

County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (As Varied)



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council

Part C: Objectives and Policies of the Towns.



June 2018

Important Note

County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (As Varied)

The County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as Varied) incorporates the Variation to the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 in respect of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (Variation No. 1) made by the Elected Members of Donegal County Council on the 31st of May 2021. Textual insertions made by said variation are shown in **blue** whilst textual deletions made by said variation are show in ~~red-strikethrough~~.

In addition the following maps form part of the abovementioned variation and are contained within Part C of the Development Plan: Map 12.1B, Map 12.3, Map 15.2, and Map 15.17. These maps are, in effect, amended versions of the original maps published as part of the original County Development Plan in June 2018. In the interests of clarity any amendments to said maps as result of said Variation are not labelled on said maps. However the original versions of the abovementioned maps are available to view on the Council's website at:

<https://www.donegalcoco.ie/services/planning/planningpolicy>

PART C

Objectives and Policies of the Towns

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Introduction

Part A of this Development Plan sets out a strategic plan for the entire County including a strategic vision based on an ambitious growth target, a Core Strategy and an associated Settlement Structure based on 3 layers namely: Layer 1: Letterkenny, Layer 2: Strategic Towns, and Layer 3: Rural Town and Open Countryside.

Part B of this Development Plan supports this strategic plan by setting out strategies, objectives and policies on such issues as the Economy, Retailing, Infrastructure, Energy, Housing, Heritage, Tourism, and Community Development which will help to guide future investment in infrastructure and services and manage development across these sectors in a progressive and sustainable manner.

In turn this section of the Plan (Part C) also aims to give effect to the strategic plan in Part A by:

- (1) Setting out **detailed policy frameworks and associated land use zoning maps for the towns of Letterkenny, Buncrana and Bundoran** in Chapters 12, 13 and 14 respectively. These towns were previously subject to their own individual Development Plans, and it is envisaged that these policy frameworks and land use zoning maps will in turn be superseded in due course by Local Area Plans.
- (2) Providing **spatial planning frameworks and associated land use zoning objectives for 60 settlements** within Layer 2 and Layer 3 of the abovementioned settlement frameworks in Chapter 15 of this part of the Plan. These spatial planning frameworks are hereafter known as settlement frameworks.

These policy frameworks/land use zoning maps and settlement frameworks are designed to be sufficiently detailed and/or geographically specific to successfully manage development in these urban areas to deliver key planning objectives but crucially they also compliment and should be read in conjunction with the strategies, objectives and policies of Part B of this Plan.

Chapter 12 Letterkenny

12.1 Introduction

This chapter relates to the detailed written text that is specific to Letterkenny. It should be read in conjunction with the wider policies contained in this Development Plan. Four maps accompany this chapter as follows (refer A3 maps inserted at the end of Chapter 12; nb. Maps 12.1A and 12.1B at A0 size may be purchased from Donegal County Council for a fee of €10 per map):

- Map 12.1A: 'The Urban Design Framework'.
- Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning Map'.
- Map 12.2: 'Town Centre Strategy'
- Map 12.3: 'Transport Map'.

Background

Letterkenny is identified as Layer 1 in the settlement structure set out in Chapter 2 of Part A of this Plan. As the largest town in the County with a population of almost 20,000 people in 2011, it provides a broad range of services across the sectors including employment, education, health, cultural services, community services, entertainment and many more. Its growth and strengthening as a major centre of critical mass together with its wider hinterland is critical in the regional context including its relationship with Derry City. A strong, vibrant, connected Letterkenny with growing critical mass will provide benefits across the County and within the region in terms attracting private sector investment in jobs and the economy and in securing investment in infrastructure that is critical to the county as a whole. The Core Strategy directs 30% of the projected growth in the County to Letterkenny during the life of the Plan and beyond to 2038 and this provides for an additional population of 4,190 people by 2024 and a further 10,881 people by 2038.

Development Trends

Since 2007/2008 and reflective of the national development trends, Letterkenny experienced a significant drop off in growth and development notable in particular when considering the level of development that was granted planning permission but not commenced. The town comprises an extensive area of new town centre providing for larger floor space requirements and a continued distinction between the new retail sector and the long established retail sector located along Main Street. Although there has been limited new residential development in recent years, existing housing is concentrated in many of the outer areas of the town and there are blocks of undeveloped land intervening the radial routes into the town. Letterkenny is a significant location for education (the LYIT) and also for employment. It benefits from the resilience of Project Kelvin, and can tap into ready-made human capital that makes the town an attractive place for new investment.

The Specific Provisions of the Core Strategy in Relation to Letterkenny

As outlined in Section 12.1.1 'Background', the Core Strategy of this Plan directs 30% of the projected growth in the County to Letterkenny thus requiring the supply of appropriate lands for the purposes of housing to accommodate an additional 4,190 people to 2024. Table 12.1 entitled, 'The Core Strategy Table in Relation to Letterkenny', extracts the relevant information from the Core Strategy Table in respect of the entire county set out in Table 2.4, Chapter 2 of Part A of this Plan. Table 12.1 shows that circa 70 hectares of lands are identified as either 'Primarily Residential-Phase 1' or as part of a mixed use zone and the location of the lands identified are shown on Map 12.1B entitled 'Letterkenny Land Use Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan. The lands identified have the potential to supply some 1,500 housing units (including 50% over zoning as provided under the Core Strategy Guidelines, 2010).

Table 12.1 shows that the quantum of lands identified for delivery of housing units to 2024, results in a shortfall of -839 units to meet the projected population and associated Housing Land Requirement (HLR). The shortfall is to be addressed through the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Letterkenny.

Table 12.1: The Core Strategy Table in Relation to Letterkenny.

Core Strategy population allocation	No. of housing units required ¹	HLR (Ha) ²	Potential no. of units that could be supplied through HLR	Existing zoning (As at 1 st Feb 2017)	No of housing units the existing zoning provides for	Proposed zoning (primarily residential (PR)- 1 st phase; Ha)	Proposed zoning (Other land) (Ha)	Housing yield from PR	Housing yield from other lands	Shortfall/excess
4,190	1,552	116.4	2,328	66	1,401	55.2	15.2	1203	286	-839

The Areas in Letterkenny Designated for Significant Development during the Period of the Plan

Figure 12.1 shows the main development areas identified as Phase 1- growth areas. These are clearly identifiable as sequential extensions to the already established urban fabric of the town. These areas are generally consolidated within or adjacent to the strategic road line proposals that will provide for improved connectivity around the town and will build on the existing social and physical infrastructure and networks that exists at present. The largest cumulative area identified as Phase 1 growth area is located north west of the town centre in the townlands of Glencar Irish, Ballyboe Glencar and Windyhall. This area adjoins onto the long established area of Glencar which is a well serviced and fully functioning neighbourhood of the town punctuated by neighbourhood level facilities and open space areas together with integrated accessibility for pedestrians. In recognition of the limitations on the existing services north of the identified growth area (in the area of the northern relief route) the Core Strategy supplies land for the purposes of a future neighbourhood node. This approach provides for the sequential growth of the town, making best use of existing services, facilities and infrastructure and providing a coordinated and planned approach to new investment in additional services. The growth area identified at Creeve, south of the river will consolidate this part of the town and provides for improved connectivity of the existing social housing scheme located adjacent, as well as making the best use of significant physical infrastructure that is already in place. Similarly, the Ballymacool growth area is sequentially located adjoining significant established development in the west of the town and significant programmes have been rolled out to service this part of the town, therein making best use of existing infrastructure, including the Ballymacool Town Park.

In addition, lands at Gortlee have also been identified as an area for significant development of a mixed use nature. This growth area is on the northern fringe of the town centre, integrated within the core of the town and its development over this Plan for mixed use purposes incorporating residential development will result in the efficient and sustainable use of this land.

Key Areas for Intervention in Letterkenny

A number of key areas in Letterkenny will require the implementation of interventions through a range of mechanisms. Such areas include:

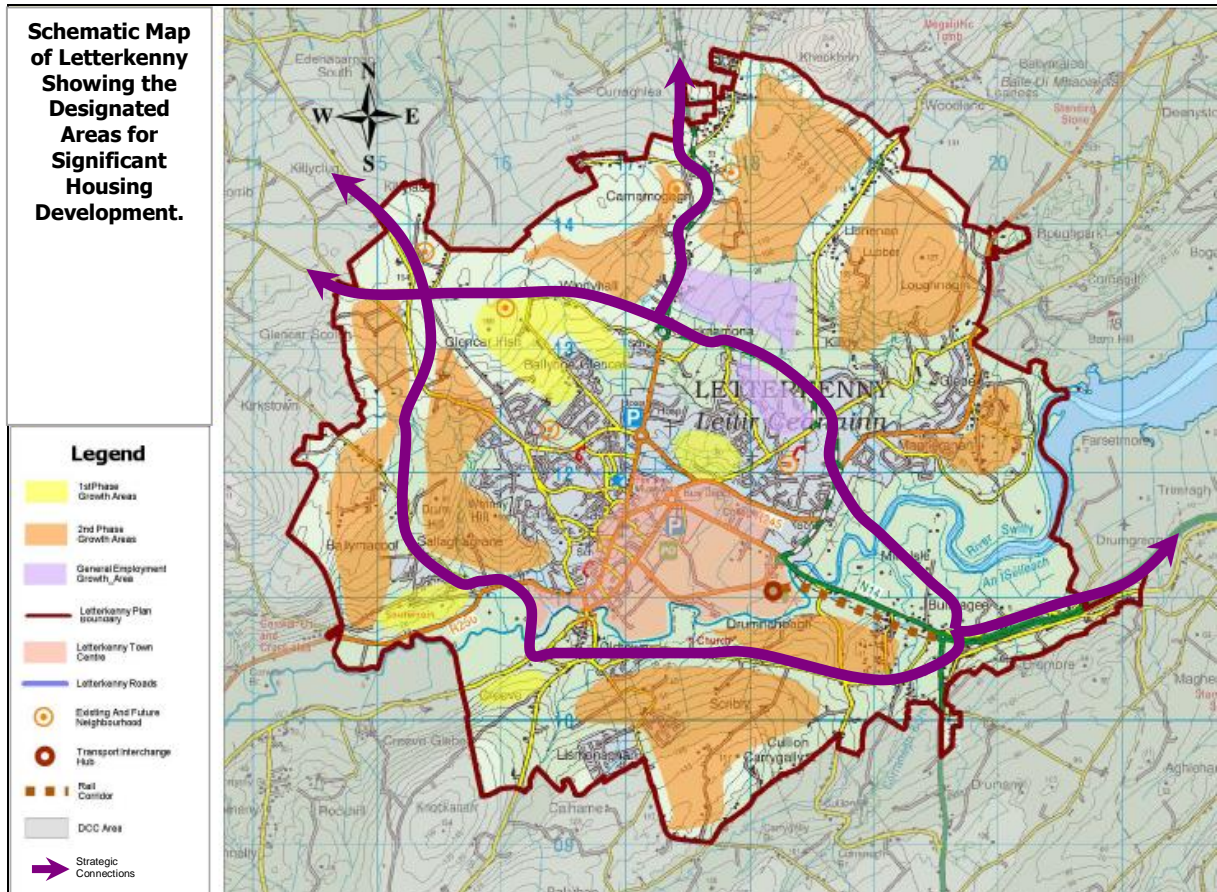
- The advancement of key strategic roads projects including the Letterkenny Relief Road (Bonagee Link).
- Unlocking of roads and waste water infrastructural constraints to lands south of the river.
- Urban and public realm enhancement throughout the town centre.

¹ Based on average density of 2.7 people per household.

