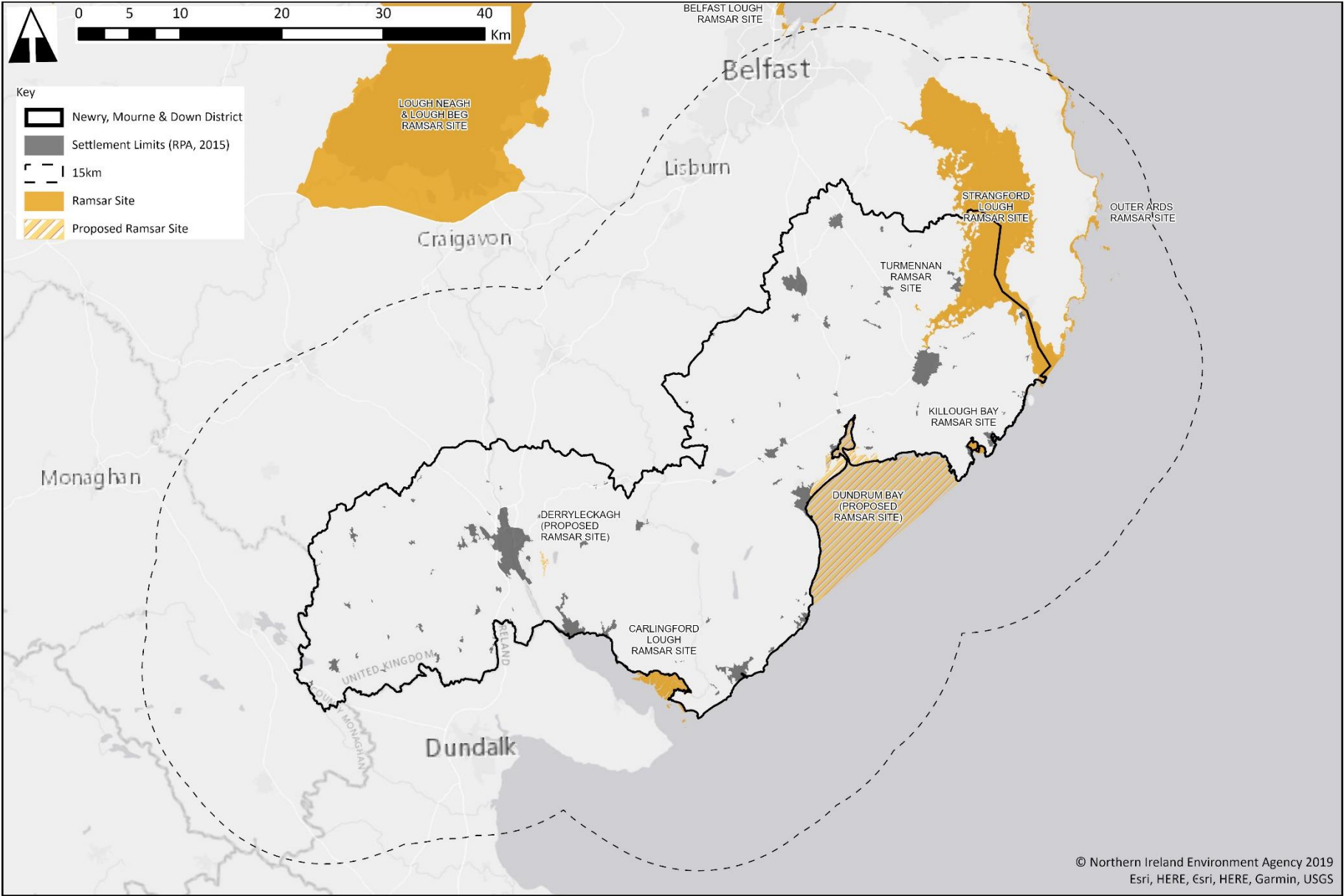
Map 1 SPAs in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down District