² 20 units/ hectares plus addition 50%.

- Integration of land use and transportation planning and policy.
- Regeneration of key brownfield sites.
- Delivery of key housing lands.

Figure 12.1: The Areas in Letterkenny Designated Areas for Significant Development



General Location and Pattern of Development- Zoning Objectives

The zoning objectives should be read in conjunction with the wider policies contained in this Plan and with the maps relating to Letterkenny, in particular Map 12.1B: ‘Letterkenny Land Use Zoning’ that accompanies this part of the Plan.

Applications may be granted where the Planning Authority considers that the proposed use or development would comply with the zoning objective of the area and would otherwise comply with the policies of the Plan and would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Table 12.2: Zoning Objectives in relation to Letterkenny

Zone	Objective
Established Development	To conserve and enhance the quality and character of the area, to protect residential amenity and allow for development appropriate to the sustainable growth of the settlement subject to all relevant material planning considerations, all the policies of this Plan, relevant National/ regional policy/guidance including environmental designations and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
Strategic Community Opportunity	To achieve an appropriate mix of health and/ or educational and/ or social and/ or community development which may include hospital expansion, educational, recreational, community health, childcare facilities, affordable housing, community support housing, cemetery/burial ground in accordance with LK-SCC-P-1.
Community Facilities	To reserve land for community and institutional, cultural, recreational, healthcare and amenity purposes.
Town Centre	To sustain and strengthen the core of Letterkenny as a centre of commercial, retail, cultural and community life.
Primarily Residential- Phase 1	To reserve land primarily for residential development.
Strategic Residential Reserve	To reserve land for residential development as a long term strategic landbank.
General Employment	To reserve land for commercial, industrial and non- retail purposes.
Commercial	To reserve land predominantly for commercial use.
Opportunity Sites	To identify lands with specific development opportunities that are appropriate in terms of mix of use and compatibility with the wider area whilst recognising features of importance that are specific to the site.
Education	To reserve land for educational purposes which may include ancillary recreational and childcare facilities.
Open Space	To conserve and enhance land for formal and informal open space and amenity purposes, and to make provision for new recreation, leisure and community facilities.
Local Environment	To provide for limited development only ensuring no significant negative impact on the landscape setting or the biodiversity quality of the area.
Flood risk area	To identify an area that will be carefully managed so as to protect the flood plain and avoid exacerbation of flood risk.
Services	To reserve land for provision of infrastructure and services
Neighbourhood Centre Area	To identify lands that may provide for appropriate facilities and services that would serve the local and convenience level needs of a surrounding residential area. Any retail development shall be in accordance with the retail policies set out in Chapter 4 of Part B of the Plan.

Zone	Objective
TEN-T PRIPD/Established³ Development	To conserve and enhance the quality and character of the area, to protect residential amenity and allow for development appropriate to the sustainable growth of the settlement and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal subject to all relevant material planning considerations, all the policies of this Plan, relevant National/ regional policy/guidance including environmental designations and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. ⁴
TEN-T PRIPD/Strategic⁵ Residential Reserve	To reserve land for residential development as a long term strategic landbank and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ⁶
TEN-T PRIPD/General Employment⁷	To reserve land for commercial, industrial and non- retail purposes and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ⁸
TEN-T PRIPD/Open Space⁹	To conserve and enhance land for formal and informal open space and amenity purposes, to make provision for new recreation, leisure and community facilities and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ¹⁰

³ As inserted by the Variation to the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2014 in respect of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (Variation No. 1).

⁴ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

⁵ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

⁶ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

⁷ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

⁸ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

⁹ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

¹⁰ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

12.2 Economic Development

Background

As the largest town in the County, Letterkenny is the focus for concentration of services and facilities such as retail, commercial, entertainment, social and community, financial and public service. The town centre is identified on Map 12.2 entitled 'Town Centre Strategy' contained in this part of the Plan. It comprises some 163 hectares of land and is made up of a number of particular areas: the traditional town centre (north and south along Main Street and the Upper Port Road), town centre residential areas at Fortwell and Rosemount Lane, Paddy Harte Loop Road retail park extension, and an area of undeveloped lands in the vicinity of Isle Burn. The diversity of land uses exemplified within these areas demonstrates a vibrant and fully functioning town centre. This is most evidenced in the traditional town centre area along Main Street where there is a good mix of retail, services, entertainment and cultural activities occurring. The Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of Part A of this Plan identifies Letterkenny as the Layer 1 settlement in the urban settlement hierarchy for the County and adopts a strategy of promotion of Letterkenny as the key service centre for the county, recognising the fact that Letterkenny fulfils an important regional retailing and economic function.

Local Context

Letterkenny is a key economic engine of the northwest region. It is an ideal location for locating a business and it possesses many important strengths including its natural environment, location, entrepreneurial culture and a well-educated and adaptable workforce.

This Plan strives to achieve and maintain the key determinants of sustained economic performance: the industrial base, strategic infrastructure requirements, telecommunications and the creation of a strong knowledge sector. The development of enterprise must embrace all elements: the town must be attractive to the knowledge and wealth creators in terms of living, learning, working and leisure. In part this will be achieved by continued co-operation with Derry City and Strabane District Councils and through investment in the improvement of the transport infrastructure, inclusive of the A5 and A6 (NI) so as to achieve a greater accessibility to the major centres of Dublin and Belfast.

The Council is focused on the creation of high value industry throughout the county and it is a goal of the Council to create a vibrant knowledge and high value based industry sector within the town of Letterkenny, as the principal service and economic centre in the county.

12.2.1 General Economic Development

Employment Strategy

The Council will continue to promote and strengthen the economic development of Letterkenny through the application of policies and land use zoning in order to maximise opportunities presented by the town's status as the county town of Donegal.

The Council has a significant amount of land zoned to accommodate the continued economic development and growth of the town for the period of the Plan. A range of sites are identified to meet the different practical needs of potential investors and thereby encourage a diversity of employment opportunities. It is considered that this approach will provide assistance to the diversification of the local economy and thereby ensure that it is more resistant to any potentially adverse changes in the structure of employment activity.

A key objective of the Plan is the continued development of a strong and sustainable employment base. The creation and maintenance of a large employment base in Letterkenny will be paramount to supporting the continued growth of the town so that the increasing population is matched with job creation and availability in order to attain a 'Critical Mass' so that the town becomes self sustainable. In attempting to facilitate the creation of indigenous industry and to attract investment into Letterkenny, the Council will support proposals which will create sustained employment.

12.2.1.1 Economic Development Objective Specific to Letterkenny

LK-ED-O-1: To build and strengthen Letterkenny as a centre for economic growth across the sectors, in particular through the promotion of the existing business park and through consolidation of the town centre, including the prioritising of improvements to public realm.

12.2.1.2 Economic Development Policies Specific to Letterkenny

LK-ED-P-1: Employment Location and Land Supply

Proposed developments that will create sustained employment and economic benefit will be appropriate in the following land use zonings:

- (a) Lands zoned for general employment;
- (b) Lands zoned for commercial uses;
- (c) Land with established employment generating uses; and
- (d) The Town Centre.

Consideration will also be given to proposals in areas other than those mentioned where it can be demonstrated that there are no other sites available within land zoned for employment generating development purposes that can accommodate the proposed development. Any development proposal of this nature should be in accordance with the other policies of this Plan and should not affect the amenity of the area in which it is proposed.

Employment generating development proposals will normally be expected to locate within suitably zoned areas for general employment and the town centre. This is to try and encourage a more sustainable use of land and in order to try and reduce the need for the car as the only means of transport. The employment land supply seeks to consolidate existing employment development and provide the majority of land within close proximity to existing development and to major transport nodal points. The policy seeks to protect residential amenity and the natural environment from inappropriate employment generating development proposals.

Appropriate locations for employment generating developments are identified on Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan and include existing employment areas and business parks, the Town Centre and other identified zoned areas. Each development proposal will be considered against these criteria as well as their acceptability with regard to other policies established in the Plan.

LK-ED-P-2: Developments in 'General Employment' zones

In land zoned for General Employment or extensions to existing employment generating development, proposals will be permitted provided that:

- (a) They are appropriate to the respective area in terms of size and the type of employment generating development to be provided; and
- (b) They would not cause adverse transport effects to the safety and free flow of traffic on the surrounding road network;
- (c) They would have no significant adverse environmental effects on the character of the surrounding area or on the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupiers; and
- (d) They comply with the Major Accidents Directive.

Proposals will also be considered for developments within the general employment zones, which contribute to the creation of a sustainable working environment. The provision of services ancillary to industry and business including day to day facilities such as childcare facilities and cafes will be acceptable in conjunction with policy LK-ED-P-3.

In accordance with the overall development strategy for the Letterkenny area, the Council considers that generally the most appropriate locations for employment generating development will be within the defined General Employment Zone.

Employment development (particularly large-scale proposals) should therefore be concentrated in locations which are: easily accessible, or can be made easily accessible for employees, freight movement, and where there are a range of existing support services and facilities.

The Council considers that locations outside those identified as the general employment zone on Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan will not generally be suited to large-scale employment generating developments. This is because: such development proposals will have a significant impact on the existing character and balance of these locations; would be more difficult to adequately service with the necessary infrastructure; and that the levels of traffic generation will be unacceptable.

Where employment generating development proposals at locations outside these zones are acceptable in principle, this will usually be because they are of a small scale in terms of the number of likely employees and the proposed site and building size, accord with the scale and character of other development within the surrounding area, and because the developers have sufficiently demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative sites available within the existing employment reserves.

LK-ED-P-3: Other Uses on General Employment Land

Designated general employment zones are primarily reserved for enterprise, general industrial and storage and distribution activities. Activities that do not fall within these categories will be considered in relation to their suitability to the location concerned, including the supply of available land. In the context of creating sustainable working environments, the Council will also consider the use of General Employment lands to cater for the day-to-day need of working life, including cafés and childcare facilities and will support the creation of a vibrant business district. Proposals for development other than for business, commercial, general industrial, storage and distribution uses within identified general employment zones will only be considered where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- (a) They do not give rise to adverse environmental impacts; and
- (b) They do not compromise the provision of a sufficient supply of general employment land for employment generating activities within the defined town boundary; and
- (c) Where the proposal is for retail uses they are ancillary to a permitted zoned use.
- (d) Proposals for residential developments on land zoned general employment will not normally be permitted.

Some activities may be considered as inappropriate for a particular general employment zone location for environmental and amenity reasons, such as noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust, etc. Shops and other retail activities aimed primarily at the general public will be excluded from general employment zone locations. However, retailing which is for trade purposes only or can be demonstrated as being ancillary to an industrial, or commercial business (i.e. not its primary purpose or business but open to the public), may be acceptable. Ancillary is

taken as comprising 10% of floorspace or 10% of turnover devoted to non-trade sales.

The Council considers it appropriate to ensure that industrial estates and land zoned for general employment purposes are able to fully serve their intended purpose without being restricted by the presence of other land uses, which are not compatible with or suitable for such locations. Industrial areas assist in the segregation of 'bad neighbour' uses from other areas of the town, in particular residential. While most business uses are readily accommodated, certain noxious industries are best excluded.

There is a need to protect environmentally sensitive areas, which are important for their conservation value for the benefit of current and future generations. Therefore, proposals for employment generating development will not normally be permitted on land within or close to designated conservation areas.

LK-ED-P-4: Developments in 'Commercial' zones

Lands zoned 'Commercial' in Letterkenny have been designated as not being able to support industrial uses. These zones are more suited to commercial uses that generate employment but that are less intensive than industrial development proposals and are located along key arterial transport corridors, which are highly accessible. The Council will support proposals that generate sustainable employment within these lands. The Council does not view these lands as being capable of supporting heavy industries. All other employment creating development proposals within this zoning will be considered on the basis that:

- (a) They would not cause adverse transport effects to the safety and free flow of traffic on the surrounding road network;
- (b) They would have no significant adverse environmental effects on the character of the surrounding area or on the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupiers;
- (c) They will provide for an appropriate design and form that responds suitably to the location of the lands;
- (d) They comply with the Major Accidents Directive; and
- (e) Provide for a proposed design that is of innovative architectural form in the context of the location of these lands at the entrance Gateways to the town.

Proposals will also be considered for developments within the commercial zones, which contribute to the creation of a sustainable working environment. The provision of services ancillary to retail and business including day to day facilities including childcare facilities and cafes will be acceptable in conjunction with policy LK-ED-P-3.

Commercial zoning is applied to pockets of land outside of the town centre zone, which is considered unable to support the more intensive development associated with the General Employment zone. The areas identified with this type of land use zoning are:

- Mountain Top, on the Kilmacrennan Road, which currently supports predominantly bulk retailing, car sales and the Highland radio station.
- The low rise predominantly garages and car-sales premises and existing Hotel along the N14/Port Road between the Dry Arch roundabout and the Port Bridge; and land to the immediate south of the existing Hotel at Drumnaoagh.

LK-ED-P-5: Tourism Related Development

The Council will promote and support the establishment of a new landmark visitor facility on lands by the banks of the River Swilly, within the identified Town Centre area. The proposal will be linked to the leisure and recreational development of the riverside area.

Tourism is a major growth industry within Letterkenny, providing jobs and inward investment, yet the town contains no specific visitor attraction. One of the principal attractions of Letterkenny is proximity to nearby attractions including Glenveagh National Park, Newmills and the Inishowen and Fanad peninsulas. The attraction of visitors provides particularly valuable benefits to the local economy by way of increased expenditure, job creation and strengthening of business. In addition, a focus on creating a high quality built environment within the town centre will contribute to the attractiveness of Letterkenny town as a tourist destination in its own right.

Throughout the town area, the Council seeks to promote the development of the tourism sector, by setting out a range of policies which seek to positively contribute to tourism related development and visitor impacts, by ensuring that accommodation and any tourist attractions are of a scale and character that will be compatible with the existing environment.

LK-ED-P-6: E-Commerce

It is the policy of the Council to support E-Commerce as a sustainable source of employment. The Council will aim to promote and improve the existing broadband infrastructure, which is key in the creation and sustainability of E-Commerce. The Council recognises that E-Commerce may not necessarily require a shop frontage and as such would be sustainable in business parks and lands zoned for general employment. As such proposals for developments predominantly associated with e-commerce will be permitted provided that:

- (a) The proposal is of an appropriate scale for its location; and
- (b) The proposal will not give rise to adverse environmental and transport effects or be prejudicial to residential amenity.

In line with the national policy of promoting high value added employment, the Council will support the continued promotion of E-Commerce investment. E-Commerce industries and services usually require a large number of well educated staff trained in information technology. Letterkenny Institute of Technology provides many IT and business based courses, graduates of these courses would be suited to the e-commerce sector. The Council promotion of E-Commerce is assisted by 'Project Kelvin', a cross border initiative providing a high-speed fibre optic link between North America, Derry, Letterkenny and Monaghan.

LK-ED-P-7: Opportunity Sites

It is the policy of the Council to assess proposals for the development of lands identified as 'Opportunity Sites' having regard to all relevant material planning considerations, relevant policies of this Plan including the Planning Frameworks relating to each Opportunity Site and other national/ regional guidance and relevant environmental designations.

The Opportunity Sites identified on Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan offer a unique development opportunity by reason of their strategic location, scale, nature or current use. The planning frameworks set out for each 'Opportunity Site' shall form a guide to the type of development that may be appropriate at each location and, where residential

development opportunities are identified (Sites 1, 6, 7, 9 and 10), the planning framework also applies a phased approach in accordance with the Core Strategy. In this regard, the list below sets out the 'Opportunity Sites' where residential development opportunities are identified and also, for clarity, states whether the particular site forms part of Phase 1 or Phase 2 as regards the residential element.

- Opportunity Site 1: Phase 1
- Opportunity Site 6: Phase 2
- Opportunity Site 7: Phase 2
- Opportunity Site 9: Phase 2
- Opportunity Site 10: Phase 1

Any specific proposal that is not referred to in the planning frameworks shall be considered on their own merits subject to relevant policies of this Plan, all relevant material planning considerations, including national/ regional guidance and relevant environmental designations.

The planning frameworks for the Opportunity Sites excluding town centre sites are set out below:

LK-OPP-P-1: Extension to Town Park at Gortlee

This site, bounded by the Town Park, DeValera, Ramelton and Gortlee Roads, and Whitethorn housing developments, comprises one of the few remaining significant woodlands within the town. The woodlands cover some 16ha of land stretching up to the Town Park and within the woodlands there are a number of large open spaces. The site and the setting of Gortlee House represent a major environmental asset to the town and therefore proposals will be required to demonstrate compatibility with the environmental setting of the site. The Council considers that this site has the potential to be sensitively developed for an appropriate mix of uses and any use proposed may include residential, offices, tourism, institutional uses or local neighbourhood level retail activity in accordance with Policy RS-P-7 (Section 4.2 of Part B of this Plan - 'Neighbourhood Shops'). The concept for developing the site shall demonstrate the following elements:

- (a) That the site is developed as a town park campus, retaining the substantive woodland cover of the site and providing for discrete pockets within which buildings can be introduced into an extended parkland setting.
- (b) That pre- planning consultation be carried out with the Planning Authority.
- (c) That the proposal provides for an extension of the existing town park linking through to Gortlee Road and providing for the conservation of the existing mature woodland cover with full public access. The substantive areas of new parkland space must be contiguous with and adjacent to the existing town park.
- (d) The setting of Gortlee House is safeguarded when considered both within the confines of the site and from views into the site. In particular, no development will be permitted that curtails views to the house from the De Valera Road and from the junction of Gortlee and Ramelton Roads.
- (e) The yield of residential units appropriate at this location shall not exceed 290 units.
- (f) A high standard of architectural quality is achieved throughout having regard to the nature of the site as an important landmark site. In addition, density within the site will be carefully considered having regard in particular to the heritage value of Gortlee House and the wooded nature of the site.
- (g) Vehicular access to the development is achieved via a new access improvement on Gortlee Road, subject to engineering and road safety assessment. Proposals to access the site from De Valera Road will only be considered where a clear justification is demonstrated together with evidence of minimal impacts on the

town park, and subject to adequate and appropriate engineering and road safety both within the site and outside the site.

- (h) Pedestrian and cycle access will be required to link through the development connecting the Town Park, De Valera Road, Gortlee Road and the Whitethorn housing area.
- (i) The public parkland areas are served by footway and cycleway access, street lighting and park furniture as required by the Council and provided by the developer.

The Council will consider the adoption and maintenance of all public spaces and woodlands on the basis that title is transferred to the local authority at completion of the development.

LK-OPP-P-2: Gortlee

This site is located along Gortlee Road where there is substantial residential development, the Church of the Irish Martyrs and a range of industrial and employment generating activities to the north of the site. This site presents an opportunity to integrate the conflicting uses of residential and General Employment by creating a buffer between the housing to the west and the General Employment to the East together with the development of the site as a neighbourhood centre supporting a mix of small local retail units and community services so as to enhance the existing established neighbourhood amenities. Residential development shall not be permitted on this site.

LK-OPP-P-3: Donegal Creameries Site

The Donegal Creameries site is located on the edge of an established residential area and adjacent to 'General Employment' land use and zoning. The location is a transitional area between differing land uses and therefore any development proposal must give consideration to the creation of a buffer between the 'Residential' and 'General Employment' lands and have due regard to the protection of residential amenities. Notwithstanding, it is recognised that existing uses on the site are long established in the form of Donegal Creameries retail store and garden centre facility, associated offices, car parking facilities and the disused factory building along the Ballyrairie Road. The redevelopment of this brownfield site is supported by the Council for commercial, tourism/leisure and small-scale retail uses with a maximum of 500m² for any neighbourhood shop. Pedestrian access to adjoining undeveloped lands will also be required. Residential development shall not be permitted on this site.

LK-OPP-P-4: Thorn Pier and Landing Stage

The site, which has a frontage onto the Swilly, is within a number of environmental designations such as SAC, SPA and it is also within the flood zone and adjacent to zoned green space. Subject to the environmental and amenity considerations related to the above and to adequate access arrangements, infrastructure and community considerations, the site could be the subject of a carefully designed Waterfront Regeneration Project introducing a number of appropriate commercial tourism/leisure uses. The Council would welcome the submission of a detailed design brief in regard to the site. Residential development shall not be permitted on this site.

LK-OPP-P-5: Former Town Port

The site occupies a prime gateway position into the town and has potential to represent a landmark development. At present, this gateway entrance is represented by the views of the art structure at Port roundabout, the tourist office building and also the Mount Errigal Hotel. Given the location of the site adjacent to the Swilly, proposals providing for commercial tourism/leisure facilities are considered

appropriate, however, residential development shall not be permitted at this location. In this regard, development proposals shall demonstrate:

- (a) That the proposal is of high architectural design including high quality internal and external specification, and that is of an architectural form that will represent a landmark quality structure at this key Gateway to the town.
- (b) That the development addresses the river and integrates the river corridor into the design concept providing for public realm/amenity space.
- (c) That the development will not have a negative impact on the relevant environmental designations.
- (d) That any proposal must make provision for flood alleviation and flood risk management in line with the flood risk management policies of this Plan.

LK-OPP-P-6: South of River Swilly

The site is located south of the River Swilly where proposals for re- development shall provide for a mix of uses in the range of residential, tourism, offices, community uses and local neighbourhood level retail activity in accordance with Policy RS-P-7 (Section 4.2 of Part B of this Plan - 'Neighbourhood Shops'). The development of the site in relation to the residential element shall form part of the Phase 2 (Strategic Residential Reserve) supply of Housing Land Requirement. Proposals for redevelopment of these lands shall be required to consist of a detailed design concept that considers the integration of the proposed development with land zoned 'Strategic Residential Reserve' (south) and town centre (north). In addition, the design concept shall consist of:

- (a) Adequate provision of open space, public realm, pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- (b) High quality architectural design
- (c) Details of consideration of relevant environmental designations, flood risk and associated mitigation measures having regard to the flood risk management policies contained in the Plan.
- (d) Details of consideration of further linkages and compatibility with residential lands south and the town centre north.

LK-OPP-P-7: South of Swilly

The lands in question are located to the south of the River Swilly and the 'Town Centre'. The lands adjoin the River Swilly and consist of an existing walled graveyard whilst a proposed new bridge and proposed road alignment traverse the site. Having regard to the environmental and infrastructural issues arising, a masterplan approach to the development of these lands will be required. The over- riding objective of the masterplan is to ensure a balanced approach to the development of the lands in terms of the delivery of appropriate scale and built form set against the delivery of integrated and substantive open space proposals in the form of linkages, corridors and parkland space. The development of the site, in relation to the residential element, shall form part of Phase 2 (Strategic Residential Reserve) supply of Housing Land Requirement. The masterplan will be required to include:

- (a) A mix of uses that may include residential, offices, local neighbourhood level retail activity in accordance with Policy RS-P-7 (Section 4.2 of Part B of this Plan - 'Neighbourhood Shops'), bulky goods retail, car retail and hotel uses or institutional uses.
- (b) The adequate provision of public open space both along the river corridor and within the overall site that provides for a high quality environment where access and permeability are paramount.
- (c) Open space provision within the masterplan area shall accommodate the graveyard and pedestrian river crossing.