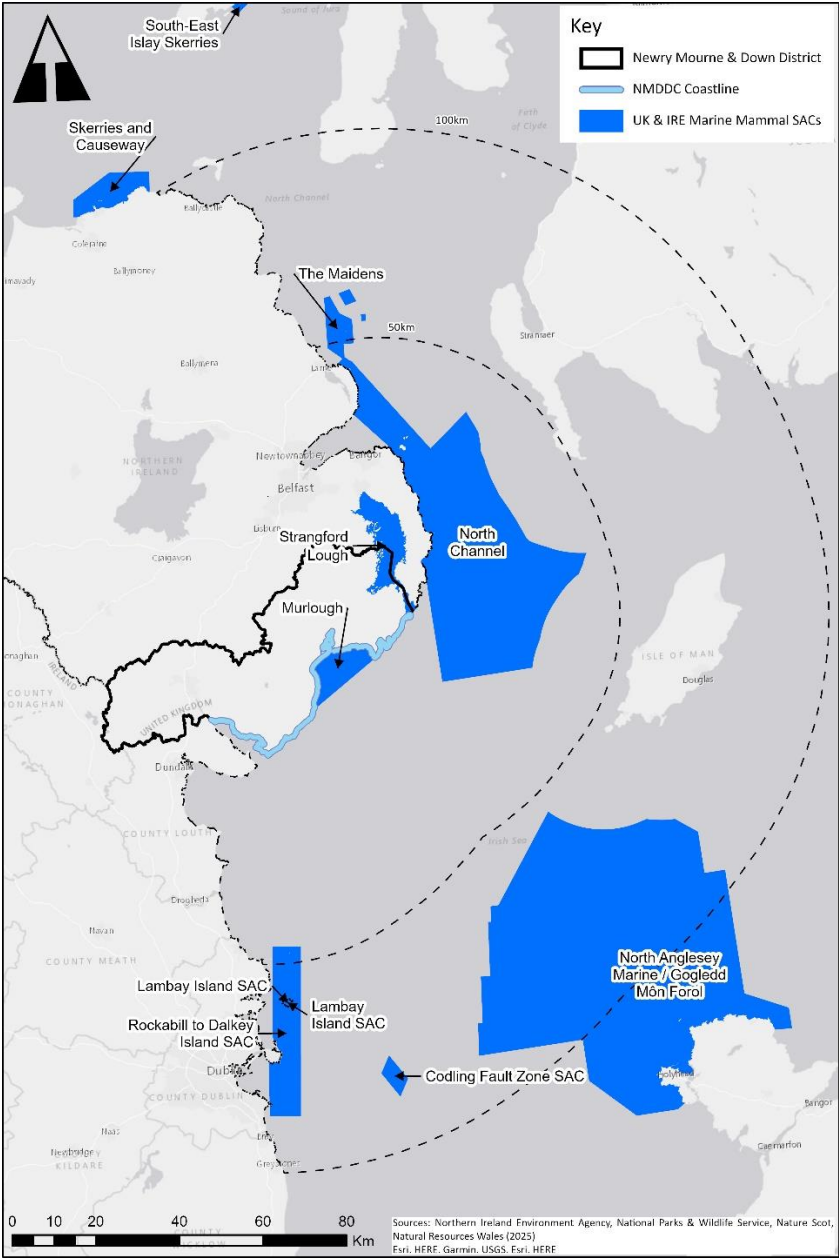
Map 2: SACs in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down District