- (d) The provision of adequate buffer areas around the existing walled graveyard in such a manner so as to protect the integrity, context and setting of the graveyard whilst incorporating the buffer area within an overall open space concept for the site.
- (e) Consideration of flood risk and associated mitigation measures having regard to the flood risk management policies of this Plan set out in Section 5.4 of Part B of this Plan.
- (f) Consideration for further linkages and compatibility with residential lands to the south.
- (g) Integration of the road and bridge structures in a manner that makes provision for a design and engineering concept that shall cause the structures to contribute positively to the strategic location of the site, to the open space/public realm concepts and to the setting of the walled graveyard.

LK-OPP-P-8: Oldtown

Oldtown is well located in relation to the town centre, but is located within and adjacent to the Swilly Flood Buffer zone. This site represents an opportunity to provide a neighbourhood centre supporting some small local convenience retail, childcare and play facilities and other community services that would serve the Oldtown residential area. Residential development shall not be permitted at this site.

LK-OPP-P-9: Lands at Crieve to the south of the River Swilly

This area of land at Crieve represents an opportunity to consolidate both the established Oldtown residential area to the immediate southeast and the town centre area to the north. The site is bounded by the river Swilly to the north giving rise to significant flooding implications as the site is located within the flood risk area and proposals for development must demonstrate adequate flood protection measures and that there will be no contribution to or increase in the risk of flooding elsewhere. In addition, the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems must be considered as part of any proposal. Uses will only be permitted where they are compatible with the environmental setting of the site e.g. specialist residential, apartments, offices or tourism or local neighbourhood level retail activity in accordance with Policy RS-P-7 (Section 4.2 of Part B of this Plan - 'Neighbourhood Shops'). Any proposal must have due regard to the route of relief roads. The development of the site in relation to the residential element shall form part of Phase 2 (Strategic Residential Reserve) supply of Housing Land Requirement.

LK-OPP-P-10: Former Mart, Sentry Hill

The site of the former mart is located in an area where education, religious and recreational facilities are clustered as well as a substantial level of high-density residential development. Having regard to the location of the site within walking distance of a range of community facilities and the town centre whilst having regard also to the significant associated car parking/traffic congestion, the former mart site would serve needs for social/affordable housing (particularly for the elderly in conjunction with the provision of an area for bus/coach parking for school and tourist use. The delivery of residential units as a result of the development of this site is identified as forming part of the Housing Land Requirement to be delivered over the Plan period and the total number of units that may be permitted shall not exceed 5 units. In addition, any proposal for these lands will be required to reflect a high quality architectural design so as not to result in a negative effect to the character of the Cathedral 'Architectural Conservation Area'.

[LK-OPP sites 11-15 see Town Centre Policies LK-TC-P-20 to LK-TC-P-24)

LK-OPP-P-16: Kiltroy

The former UNIFI site is a brownfield site where regeneration is sought through appropriate sustainable uses that have regard to the Plans other objectives and policies for the Town. The approved infrastructural improvements to both the national and local road networks along with the permitted redevelopment of 'Plant 2' and a medical facility have initiated this process. Having regard to the potential of the site, the site may include enterprise activity associated with the adjacent 'General Employment' lands in conjunction with specific provision for car showrooms, medical related facilities/services, leisure, sports (except sports retail) and related education facilities, wholesale warehousing and bulky goods retail warehousing. Proposals for retail uses that undermine the retail function of the defined town centre will not be permitted. Residential development shall not be permitted on this site.

Areas within the Town Centre

The overall town centre area in its entirety covers a considerable area of land at 163 hectares and can be succinctly categorised into the following sectors:

- **Traditional Town Centre:** This covers an extensive area North and South of the Main Street and the Upper Port Road. It continues to act as the commercial core of the town and displays a vitality and diversity of functions not apparent in other areas of the town. The strong links between the arts, entertainment, traditional town services, (e.g. banking, legal) and independent retailing remain core strengths of this area. The quality of the built environment of the commercial core also contributes significantly to the shopping and visitor experience of the town. It is imperative that the vitality and vibrancy of the Commercial Core is maintained and expanded.
- **Town Centre Residential Areas:** Residential development is dispersed throughout the town centre area in residential pockets, one-off houses apartments and above the shop, development. In particular there are two succinct residential areas within the town centre commercial core, namely Rosemount Lane and Fortwell. These residential pockets are integral to the character and energy of the town centre area. Collectively such residential development contributes significantly to the vitality and vibrancy of the town and emphasises the need to promote residential development within the town centre.
- **Paddy Harte Loop Road Retail Park Extension:** The majority of new retail developments within the town centre over the past decade have been within purpose built 'retail units' in areas immediately adjacent to the Paddy Harte Loop Road. For the most part these consist of large format retail units, often containing 'branded' higher order national and multinational retailers within Retail Park setting with extensive parking frontage. As a consequence of the scale, density and nature of development the area does not have the vitality, vibrancy and diversity of uses evident in the town centre.
- **Undeveloped Lands in the vicinity of the Isle Burn:** Despite the rapid expansion of the town in recent years there remains a significant portion of the area undeveloped.
- **Other Areas:** There are a number of areas within the overall town centre area which do not readily fall into any of the above categories namely the Letterkenny Shopping Centre and pockets of development either side of the Port Road between the Port Bridge and the Station Roundabout.

Development Trends and Issues

Letterkenny town centre has expanded significantly in the relatively recent past. In particular retail floorspace has increased substantially, and an influx of national and multi-national retailers have significantly added to the town's retail offering. As stated the traditional town centre continues to display a vitality and vibrancy within a strong multifunctional urban structure.

Nevertheless it is clear that there are a number of development trends which left unmanaged and unchecked may significantly hinder the achievement of the creation of a cohesive, multifunctional and high quality town centre.

In particular it is noted the area south east of the Pearse Road has become characterised by dispersed low density, mono-use and generally ad-hoc development forms with large areas of surface car parking, a relatively poor architectural character and an almost exclusive dependency on the private car as a means of transportation. In addition the widespread availability of large format retail units with car parking frontage within this area has led to the majority of new higher order retailers locating in this area.

In turn this has created a somewhat dysfunctional segmentation of uses. Increasingly the traditional town centre is dominated by; lower order retail units, banks, pubs restaurants and other general services, and struggles to attract and retain higher order retail outlets. On the other hand the area of east of Pearse Road boasts a range of leading high street, higher order retailers but has failed to attract a sufficient diversity of uses and consequently lacks the vitality of the traditional town centre. This functional segmentation has been attenuated by the physical barriers of the two lane one-way system of the Paddy Harte Loop Road/Pearse Road, which presents a significant obstacle to pedestrians moving into and within the newly developed retail area. In addition the existence of the Letterkenny Shopping Centre at the north-eastern extremity of the town centre has led to the establishment of the area as a retail destination in its own right.

These development trends, combined with the general nature of development, has had a number of key effects; namely:

- The creation of a dispersed, low-density and multi-nodal retail environment (both within the newly developed retail area and throughout the town centre), which necessitates car based travel and significantly hinders pedestrian movement.
- The location of the majority of higher order branded comparison retailers in the newly developed retail area.
- The creation of a newly developed retail area of inferior architectural character displaying a poor quality of public realm and almost exclusively dominated by retail uses.
- A lack of quality public spaces throughout and immediately accessible from the town centre.
- The fragmentation of the town centre into self-contained pockets of developments, which hinders the creation of a coherent town centre.

In view of the abovementioned issues it is necessary to have a clear and coherent strategy for the future development of the overall town centre. The strategy outlined below directly informs the specific policies in this section and in related areas of the Plan.

12.3 Town Centre Strategy

In arriving at a strategy capable of delivering the vision detailed above, the Planning Authority considered the aforementioned issues, a range of possible strategic options and role of the Urban Design Framework (Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers). The strategic options considered ranged from allowing development to proceed in a 'business as usual' fashion to managing development on a phased basis.

Following consideration of the above the Planning Authority is of the firm opinion that in order to develop a consolidated, vibrant, accessible, multifunctional and high quality urban environment with a critical mass of development it is necessary to:

- Consolidate future Retail development within a defined town centre and expand retail development thereafter in an incremental fashion in accordance with the Sequential Test.
- Promote a higher density and greater diversity of development through backland, infill and mixed-use development.
- Focus certain developments within the town centre and promote the relocation of other uses to more appropriate locations.

- Guide the overall form and layout of future development in accordance with an improved Urban Design Framework (Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers), and develop certain urban blocks to specific design criteria.
- Ensure that all future development provides for a high architectural standard and contributes to a quality public realm in accordance with detailed and robust Development Management Policies.

In turn it is considered that the following complementary and self-reinforcing actions are necessary for the achievement of this strategy:

- Achieving a critical mass of development in the town centre by increasing overall densities, developing derelict underutilised sites within the town centre, consolidating new retail development within a defined town centre (and expanding retail development thereafter in an incremental fashion) and focusing certain forms of development within the town centre.
- Developing a mixed-use town centre by requiring that all new developments provide for a diversity of town centre uses including Retail, Services, and Residential Development.
- Creating a more coherent, and interlinked town centre through the achievement of critical mass, the establishment of quality linkages and promotion of a diversity of uses throughout the town centre.
- Establishing new streets with active street frontages by ensuring that new developments provide for a mixture of active uses, at a human scale, along architecturally pleasing and visually engaging facades.
- Further refining the template offered by the Urban Design Framework by identifying specific layouts and design criteria for the development of key urban blocks within the framework.
- Ensuring a higher quality of public realm, and engendering a distinct sense of place by; promoting a finer grain of overall development, permitting buildings and ancillary spaces of only the highest architectural design and finish, and ensuring a rigorous adherence to the Urban Design Framework with regard to development form, layout and open spaces.
- Establishing a pedestrian friendly town centre, through the consolidation and densification of development, prioritising pedestrians over private vehicles in the design and layout of development, the improvement of key pedestrian crossing points and the reservation of routes for pedestrian and cycling linkages.
- Building a sustainable land use transportation model by promoting mixed development within the town centre and ensuring that all future, layouts, road alignments, and pedestrian linkages are based upon the Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan.
- Conserving and enhancing of built historic and architectural heritage of the traditional town centre by promoting the retention, or where appropriate, sensitive redevelopment of the town's built heritage.
- Facilitating the relocation of lower order activities and certain retail activities (e.g. light manufacturing, wholesale, vehicle retailing) to other areas of the Plan by restricting the future location and/or expansion of such uses within the town centre.

By carefully managing new development in accordance with this strategy, and the related actions and policies within this section and by promoting an acceptance of this vision by architects, developers, planners alike it is considered that the strategic vision for the town centre can be delivered upon.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Town Centre objectives and policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.3.1 Town Centre Objectives Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-TC-O-1:** Achievement of a critical mass of retailers within a defined town centre, and the expansion of retail activities thereafter in an incremental fashion.

- LK-TC-O-2:** Provision for a diversity of different retailing types (comparison and convenience) and sizes throughout the town centre.
- LK-TC-O-3:** Creation of an attractive retail environment in terms of overall design and the quality of the public realm.
- LK-TC-O-4:** Establishment of a strong and competitive retailing environment including a strong independent retailing sector.
- LK-TC-O-5:** Development of an integrated retail environment accessible by a range of transportation modes.