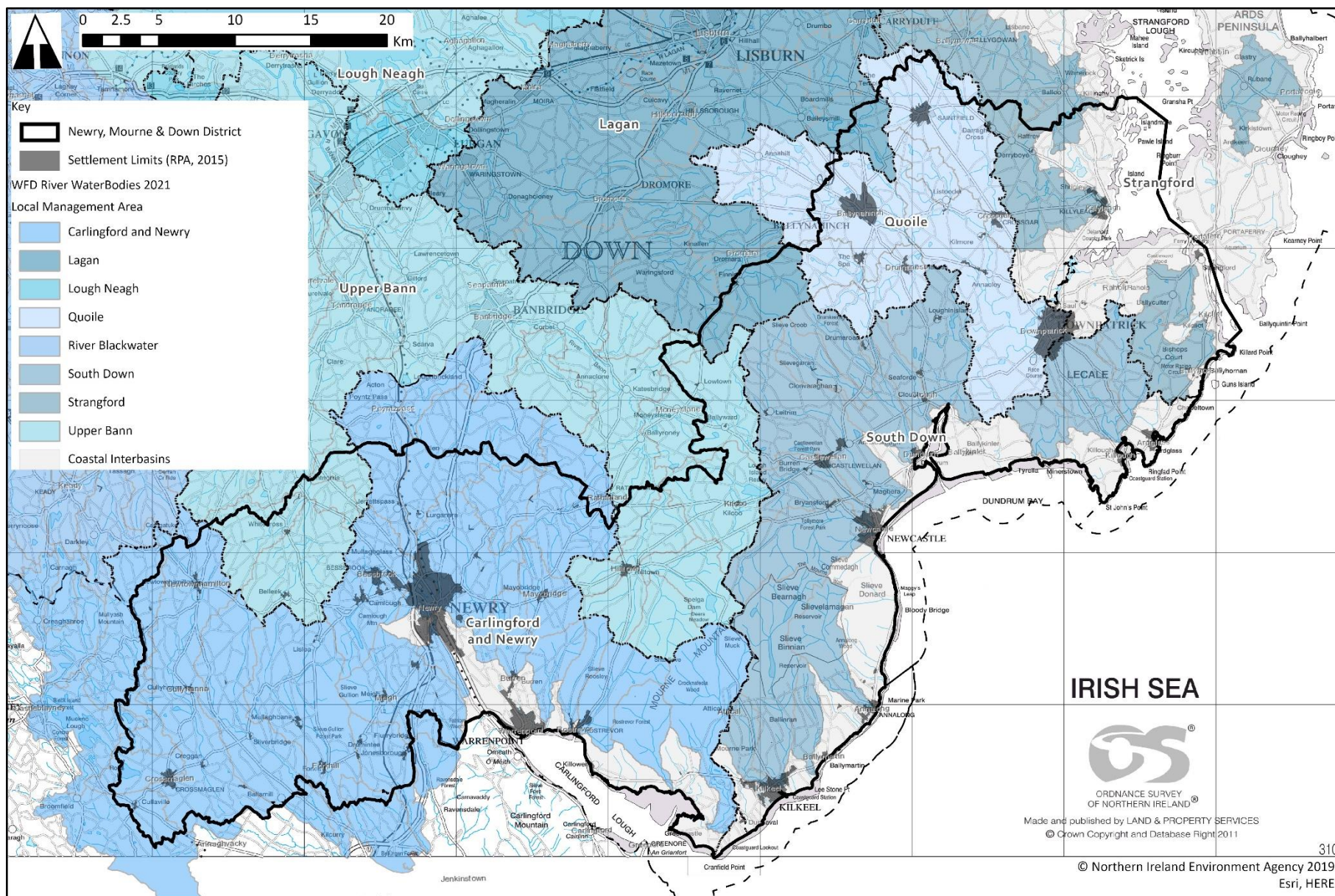
Map 3: Ramsar sites in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down District



Map 4: Marine SACs within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area (DAERA screening distances applied)



Map 5: Water Framework Directive Local Management Area River Catchments within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council 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 European 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 a European site (screened in) F.6.3.12

Newry Mourne and Down - LDP Plan Strategy 2035 – Screening of Plan Strategy Proposals and Policies

Plan Proposal/Policy	Criteria	Screening	Screening Comment
PART 1			
1 Introduction	NA	Out	Administrative text - introduces plan and its preparation
2 District Profile	NA	Out	Administrative text - Profile of Council area
3 Policy Context	NA	Out	Administrative text - policy context
4 LDP Vision and Strategic Objectives			
<i>LDP Vision</i>			
Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe, and vibrant communities, where people enjoy a good quality of life and equality of opportunity for all. A sustainable, well connected and high-quality place where our environment and cultural heritage are valued and protected to make the district an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
<i>LDP Objectives</i>			
SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING			
To further develop Newry City as a regional gateway city and Downpatrick as a main hub within the district.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect and sustain the role of local and small towns so they act as local centres for housing and community services.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To provide for vital and vibrant rural communities in our villages and small settlements which meet the daily needs of their rural hinterland whilst protecting the countryside by accommodating sustainable growth.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.

To provide for approximately 11,000 new homes by 2035 across a mix of housing type, size and tenure in accessible locations.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To support the regeneration of disadvantaged and deprived areas.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To recognise the need of growing families, elderly and disabled by accommodating development which allows people to remain within their communities.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of transportation.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect and enhance the provision of open space across the district to support health and wellbeing	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To provide for quality public spaces and 'shared spaces' that are accessible to all.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE			
To ensure there is a generous supply of suitable land to meet economic development needs within the district over the Plan period, 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 objectives.
To encourage and accommodate entrepreneurship and innovation for large, medium, and small firms by ensuring a variety of sites based on size, quality and choice.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.