12.3.2 Town Centre Policies Specific to Letterkenny

LK-TC-P-1: Adherence of Development Proposals to the Town Centre Strategy

All Development proposals shall demonstrate overall compliance with the town centre strategy detailed above and shall be assessed in the light of all relevant material planning considerations, relevant policies of this Plan, relevant regional and national guidance and relevant environmental designations. Proposals, which the Planning Authority consider would conflict with, or hinder the achievement of this strategy, will not be permitted.

LK-TC-P-2: Adherence of Development Proposals to the Urban Design Framework

Overall Requirement:

All Development Proposals, within the Town Centre shall adhere to the Urban Design Framework (Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers) in terms of; development forms/layouts, the provision of street frontages/active frontages, building setbacks, the protection of existing and the provision of new linkages, the development of open spaces (including positively addressing and incorporating adjacent areas of open space within development proposals).

Requirements within the Town Centre West of the Isle Burn/Isle Lane:

In the area West of the Isle Burn/Isle Lane the Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan identifies specific development forms/layouts, and linkages, including exact development blocks, block arrangements, active frontages and internal roadways/linkages. In addition to the overall requirements detailed above development proposals in this area shall adhere to the specific requirements of the Urban Design Framework in this regard.

Notwithstanding this the Planning Authority may consider large scale development proposals in this area, which provide for alternative layouts in terms of block arrangements, internal linkages etc provided that the development proposal:

- Provides for a comparable grain of development in terms of the size of individual blocks.
- Creates a strong urban form with buildings, streets and places of a human scale.
- Provides for the creation of the key urban spaces identified in the framework.
- Achieves a similar density of development.
- Provides an equivalent level and quality of pedestrian permeability including providing for the major internal and external pedestrian linkages identified in the framework.
- Otherwise meets the specific requirements of Urban Blocks 1-4 as identified in Policies LK-TC-P-21 to LK-TC-P-24.

Requirements within the Town Centre East of the Isle Burn/Isle Lane and in Urban Block 5

In the area East of the Isle Burn/Isle Lane and in Urban Block 5 the Urban Design Framework identifies more general development areas/layouts and more approximate road linkages and building setbacks (Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers). This allows for a more flexible approach in view of the Greenfield nature of the area. Notwithstanding these more general requirements, development proposals in this area shall be expected to provide for:

- The creation of distinct development blocks within an overall grid structure.
- A fine grain block and plot size (with block edges not greater than 80m in length).
- A strong urban form with buildings, streets and places of a human scale.
- Street Frontages and Streetscape along both the linkages identified in the Urban Design Framework and the edges of the blocks created within/by specific development proposals.
 - Such frontages shall provide for buildings to front directly onto the street with building setbacks only in so far as to accommodate sufficient space for footpaths, cyclepaths, kerbside parallel parking and (where appropriate) small areas of private space fronting residential developments. In exceptional cases a greater building setback will be permitted to accommodate suitably landscaped public open space or variations in setback to promote visual interest.
- An overall development density suitable for a town centre environment.
- Quality pedestrian linkages within the development and between it and the adjoining development blocks.
- Public spaces within larger development areas.
- Active frontages along key sections of the street frontage in accordance with Policy LK-TC-P-17.

In recent decades the development of Letterkenny in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner in the absence of a detailed masterplan has significantly detracted from the ability of Letterkenny to develop a strong urban structure with a quality townscape. Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan specifically aims to rectify this by providing a macro scale vision for the future development of the area known as the town centre extension area in the previous Plan.

Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework' details the form and layout of future development, sets out strategic road alignments and pedestrian linkages and identifies key urban places, and open spaces. This includes *inter alia*; the identification of an avenue along Pearse Road, 'Railway Place' a key urban space at the junction of Justice Walsh Road and Pearse Road, a Linear Park connecting the traditional town centre with the Public Services Centre and Riverside parks along the Isle Burn and the River Swilly.

In order to achieve the spatial vision contained therein it is imperative that future development proposals adhere to the Map 12.1A and to the related policies elsewhere in this section.

LK-TC-P-3: Mixed Use Development Policy in the area identified as the Traditional Town Centre

New Developments, the redevelopment or the change of use of existing buildings or parts of same, in the traditional town centre shall demonstrate that the proposed usage shall not detract from the objective of creating a vibrant and mixed use town centre. In addition such uses shall be reflective of the development's/building's

location within the town centre. Larger scale developments shall provide for a range of unit sizes capable of accommodating a diversity of types of retail, service and residential accommodation. This policy shall not apply to the development of buildings for a cultural, community or educational use.

LK-TC-P-4: Mixed Use Development Policy in areas other than the Traditional Town Centre

New Developments, the redevelopment or the change of use of existing buildings or parts of same, shall provide for a diversity of uses within the development/building in question. In addition, larger scale developments shall provide for a range of unit sizes capable of accommodating a diversity of types of retail, service and residential accommodation. This policy shall not apply to the development of buildings for a cultural, community or educational use.

Mixed-use developments are essential in the creation of vibrant and diverse town centres which support vitality and sustainable modes of transportation.

Letterkenny's traditional town centre (including the Main Street) continues to provide a variety of different uses (e.g. shops, banks, restaurants, offices and residential accommodation). Consequently it displays vitality, generally lacking elsewhere where buildings are often exclusively dedicated to a single use (e.g. retail). In order to address this situation it is considered appropriate to adopt a robust and proactive mixed-use policy whereby new developments shall be expected to provide for a range of uses. Elsewhere in the town centre developments will be expected to demonstrate that they do not detract from the objective of creating a vibrant, mixed-use town centre.

LK-TC-P-5: Design Criteria in the Town Centre

Development proposals in the town centre shall only be permitted where they:

- Provide for distinctive buildings of high architectural quality, which contribute to a distinct sense of place and a quality public realm.
- Adhere to the building lines set out in the Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework,' that accompanies this part of the Plan, or where same is not identified adhere to the established building line.
- Provide for a fine grain of development in terms of overall scale, fenestration size/proportions, signage, and detailing.
- Promote visual interest through modulation and detailing of architectural elements (e.g. variation in building elevations, variations in roof form, cornices, windows, eaves, frontages and entrances and minor variations in setback).
- Provides for a minimum 3-storey development along the Pearse Road and 2 Storeys elsewhere in the town centre.
- Avoids the use of industrial type cladding.
- Avoids the use of cladding or glazing of extensive areas of the proposed development.

LK-TC-P-6: Town Centre Streetscape

It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the quality of the 'Town Centre Streetscape' as identified on Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan.

The 'Town Centre Streetscape' which forms the spine tying the historic core of Letterkenny together runs from the roundabout at the bottom of Ramelton Road, up High Street and along Main Street, past Market Square, and down Lower Main Street. This east/west corridor, designated as the town centre streetscape provides the

clustering of activities and the historic, cultural and heritage material to help enrich the public realm. Vibrant streetscapes and civic spaces are defined by surrounding buildings but have their own distinctive character which forms a coherent inter-connected network of places that support social interaction and display a hierarchy of private, commercial and civil functions.

The beauty and opportunity in Letterkenny town centre lies in its diversity between the larger scale retailing activity in the east of the town centre and the more intimate street pattern of the historic town centre. This opportunity is to be explored and celebrated providing a diversity in experience to both the resident and visitor. The character of the town is created not just by an array of individual buildings of good architectural quality, but by total settings, the relationship of the building to the space in which they are located, and most importantly the way the ordinary buildings in the town relate to the grander ones. Respect for design is demonstrated in the way new buildings are inserted into the framework of the existing townscape, on the one hand respecting its scale and form, while on the other producing contemporary architecture of the highest quality.

The promotion of design quality is seen as an essential part of Development Management. The Council therefore intends to place an increased emphasis on urban design and the need for vision and ideas for the 'town centre streetscape', seeking to ensure that new development respects the street and site and fits with its surroundings.

LK-TC-P-7: Shop fronts along the 'Town Centre Streetscape'

It is the policy of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure the retention of traditional street-fronts as appropriate.
- (b) Only approve alterations to existing traditional shop fronts if the proposal is an improvement on what exists. Particular care will be taken over proposals for the installation of blinds, canopies, security grilles and shutters to avoid harm to the visual amenity of the shopping streets, if acceptable in principle they must be designed as an integral part of the shop front design.
- (c) Avoid pastiche shop fronts and facades.
- (d) Encourage contemporary design resolution where appropriate avoiding cautious pastiche, considering security lighting and shutters, additional security measures as necessary, signage and advertisements.

Shop fronts form the core of the Main Street providing for a vibrant and active shopping experience. Care is to be taken in the specification detailing of shop fronts, whereby high quality design will tend to promote the town as a retail centre of excellence.

LK-TC-P-8: Traditional Town Centre

It is the policy of the Council to reinforce the traditional town centre as the heart of the town, to increase its vibrancy and improve its environment (Map 12.2: 'Town Centre Strategy' contained in this part of the Plan, refers).

LK-TC-P-9: High Quality Sustainable Vibrant Town Environment

It is the policy of the Council to ensure the traditional town centre streetscape of Letterkenny is preserved and enhanced to create a high quality sustainable vibrant town environment.

LK-TC-P-10: Promotion of Attractive Town Centre

It is the policy of the Council to promote an attractive town centre atmosphere which would encourage additional trade and business to the traditional town centre encouraging increased footfall along the historic streetscape of the town.

LK-TC-P-11: Improvement Programme

It is the policy of the Council to initiate a programme encouraging ongoing improvement in street fronts in order to attract more quality businesses to Main Street.

LK-TC-P-12: Management of 'Town Centre Streetscapes'

The Council will manage the 'Town Centre Streetscape' (Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers) as follows:

- (a) All refurbishment restoration and development proposals within the 'Town Centre Streetscape' will respect the character of existing buildings, important views and spaces and historic settlement pattern in terms of scale, height, density, grouping, design and materials along the designated 'Town Centre Streetscape' and always of the highest design quality.
- (b) Existing buildings adding to the character of the town centre streetscape should not be damaged or demolished. There is a presumption in favour of the retention of buildings that are of traditional form and are of cultural or heritage value.
- (c) The Council will promote the sensitive re-use of existing buildings and encourage quality repair and maintenance carried out with appropriate materials and to a high standard of workmanship.
- (d) The Council will seek to retain all original features which are important to the character of the buildings along the Town Centre Streetscape such as entrances, chimney stacks, doors, windows and materials.
- (e) The Council will ensure that all development within the designated town centre streetscape should reflect and interpret the specific character of the streets, responding to and reinforcing the townscape, landscape, scale, materials and topography, and always of the highest quality regardless of the conceptual approach adopted.
- (f) The Council will reinforce the value and importance of the green spaces in the town and the natural topography of the area in relation to the protection, enhancement and promotion of the 'Town Centre Streetscape.'
- (g) All planning applications must be accompanied by a design statement clearly outlining the concept and design approach chosen in relation to the development of buildings and/or sites along the designated spine.

LK-TC-P-13: Landmark Buildings

Proposals for the development of new buildings or the redevelopment of existing buildings on the sites designated as Landmark sites on Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan, shall not be permitted unless they provide for a distinctive landmark building of high architectural merit in terms of design, character, materials and finishes. In any urban area there are a number of sites (e.g. at prominent corners, at the junction of important streets, or developments at the termination point of important views) of specific visual importance. Such sites deserve specific attention with regard to design, materials, finishes etc and which present a particular opportunity to create a landmark building of high architectural value. In this regard the Planning Authority have identified a number of such sites where development proposals will be expected to result in the creation of landmark building of high architectural merit.

LK-TC-P-14: Protection of Short Views and Prospects of Special Amenity Value

It is a policy of the Council to protect the identified Views and Prospects of Special Amenity Value (Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan refers). Developments, which obstruct, detract from or otherwise compromise the architectural character, setting, streetscape, or general visual harmony of the view in question, shall not be permitted.