To facilitate Newry City to capitalise on its role as the South Eastern City Gateway on the Belfast-Dublin economic corridor, similarly maximising Warrenpoint/Burren as a local hub and major port, whilst ensuring Downpatrick as our main town is strengthened as a main employment centre.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To support the district as a major leisure destination which promotes sustainable tourism initiatives underpinned by tourism infrastructure in appropriate locations.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To achieve strong and vibrant city and town centres supported by a hierarchy of centres that sustainably meet the shopping, working and leisure needs of the district.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect and sustain the role of local and small towns so they act as local centres for shops, employment and leisure of an appropriate scale and support our villages to meet the daily needs of their rural surrounding area.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
Provide for sustainable economic development in the countryside.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To promote integration between transportation and new development to reduce the need to travel and reduce dependency upon travel by car.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
Promote opportunities for sustainable travel including walking, cycling and public transport and reduce the need to travel by private car.			
To protect strategically important transportation routes.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.

To support renewables infrastructure whilst affording protection to the environment.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To support digital connectivity which meets the needs of business and households while reducing the need to travel.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To accommodate appropriate investment in public utilities and sustainable waste management.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
ENVIRONMENTAL: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HERITAGE			
To protect, conserve and, where possible enhance the historic environment to achieve quality design and support economic opportunity.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect, conserve and enhance the district's heritage assets and promote their sensitive re-use.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect, conserve and enhance townscape character, delivering high-quality design that helps to create a sense of place.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect, conserve, enhance and restore the district's natural heritage to support biodiversity in its habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features, and promote health and wellbeing.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect our sensitive landscapes from inappropriate development.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To reduce vulnerability to climate change and prevent inappropriate new development in areas known to be at risk of flooding, coastal erosion or land instability.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.

To protect and sustainably manage the district's natural resources by avoiding impacts on water quality and managing the extraction of mineral reserves.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect and enhance the network of blue and green infrastructure to support opportunities for active travel, recreation, health and wellbeing and creation of wildlife habitats.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To protect and enhance the natural character and landscape of the undeveloped coast protecting it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To facilitate appropriate development in coastal settlements and other parts of the developed coast that benefits local communities, contributes to a sustainable economy and is sensitive to its coastal location.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
To enable and support coastal development that is adaptive to coastal change through good design and siting.	A	Out	General statement of objectives.
5 Spatial Growth Strategy and Strategic Policies			
Overarching Strategic Policies			
SP1 Sustainable Development and Climate Change	A	Out	This is a strategic high-level statement of policy setting out what proposals must demonstrate in relation to sustainability and climate change. In itself, it cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies
SP2 Enhancing Design and Place Shaping	A	Out	This is a strategic high-level statement of policy related to design. In itself, it cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies

SP3 Developer Contributions and Planning Agreements	A	Out	This is a strategic high-level statement of policy which sets out requirement for developer contributions and planning agreements. In itself, it cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies
<i>Spatial Growth Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy</i>	A	Out	This is a high-level statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
SGS1 Spatial Growth Strategy	A	Out	This is a high-level statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery will be assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
SETT1 Settlement Hierarchy	A	Out	This is a strategic high-level statement setting out the settlement hierarchy within the Plan. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
SETT2 Settlement Development Limits	A	Out	This is a strategic high-level statement. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING			
<i>Housing Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a high-level statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
HS1 Housing Land Allocation	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HS2 Protection of Zoned Housing Land	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HS3 Management of Housing Supply	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Countryside Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.

CS1 Development in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Open Space Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
OSS1 Protecting and Enhancing Open Space	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE			
<i>Economic Development Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
EDS1 Employment Land Allocation	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
EDS2 Protection of Economic Development Land	I	In	The Policy is largely protective to avoid conflicting land use however exceptions may be permitted. The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Retail Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
RS1 Retail Hierarchy	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Tourism Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
TS1 Sustainable Tourism	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Minerals Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.

MS1 Mineral Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Transport Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
TRS1 Sustainable Transport	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Telecommunications and Other Utilities Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery will be assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
TUS1 Telecommunications and Other Utilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Waste Management Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
WMS1 Waste Management	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Renewable Energy Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery will be assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
RES1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
<i>Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
FRDS1 Flood Risk and Drainage	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ENVIRONMENTAL: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HERITAGE			

<i>Historic Environment and Natural Heritage Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
ENVS1 Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	A	Out	Overall seeks to be protective of the Historic Environment, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site.
ENVS2 Protecting, Conserving, Enhancing and Restoring Natural Heritage and our Valued Landscapes	A	Out	Overall seeks to be protective of the Natural Environment and Landscape, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site.
<i>Coastal Development Strategy</i>	A	Out	This is a general statement of strategy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
CDS1 Coastal Development	A	Out	Overall seeks to be protective of coastal development and coastal settlements. Implications of delivery are assessed under related Strategic and Operational Policies.
PART 2			
6 General Policy and Operational Policies			
GP1 General Policy	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
SOCIAL: ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, CREATING QUALITY PLACES AND IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING			
<i>1. Housing in Settlements</i>			
HOU1 Quality in Residential Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HOU2 Design Concept Statements and Concept Masterplans	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
HOU3 Residential Extensions and Alterations	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HOU4 Conversion or Change of Use of Existing Building to Flats or Apartments	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.

HOU5 Affordable Housing	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HOU6 Housing Type, Size and Tenure	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HOU7 Adaptable and Accessible Homes	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HOU8 Specialist Residential Accommodation	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HOU9 Accommodation for the Travelling Community	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
2. Housing in the Countryside			
COU1 Dwellings in Existing Clusters	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU2 Replacement Dwellings	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU3 Affordable Housing in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU4 Personal and Domestic Circumstances in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU5 Dwellings for Non-Agricultural Rural Enterprises	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU6 Ribbon Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU7 Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
COU8 Dwellings on Farms	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
3. All Development in the Countryside			
COU9 Design and Integration of Buildings in the Countryside	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.

COU10 Rural Character	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
COU11 Setting of Settlements	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
4. Health, Education and Community Facilities			
CF1 Community Facilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
5. Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation			
OS1 Protection of open Space	I	In	This policy safeguards existing open space, however, exceptions will be permitted subject to meeting criteria, potential effects on a European site cannot therefore be ruled out.
OS2 Public Open Space in New Residential Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS3 Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS4 Intensive Sports Facilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS5 Noise Generating Sport and Outdoor Recreational Activities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS6 Development of Facilities Ancillary to Water Sports	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS7 Floodlighting of Sports and Outdoor Recreational Facilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS8 Green and Blue Infrastructure	A	Out	This is a general statement of policy which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site. Implications of delivery are assessed under relevant Strategic and Operational Policies.
OS9 Community Growing Space and Allotments	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
OS10 Cemeteries and Burial Space	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.

ECONOMIC: CREATING JOBS, PROMOTING PROSPERITY AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE			
6. Economic Development in Settlements			
ED1 Economic Development in Settlements	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
7. Economic Development in the Countryside			
ED2 Expansion of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ED3 Redevelopment of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ED4 Major Industrial Development in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ED5 Small Rural Projects	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ED6 Farm and Forestry Diversification	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
ED7 Agricultural and Forestry Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
8. All Economic Development			
ED8 Development Incompatible with Economic Development Uses	A	Out	This policy seeks to avoid conflicting land use which, in itself, cannot have any effect on a European site.
9. Town Centres and Retailing			
RET1 Town Centre First	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
RET2 Primary Retail Core and Primary Retail Frontage	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
RET3 Retail Impact Assessment and Assessment of Need	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
RET4 Retail Development Outside City and Town Centres	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.

RET5 Local Centres	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
RET6 Retail Development in Villages and Small Settlements	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
RET7 Retail Development in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
10. Advertisements			
AD1 Outdoor Advertisements	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
11. Tourism Development in Settlements			
TOU1 Tourism Development in Settlements	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
12. Tourism Development in the Countryside			
TOU2 Tourism Amenities in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TOU3 Hotels, Guest Houses, B&Bs, Tourist Hostels and Bunkhouses in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TOU4 Major Tourism Development in the Countryside - Exceptional Circumstances	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TOU5 Self-Catering Accommodation in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TOU6 New and Extended Holiday Parks in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TOU7 New and Extended Glamping Accommodation in the Countryside	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
13. All Tourism Development			
TOU8 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.
14. Minerals Development			

MIN1 Minerals Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
MIN2 Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development	I	In	This policy constrains mineral development on protected areas because of their intrinsic landscape value, however exceptions apply therefore potential for effects on European sites depending on location, scale and nature of the development.
MIN3 Valuable Minerals	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
MIN4 Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
MIN5 Mineral Safeguarding Areas	D/F	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and one that cannot lead to development or other change.
MIN6 Peat Extraction	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
MIN7 Restoration and Aftercare	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
15. Transportation			
TRA1 Creating an Accessible Environment	A	Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on a European site.
TRA2 Access to Public Roads	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TRA3 Access to Protected Routes	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TRA4 Protection of New Transport Schemes	A	Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on a European site.
TRA5 Disused Transport Routes	A	Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on a European site.
TRA6 Transport Assessment	A	Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on a European site.