Every urban area has a number of key views and prospects, which make a significant contribution to the overall townscape and character of the area. Such views may be of a key landmark building(s), groups of buildings, or simply the overall streetscape, which because of their architectural, aesthetic, historical character or quality makes a distinct impression on the viewer. Many of the views will be long established and in some cases iconic.

As Letterkenny grows and develops some of these sensitive views and prospects may come under development pressure, which if not properly managed may compromise their architectural and aesthetic value to the overall townscape. Consequently it is important to identify such views and formulate development management policies, which will actively protect and enhance such views.

LK-TC-P-15: Protection/Enhancement of Key Linkages

Developments, which obstruct, narrow, physically encroach upon, otherwise restrict the safe use of the established or potential linkages identified in Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework', that accompanies this part of the Plan, shall not be permitted. The promotion of sustainable modes of transportation (such as walking and cycling) and the creation of vibrant town centre are mutually reinforcing objectives. The Town Centre currently possesses a number of key pedestrian linkages (e.g. Church Lane, Rosemount Lane), which greatly improve permeability within the town centre and to the surrounding residential areas. The Planning Authority has also identified a number of future strategic pedestrian linkages, which if realised have the potential to greatly enhance the permeability and the vitality of the town centre. Consequently it is a policy of the Council to both protect and enhance existing linkages and to safeguard the routes of such future strategic pedestrian linkages.

LK-TC-P-16: Promotion of Active Frontage within the Town Centre

New development proposals, or the redevelopment of existing properties, in areas determined or considered by the Planning Authority to be 'active frontage' in the Urban Design Framework (Map 12.1A 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan refers), shall provide for the creation of an attractive, high quality urban environment that promotes commercial vitality and pedestrian amenity:

- (a) Developments are built to the building line identified on the urban design framework.
- (b) Buildings create a human scale and visually engaging façade by:
 - i. The modulation and detailing of architectural elements (e.g. minor changes in sets backs, variation in roof lines, entrances, window detailing).
 - ii. Ensuring that building forms along street frontages are broken down into narrow horizontal distances, which create a human scale and maintain visual interest.
 - iii. The avoidance of large expanses of blank walls, or frontages exclusively devoted to display.
- (c) The development, in combination with existing and permitted development in the immediate vicinity, provides for the occupation of ground floor units by a variety and mix of active uses (e.g. Convenience and Comparison Stores, Cafés, Restaurants) directly accessible from the street through the provision of a range

of different unit sizes. In larger developments smaller units shall be interspersed with larger units.

- (d) Buildings shall provide a minimum of two full storeys of useable floorspace along the full street frontage of the site.
- (e) Car parking provision/arrangements in accordance with Policy LK-TC-P-17.

LK-TC-P-17: Quality Residential Development within the Town Centre

New development proposals, including proposals for the redevelopment of existing developments shall adhere to the following requirements in relation to the arrangement/layouts of car parking, manoeuvring and loading spaces.

With the exception of on street parking provided in the manner described below, car parking manoeuvring and loading areas, where appropriate, shall be located to the rear of buildings, or through alternative appropriate internal parking arrangements (e.g. basement or multi-storey parking) which do not hinder the creation of strong street frontage. Car parking/loading spaces provided along the road/street frontage (i.e. to the front of buildings) shall:

- Be arranged parallel to the street frontage.
- Not amount to more than 50% of the overall street frontage.
- Be grouped with an equal length of free kerbside between each group.
- Where it is not physically possible or desirable to locate parking in accordance with the above provisions, the developer shall be expected to provide a financial contribution to the shortfall in car parking in line with the applicable Development Contribution Scheme.
- In primarily residential developments within the town centre a more flexible approach shall be taken to application of the above parking policy. However in such locations, developments shall be expected to employ appropriate alternative solutions (e.g. small areas of grouped parking, basement parking, courtyard parking etc.) in order to achieve a strong urban form in the design of such developments.

Adequate and strategically located car parking provision is an essential component in successful contemporary town centres. However in recent years the preference by both consumers and retailers to have/provide parking immediate to individual retail units has manifested itself in the creation of retail park type developments with large areas of surface car parking fronting same. This form of development has in turn led to the creation of a dispersed low-density urban form, which significantly hinders pedestrian access and militates against the creation of quality urban places. In addition Letterkenny has sufficient car parking spaces located within a reasonable walking distance of the majority of retail developments.

Consequently it is considered necessary and appropriate to ensure that the location and design of future town centre car parking promotes the creation of strong urban form with a quality streetscape. Accordingly the above policy seeks to ensure that new town centre parking provision over ground occurs parallel to street/road frontages or to the rear of buildings.

LK-TC-P-18: Quality Residential Development within the Town Centre

Residential Development proposals, which provide for the creation of high quality liveable and sustainable residential neighbourhoods within the area of the town centre will be considered where:

- The development (when taken in conjunction with existing and permitted development) would result in the direct physical extension and consolidation of the urban form.

- They satisfy all of the criteria below:
 - Provides direct and quality pedestrian access to the town centre.
 - Is capable of being directly served by existing or future local public transport connections.
 - Creates buildings and spaces of high architectural quality.
 - Provides for an overall density appropriate to a town centre location.
 - Locates car parking spaces within easy reach of the main entrances to dwellings.
 - Provides a mix of residential unit types, sizes and styles, (e.g. town houses, apartments, duplexes etc) capable of promoting long term occupation patterns by a range of different occupants.
 - Provides quality open space passively supervised by residential units.
 - Slows and Calms vehicular traffic through the layout of buildings and ancillary spaces and more traditional traffic calming measures (e.g. ramps).
 - Overall layout and design creates a strong sense of place and containment.
 - Otherwise complies with the Housing Policies contained within this Plan and with relevant national guidelines on the design of residential development within urban areas.

The Mixed Use Developments policy in this section, aim to diversify the range of uses within the town centre by ensuring that all new developments provide for a mixture of uses including quality residential development. However it is considered that there is an opportunity to develop self-contained liveable and sustainable residential communities within the town centre, which would significantly bolster the population and significantly add to the vibrancy of same. As such it is considered that proposals which are for the creation of residential communities should be considered within the town centre subject to specific safeguards and criteria.

LK-TC-P-19: Location of Certain Types of Retail Development

Proposals for the development of new, the extension of existing, or the change of use of buildings to: Car Retailing Showrooms/Lots, Builders Merchants or large scale outlets predominately dedicated to the wholesale trade, will not be permitted within the area defined as the town centre on Map 12.2: 'Town Centre Strategy' contained in this part of the Plan.

Certain types of developments such as Car Retailing Showrooms/Lots, Warehousing, Builders Merchants and outlets predominately dedicated to the Wholesale trade, tend to occupy relatively large plots of land and on a low-density basis and generate significant and frequent movements of larger vehicles (articulated lorries, transport vans etc). As such they hinder, and are generally incompatible with, the creation of a Vibrant, Compact, High Density, Pedestrian friendly and Mixed Use Town Centre. Moreover such uses can be more appropriately accommodated in edge of centre locations, which enjoy easy to roads networks for such traffic types and where the requisite land holdings can be more easily assemble.

LK-TC-P-20: Town Centre Urban Block 1: (Opportunity Site LK-OPP-11 Main Street/Church Lane Backland Area)

Proposals for the development/redevelopment of the site shall be the subject of a detailed masterplan, based on in-depth preplanning discussions. Such proposals shall provide for a high quality mixed use town centre development with a range of retail unit sizes capable of accommodating higher order retail developments, centered upon a direct pedestrian linkage between Main Street, and the upper part of Church Lane (or alternatively Ard O'Donnell road) fronted and passively supervised by an active streetscape. In addition any development proposals should provide for:

- A high quality element of public realm and streetscape within the development that is accessible and incorporates a mix of complementary uses.
- A high architectural quality and a fine grain appearance (in terms of design, finishes and materials) throughout.
- Development of a scale and architectural form that will not detract from the character and quality of the Cathedral Quarter or the Architectural Conservation Area.
- The protection of uninterrupted views of the Cathedral from all vantage points in the Plan area.
- The protection, in so far as possible, of the residential amenities of the adjoining established residential areas.
- Detailed assessment of and proposals for vehicular access, traffic management, parking and loading. A car-parking shortfall will be permitted for the non-residential elements of the development where it can be demonstrated that adequate alternative car parking provision exists within the town centre and can be easily accessed from the site.

Notwithstanding challenges with respect to land assembly and vehicular access it is considered that this site represents a unique opportunity to consolidate town centre development including higher order retail activities, in the immediate vicinity of the Main Street. As such the Planning Authority considers that the development of the site is key to maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the traditional town centre.

LK-TC-P-21: Town Centre Urban Block 2

This urban block had previously been identified as an Opportunity Site in the Letterkenny and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 (as varied), with a particular emphasis on the establishment of uses such as civic / public administration, the arts or tourism. The site is currently being developed for the purposes of building a new courthouse, thus enhancing the civic/administrative function of the town.

LK-TC-P-22: Town Centre Urban Block 3: (Opportunity Site LK-OPP-13)

Proposals for the development/redevelopment of the site shall be the subject of a detailed masterplan, based on in-depth preplanning discussions, and designed to provide a pedestrianised mixed use, civic quarter with a fine grain architectural appearance and high quality public realm. In particular any development proposals should provide for:

- A high quality pedestrian street with appropriate hard and soft landscaping treatments, lighting and street furniture along the axis shown in the Urban Design Framework.
- High quality pedestrian linkages, with appropriate landscaping, lighting and street furniture between the site and retail developments to the southeast and southwest along the indicative lines shown on Map 12.1A 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan.
- High Quality Active Street Frontages in accordance with LK-TC-P-15 along the frontages designated as 'Active Frontages' in the urban design framework.
- A civic square or similar publically accessible open space with appropriate hard and soft landscaping elements and incorporating an artistic landmark feature.
- Public Toilets located adjacent to the civic square identified above.
- Craft/Artisan uses are acceptable within this area.

In recent years significant development has occurred within and along the edges of the one-way system around the Paddy Harte Loop Road/Pearse Road. Much of this development has been characterised by low density, mono-use developments of inferior architectural character. The area has little streetscape and no identifiable

focal point, which might attract a critical mass of development and so generate a high-density area of town centre character.

Nevertheless a significant proportion of land within the block bounded by the one-way system remains undeveloped or is need of regeneration. In addition it is apparent that pedestrian linkages through the town centre remain weak and underutilised. The area is also strategically located at the southern end of Oliver Plunkett Street and equidistant from many developments within the town centre extension.

The abovementioned situation creates a unique opportunity to create a new high quality mixed-use civic quarter with a critical mass of development, which would act as a focal point for, and would enjoy easy access to/from the majority of developments within the wider town centre. The development would create a strategic north/south-linking axis, successfully linking the newly developed town centre area with the traditional town centre.

LK-TC-P-23: Town Centre Urban Block 4: (Opportunity Site LK-OPP-14)

Proposals for the development/redevelopment of the site shall be the subject of a detailed masterplan based on in-depth preplanning discussions, and designed to provide a mixed use, urban environment with a fine grain architectural appearance and high quality public realm. In particular any development proposals should provide for:

- A mixed-use urban environment with provision for a mix of retail units capable of providing both larger former higher order retail development and smaller retail units.
- Building Setbacks in line with the setbacks identified on the Urban Design Framework for 'Railway Place' and the Linear Park.
- A distinctive landmark building on the corner site at the north western and north eastern extremities of the site in line with Policy LK-TC-P-12.
- Continuous Active Frontages along the lines identified in the Urban Design Framework and in accordance with Policy LK-TC-P-15.
- The subdivision of the block between the Linear Park and the Paddy Harte Loop Road to provide key pedestrian linkages in accordance with the Urban Design Framework.
- Specific hard and soft landscaping proposals on both the Linear Park and Inner public space identified on Map 12.1A 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan.
- Specific proposals for the 'Railway Place' including:
 - Hard and soft landscaping features such as street furniture, lighting, green areas, bicycle-parking provision etc.
 - The identification of vehicular and pedestrian spaces (including sufficient definition between same), and pedestrian crossing points.