TRA7 Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
TRA8 Active Travel	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TRA9 Design of Car Parking	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TRA10 Provision of Public and Private Car Parking	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TRA11 Temporary Car Parks	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
16. Telecommunications and Other Utilities			
TCU1 Control of Telecommunications Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TCU2 Future Proofing of New Developments for Telecommunications Infrastructure	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
TCU3 Public Services and Other Utilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
17. Waste			
WM1 Waste Management Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
WM2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
WM3 Waste Disposal	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
WM4 Land Improvement	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
WM5 Development in the Vicinity of Waste Management Facilities	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
18. Renewable Energy			

RE1 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
RE2 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Measures in all Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
19. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure			
WW1 Development Relying on Non-Mains Sewerage	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
20. Flood Risk and Drainage			
FRD1 Development in Flood Plains	I	In	Largely protective through constraining development in fluvial and coastal flood plains, however exceptions apply, therefore the potential for effects cannot be excluded.
FRD2 Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure	A	Out	This is a general statement of policy which cannot have any effect on a European site.
FRD3 Development at Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
FRD4 Artificial Modification of Watercourses	I	In	This policy allows for culverting in limited circumstances therefore the potential for effects on a European site cannot be excluded.
FRD5 Development in Proximity to Reservoirs	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
FRD6 Sustainable Drainage Systems	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
ENVIRONMENTAL: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT			
21. Historic Environment			
HE1 The Preservation of Archaeological Remains of Regional Importance and Their Settings	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.
HE2 The Protection of Archaeological Remains of Local Importance and Their Settings	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.
HE3 Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.

HE4 Archaeological Mitigation	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.
HE5 Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes	I	In	Largely protective however may be granted conditional to the recording of any features which would be lost prior to development commencing. The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE6 Change of Use of a Listed Building	B	Out	This is a policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability of proposals.
HE7 Extension or Alteration of a Listed Building	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE8 Advertisements on a Listed Building	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE9 Demolition of a Listed Building	I	In	Largely protective however may be granted permission subject to conditions. The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE10 Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE11 New Development in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE12 Advertisements in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE13 Demolition in a Conservation Area or Area of Townscape Character	I	In	Largely protective however may be granted permission subject to conditions. The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE14 The Re-Use of Non-Listed Vernacular and Locally Important Buildings	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
HE15 Enabling Development	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
22. Natural Heritage			

NH1 European and Ramsar Sites – International	M	In	This policy restates the legal and policy requirements of the Habitats Regulations and the SPPS in relation to European sites. As the policy is explicitly to protect European sites/Ramsar sites, it must be screened in for further assessment.
NH2 Species Protected by Law	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy. May afford additional protection to some site selection features.
NH3 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance - National	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy. May afford protection to supporting habitat for site selection features.
NH4 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance - Local	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy. May afford protection to supporting habitat for site selection features.
NH5 Habitats, Species 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.
NH6 Protection of Main River Corridors and Open Water Bodies	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy. May afford protection to supporting habitat for site selection features.
NH7 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy. May afford protection to supporting habitat for site selection features.
23. Landscape Assets			
LA1 Special Countryside Areas	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.
LA2 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.
LA3 Local Landscape Policy Areas	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.

LA4 Areas of High Scenic Value	D	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide environmental/site safeguarding policy.
24. Coastal Development			
CO1 The Undeveloped Coast	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
CO2 The Developed Coast	I	In	The potential for development with a pathway to a European site cannot be excluded.
25. Land Instability or Coastal Erosion			
DAR1 Development at Risk from Land Instability or Coastal Erosion	D/F	Out	This policy is a general plan-wide safeguarding policy and one that cannot lead to development or other change.
7 Monitoring and Review	NA	Out	Administrative text setting out monitoring and review arrangements.
Appendices 1-10	A	Out	The appendices provide visuals, evidence and additional supporting information associated with the Plan Strategy. The appendices cannot have any effect on a European site.

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0330 137 4000
info@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

 facebook.com/nmdcouncil

 x.com/nmdcouncil

Oifig an Iúir
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road
Downpatrick BT30 6GQ



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down
District Council