LK-TC-P-24: Town Centre Urban Block 5: (Opportunity Site LK-OPP-15)

Proposals for the development/redevelopment of this site shall be subject to a detailed masterplan based on in-depth preplanning discussions and designed to provide mixed-use urban environment with a superior architectural quality and a high quality public realm. In particular development proposal(s) should provide for:

- A building layout which:
 - Screens and softens the visual impact of the retail warehousing directly to the north (when viewed from the southern slopes of the Swilly), whilst maintaining the service access to the rear of same.
 - Fronts, positively addresses and sensitively integrates the riverside park along the River Swilly in any design proposals.

- A significant degree of residential development fronting the banks of the river Swilly.
- The Key linkages (both to and within the site) identified on Map 12.1A 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan.
- High quality, public open space(s), passively supervised by the surrounding development with a minimum of car parking along its edges.
- The avoidance of large areas of surface car parking.
- The retention of the mature trees situated at the southern extremity of the site on the northern bank of the Swilly and the incorporation of same into any overall landscaping proposals.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Retail policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.3.3 Retail Policies Specific to Letterkenny

LK-R-P-1: Retail Proposals and the Retail Strategy

Proposals for retail developments shall be considered in accordance with the objectives, frameworks and associated policies of the County Retail Strategy contained in Section 4.2, Chapter 4 of Part B of this Plan.

LK-R-P-2: Location of Retail Development

Proposals for retail development shall be subject to the sequential test whereby:

- The area defined as the Town Centre (Map 12.2: 'Town Centre Strategy' contained in this part of the Plan refers) is the preferred location for retail development.
- Retail development outside the Town Centre will only be permitted where the applicant has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that no reasonable development opportunity exists within the Town Centre
- If no development opportunities are available within the Town Centre, then the next preference shall be a location on the Edge of the Town Centre
- Retail development will then only be permitted outside of the Town Centre and Edge of Town Centre areas where the applicant has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that no reasonable development opportunity exists within same.
- In addition to the above where a case is made for retail development outside of the Town Centre developers will be required to demonstrate that:
 - There is a demand for additional retail provision.
 - The development will not negatively impact on the existing standard of retailing or the overall vitality and viability of the defined Town Centre. The Council will seek a formal Retail Impact Assessment in circumstances where it is considered that the development might have a potential adverse impact.
 - The development can be accommodated at the specific location without contributing to ad hoc or haphazard development form or significantly hindering the capacity of the town to develop a compact urban form.
 - The development will be serviced by existing or proposed public transport links and will be easily accessible (in terms of distance and quality of linkages) from the town centre by both pedestrians and cyclists.
 - The development will be adequately serviced by existing infrastructure networks including roads, water, telecommunications, sewerage etc.

The Council will apply a sequential location test in assessing the suitability of all sites for retail development outside the Town Centre area. One of the notable weaknesses of the Letterkenny retail offer is the dispersal of retail activity across the urban area and along the arterial approach roads. The sequential test aims to ensure that town centre vitality and viability is protected and enhanced by consolidating development within a defined Town Centre.

Under this test the preferred location for retail and shopping uses will be the Town Centre as defined on Map 12.2: 'Town Centre Strategy' contained in this part of the Plan. If no suitable sites are available within the Town Centre, the next preference will be for edge of centre sites and finally out of town locations.

The Planning Authority considers there are ample development opportunities currently available within the Town Centre for a variety of proposals. Development proposals within the town centre are clear opportunities to strengthen the physical urban form of the town. Such proposals, including those in backlands and within Urban Blocks 1,3, and 4 identified on Map 12.1A: 'Urban Design Framework' that accompanies this part of the Plan, must be based on the provision of strong pedestrian and vehicular linkages through the town centre and be designed to provide a quality urban streetscape. In addition the Planning Authority considers that the potential for larger retail development in the traditional town centre, through the sensitive amalgamation of individual retail units/buildings, remains virtually untapped. The sequential test does not apply to retail proposals located within the defined town centre.

LK-R-P-3: General Criteria for Retail Developments

Proposals for retail development will only be permitted where they:

- Comply with the sequential approach outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines and the locational policies for retail development contained within this Plan.
- Provide safe and easy access to/from the development by pedestrians, cyclists and disabled persons. In particular large-scale retail developments shall demonstrate that they can be serviced by existing or proposed public transport links, local, regional and national.
- Comply with the car and bicycle-parking standards contained within Appendix 1 of Part B of this Development Plan.
- Are of a high design standard and satisfactorily integrate with the surrounding built environment and comply with the built environment policies contained with this Plan.
- Do not negatively impact upon the flow of vehicular traffic in either the immediate vicinity of the development or in the wider area.
- Provide adequate arrangements for the collection, attenuation, and discharge of surface water and otherwise comply with the flood risk management policies contained within this Plan.

In addition to the above major development proposals may be required to submit Traffic Impact Assessments as part of the planning application. Proposals may also be required to address flood risk issues particularly in the Isle Lane area but also in Lower Main Street and the Port Road area and/or submit Flood Impact Assessments in accordance the flooding policies outlined in this Plan. Developments which entail major additions to retail floorspace in the town centre, may be required to provide, or contribute towards the provision of extra parking spaces in the town over and above that set out in the technical standards accompanying this Plan. However, for applications which comply with the policies and proposals of this Plan in all material aspects, it should not be necessary for applicants to provide additional supporting background studies.

LK-R-P-4: Ancillary Retailing

Development proposals for ancillary retail development, (i.e. retail developments ancillary to Industrial, Light manufacturing, and Service type activities) outside of the defined retail core will only be permitted where such retailing operations are ancillary to the business as a whole. The size of the retail space shall not exceed more than 10% of the total indoor space of the business in question.

It is considered reasonable that certain commercial activities such (e.g. light manufacturing) are able to dedicate a certain amount of floorspace to ancillary retail activities accessible to the general public (e.g. sales/display areas). Nevertheless this situation must be balanced against the need to protect the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre. Consequently it is considered appropriate to limit ancillary retailing to 10% of the total indoor space of the business in question.

12.4 Infrastructure**12.4.1 Transportation**

The land use patterns and objectives of the Plan area will affect the types of trips that people want or need to take and will therefore impact on a transportation in relation to walking, cycling, private car and public transport. To this end appropriate aims and objectives provide a policy framework that moves in the direction of achieving integration, permeability, and sustainable transport options.

Improved movement and permeability within and to the town will negate against criticisms of peripherality, make the town more attractive to investors and business, will provide for greater choice of movement, negate against social exclusion due to improved accessibility options, have significant positive environmental impacts and improve quality of life.

The critical transportation issues at present include:

- Dominance of car based development.
- Road traffic congestion throughout the town particularly at peak times.
- The lack of alternative sustainable transportation options.
- Land use patterns that encourage car usage.
- Lack of permeability throughout the town.
- Closed cell neighbourhoods.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Transport and Movement objectives and policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.4.1.1 Transport and Movement Objectives Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-T-O-1:** To provide for a coordinated and planned linked transport network.
- LK-T-O-2:** To support and promote improved regional access.
- LK-T-O-3:** To improve traffic congestion throughout the town particularly in the town centre.
- LK-T-O-4:** To promote, support and encourage modal shift to walking and cycling.

12.4.1.2 Transport and Movement Policies Specific to Letterkenny

LK-T-P-1: In order to influence the continued development of the town and to ensure a more accessible and attractive town in which to live and work, it is the policy of the Council to:

Ensure that all new development complies with the most relevant Traffic Management Guidelines.

- (a) Facilitate Urban Transportation Control – the identification of key Urban Junctions, a coordinated signal system to manage movement into and around the town, through which pedestrians and cyclist are given equal weighting with traffic.
- (b) Facilitate Town Centre Parking and Traffic Management - Land assembly, charging policy and enforcement.
- (c) Facilitate Public Transport – Establishment of integrated infrastructure and support measures for the ongoing operation of the Letterkenny Town Bus service and the development of sustainable public transport, for example through Quality Bus Corridors or future rail links.
- (d) Facilitate People Friendly Environments – measures, including Urban Junctions, to allow for the easy and safe movement of pedestrians and those with limited mobility or other needs in order to allow for comfortable, quality public and residential realms.
- (e) Facilitate cycling and walking - A linked network of safe routes throughout the urban area, including safe routes to schools in partnership with other stakeholders.
- (f) Facilitate new road construction – in accordance with Policy LK-T-P-7 and the prioritisation of infrastructural improvements required to enhance Letterkenny as a growth centre.
- (g) Facilitate increased permeability – ensuring new development increases the incidences of linkages and flow of both public and private traffic, including pedestrian and cycle, throughout the town development envelope.
- (h) Facilitate the development of a Transport Interchange Hub - Developing an integrated transport interchange hub thereby allowing for a more efficient, sustainable and dynamic transport model linking to and around the town.
- (i) Facilitate new ways to travel – Encouraging and facilitating the use of green travel plans by both public and private interests, providing training and advice on implementation and safety.
- (j) To facilitate transportation and landuse integration – a major focus on the efficient linking of landuse to transport allowing for easy and sustainable movement of people and vehicles, creating opportunities for the servicing of development by efficient public transport modes and creating opportunities for green travel planning.

Global concerns regarding over-reliance on car based transport are now affecting the town of Letterkenny in a more radical way than ever before. The major concerns include:

- Congestion
- The effect of road traffic on the environment (both natural and built)
- Discrimination against vulnerable groups in society such as the poor, the elderly and the disabled
- Instability in oil supply and price control.

LK-T-P-2: Strategic Road Links to the Town

It is the policy of the Council's to safeguard national investment, by preventing the premature obsolescence of strategic road links to the town, by not permitting direct frontage access to the N13 and N14 within the Plan area.

It is an aspiration of the Council to have an 80km speed limit introduced along the stretch of the N14 between the Dry Arch roundabout and the Port Road roundabout and to remove the right turning option from this route.

For planning purposes, in terms of Development Management, (access arrangements), National Roads Standards will be applied to the Ramelton Road R245 to the Golf Course Road Junction, from the Port Bridge Roundabout to the Ballyraine Creamery Roundabout and up to the (previously known as) Unifi Site Junction.

LK-T-P-3: Multi Modal Strategic Link – N14 Dry Arch roundabout to the Port Road Roundabout

It is the policy of the Council to reserve a 'Multi Modal Strategic Link Corridor' (as identified on the Map 12.3: 'Transport Map' contained in this part of the Plan, between the N14 Dry Arch roundabout and the Port Road roundabout to facilitate future further expansion, the provision of Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs) and other possible future transport innovations so as to ensure that the town shall be quickly, safely and efficiently serviced and to reduce journey time into the town.

LK-T-P-4: Rail Corridor

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the old railway line, running parallel to the N14 Dry Arch roundabout to Port Road roundabout along with all other intact railway lines within the Plan area, shall remain free from development for possible future re-instatement within the national rail network-¹¹ [save to the extent necessary to allow for the provision of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal.](#)¹²

LK-T-P-5: Transport Interchange Hub

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the development of a new Transport Interchange Hub in order to ensure a multi modal transport system for the town. This shall indicatively be located at lands close to the Port Road roundabout as indicated on Map 12.3: 'Transport Map' contained in this part of the Plan.

LK-T-P-6: New Strategic Relief Road Development and Urban Road Improvement around the Town

The Council seeks to improve access into, through and around Letterkenny through the further upgrade and development of Urban Roads and the identification and provision of new Strategic Relief Road Corridors (Map 12.3: 'Transport Map' contained in this part of the Plan refers). The roads and corridors identified are an indicative width of 20 metres.

For planning purposes, in terms of Development Management, all identified Strategic Relief Road Corridors shall be subject to National Roads Standards. Those lands adjacent to and affected by Strategic Relief Road Corridors have been identified for special consideration (Map 12.3: 'Transport Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan). Development proposals which are located within the lands identified shall:

¹¹ As deleted by the Variation to the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2014 in respect of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (Variation No. 1).

¹² As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

- Consult with the Council Transport Authorities, namely the Roads and Transportation Service, Town Engineer and the National Roads Design Office (NRDO), prior to the submission of any planning application.
- Be required to demonstrate and satisfy that the proposal will not inhibit the future development of the corridor.
- Achieve excellence in road corridor landscaping, including avenue planting in order to develop attractive entrances to and views of the town.
- Provide for the development of public transport 'pick up'/ 'drop off' points, shelter facilities and future road widening to accommodate increased capacity and/or the provision of public transport corridors to the satisfaction of the Council.

The Strategic Relief Road Corridors are:

- Southern Strategic Relief Corridor, joining the Leck East, Leck West and Swilly Diversion Routes.
- Western Strategic Relief Corridor, connecting Ballymacool and Glencar via Rodgers Burn.
- Northern Strategic Relief Corridor encompassing the Windyhall Route.
- Eastern Strategic Relief Corridor, joining the N56 (New Link Road) and Bonagee Diversion Routes.

Urban Road programmes include the upgrading and rationalisation of the Cullion Road, strengthening to sections of the R250 (Glenties) and strengthening of the R245 (Ramelton) and the development of new roads as appropriate (Map 12.3: 'Transport Map,' contained in this part of the Plan, refers).

LK-T-P-7: Traffic Management Programme

It is the policy of the Council to implement a programme in relation to Urban Junctions. This programme will involve a linked signal system to manage movement into and around the town, through which pedestrians and cyclists are given equal weighting with traffic.

LK-T-P-8: Cycling and Walking

The Council will promote the development of cycling and walking as a viable transport option. To do so, all development proposals shall be accompanied by appropriate levels of provision for cycle and pedestrian movement including:

- Covered secure cycle parking which is convenient and located to allow for informal surveillance
- Pedestrian and cycle friendly routes throughout new residential areas
- Footpaths and cycle provision in order to adequately and conveniently access public transport, services/amenities and connect with the wider locality.

12.4.2 Water

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the following Water Supply policy is specific to Letterkenny:

12.4.2.1 Water Supply Policy Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-WS-P-1:** The Council will seek to provide adequate and sufficient water supply in order to meet current capacity requirements together with future projected need. Proposals that cannot demonstrate that an adequate water supply can be achieved will not be permitted.

The existing limitations on water supply represent a significant difficulty having regard to the projected growth over the period to 2020. In recognising the importance of efficient and reliable water supply, the Council, through the Directorate of Water, Environment and Emergency Services, have identified a series of strategic actions/projects to upgrade and augment supply. This involves a number of projects including:

- Water conservation.
- Boreholes scheme at Ballymacool.
- Lough Greenan Scheme.
- South Letterkenny Water Supply Scheme.
- Letterkenny/Lough Mourne Scheme.

The growth strategy of this Plan assists in the drive to ensure adequate and efficient water supply by reinforcing an incremental growth of the town outwards from the core together with evidence led and objective led release of 2nd phase of residential land.

12.4.3 Environmental Services

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Environmental Services are contained in Section 5.2, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.4.4 Telecoms

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Telecoms are contained in Section 5.3, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.4.5 Flooding

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Flooding are contained in Section 5.4, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.5 Housing

Background

In line with the Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of Part A of the Plan, the Council's strategy in relation to housing in Letterkenny is to ensure that adequate provision is made to accommodate the projected growth in persons of an additional 4190 persons by 2024. Therefore, using an evidenced based methodology, 70 hectares of lands have been identified to supply the first phase quantum of need and are identified shown as 'Primarily Residential- Phase 1' on the Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning' that accompanies this part of the Plan. Generally, these are focused on lands located proximate to the centre of the town and where the facilities to service development are readily available or can be made readily available without the need for mechanical or electrical plant/equipment. Part A, Chapter 2, Core Strategy acknowledges that there is a significant shortfall in zoned land in Letterkenny for 'Primarily Residential-Phase 1' in this Plan and Section 2.5 of Chapter 2 outlines that the shortfall is to be addressed through the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Letterkenny.

A further 659 hectares of land are identified as 'Strategic Residential Reserve' that will supply need over a longer term time frame, beyond the life of the current Plan. The release of this land will be

reviewed and managed through a clear and transparent evidenced led approach that will involve annual assessment of the uptake of land zoned 'Primarily Residential- Phase 1' and will only occur through a review or variation of the Development Plan or through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Housing objectives and policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.5.1 Housing Objective Specific to Letterkenny

LK-H-O-1: To identify the appropriate quantum and range of lands to meet future housing need in Letterkenny including social and affordable housing need.

12.5.2 Housing Policies Specific to Letterkenny

LK-H-P-1: It is the policy of the Council that new housing development shall be guided to those lands identified as 'Primarily Residential- Phase 1' and to those lands identified 'Opportunity Sites 1 and 10 - 1st phase' on the accompanying Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny land Use Zoning' that accompanies this part of the Plan. In addition, consideration will be given to appropriate proposals for development at other locations as follows:

- (a) Within 'Established Development.'
- (b) Within the town centre.
- (c) Within an entire existing unfinished housing development where the entire development has commenced, or, within that part of an existing unfinished housing development where only part of the development has commenced. The number of residential units that may be permitted shall not exceed the number of units permitted within the unfinished development, or part thereof as applicable.

All proposals shall be subject to all relevant material considerations, relevant policies of the Plan, other regional and National guidance and relevant environmental designations.

LK-H-P-2: It is a policy of the Council to ensure the adequate supply of future strategic landbank for the purposes of housing in Letterkenny beyond the life of the Plan through the identification of 659 hectares of land as 'Strategic Residential Reserve.' The Council will examine and manage the appropriate release of 'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands on the basis of a clear and transparent evidenced led approach that will involve annual assessment of the uptake of land zoned 'Primarily Residential- Phase 1' and having regard to relevant environmental designations. Release of 'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands shall only occur through a review or variation of the Development Plan or through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

LK-H-P-3: It is the policy of the Council to protect the architectural, cultural and historic value of residential communities within and on the edge of the town centre that are identified as 'Long Established Residential Areas' on Map 12.1B: Letterkenny Land Use Zoning, that accompanies this part of the Plan.

12.6 Natural and Built Heritage

12.6.1 Natural Heritage

Background

Letterkenny is set within the River Swilly Valley at the rivers lowest crossing points, near the mouth of the estuary of Lough Swilly. The surrounding valley hillsides with elevated slopes and ridges provide a strong enclosed setting for the town. This landscape setting is one of Letterkenny's greatest assets, which, in addition to the river, lough and valley comprises streams, woods, historic monuments, trees, wetland, archaeological sites as well as undulating landscape giving scenic views of Lough Swilly, the town itself and long ranging panoramic vistas of the upland terrain of the Knockbrin and Garvoe Ranges.

This unique natural environment, as well as supporting rich biodiversity and offering a great amenity value is one of the foundation stones of local identity and sense of place in Letterkenny. It contributes to the quality of life of local people and provides a unique attraction for visitors in the region.

The landscape and natural environment is a finite resource and requires protection, management and enhancement to ensure we can make best use of its features whilst ensuring its qualities are sustained for the enjoyment of future generations. Careful consideration is required in providing a framework that can allow Letterkenny to prosper and grow economically whilst maintaining its highly valuable natural environment. In doing so, the objectives and policies in this section aim to establish a balanced and measured approach of integrating the urban demands with the positive environmental qualities that exists in Letterkenny today.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Natural Heritage policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.6.1.1 Natural Heritage Policy Specific to Letterkenny

LK-NH-P-1: Local Environment

It is the policy of the Council to limit new development within areas identified as 'Local Environment' to limited residential development of single housing only so as to ensure minimum negative impact on the landscape setting i.e. the proposal must demonstrate that the development will not be an obtrusive and dominant feature within the landscape but rather that the development must be of a design form and scale that can be integrated comfortably into the landscape utilising and retaining key landscape features such as trees, hedgerows.

The Council will not permit multiple residential developments within 'Local Environment' (i.e. 2 or more units). In addition, where the cumulative impact of single houses is such to be resulting in a piecemeal and haphazard proliferation of single housing, permission will not be forthcoming.

A number of areas within the Plan have been identified as 'Local Environment' on grounds of either one or a combination of the following criteria:

- (a) Lands that are not required in order to supply urban land uses such as residential or general employment.
- (b) Lands that are substantially undeveloped as exist.
- (c) Lands that would not contribute to the consolidation of the urban fabric of the town.

- (d) Lands that have substantial visual amenity in terms of the landscape setting.
- (e) Lands that have a high biodiversity value.
- (f) Lands located on the outskirts of the Plan area.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Built Heritage objectives and policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.6.1.2 Built Heritage Objectives Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-BH-O-1:** To promote economic growth and sustainability through the ongoing regeneration of the built environment in Letterkenny.
- LK-BH-O-2:** To facilitate informed change in relation to the historic streetscape of Letterkenny, in relation to any proposed alteration/extension or modification to a Protected Structure or collection of structures.

12.6.1.3 Built Heritage Policies Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-BH-P-1:** It is the policy of the Council to implement an Architectural Conservation Area, in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in the area described as 'The Ecclesiastical Quarter Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), as identified on Map 12.1A Urban Design Framework.
- LK-BH-P-2:** It is the policy of the Council to manage the ACA as follows:
 - (a) The Council shall ensure that any development in the ACA will be carefully controlled to protect, safeguard and enhance their special character. The special character of the area includes its traditional building stock and material finishes, spaces, streetscape, landscape and setting.
 - (b) Streetscape views within, into and out of the ACA shall be maintained, enhanced and protected, particularly with reference to the character of Cathedral Square, Church Lane, and Castle Street
 - (c) It is the policy of the Council to ensure that any development, modification, alteration or extension affecting a protected structure, adjoining structure or structure within an Architectural Conservation Area, are sited and designed appropriately and are in no way detrimental to the character or setting of the structure or surrounding area.
 - (d) It is the policy of the Council to protect structures recorded on the RPS and features that contribute to the character of the ACA.
 - (e) In consideration of applications for development within the ACA, the following principles will apply:
 - Proposals will only be permitted where they positively enhance the character of the ACA.
 - The siting of new buildings will, where appropriate, retain the existing street building line.
 - The massing and scale of any new building form will respect and positively integrate with neighbouring buildings and the character of the area.
 - Architectural detailing of historic buildings will be retained and restored.
 - Where it is not desirable to comply with car parking standards, in respect of developments within an ACA, the Council will consider a Financial Contribution in lieu of shortfall in car parking spaces.

Planning applications in the ACA's will include sufficient and detailed documentation to inform the proposed development, supported by a written assessment of the proposed development on the character of the area, completed by a suitably qualified individual with experience working with historic buildings.

LK-BH-P-3: Management of 'Long Established Residential Areas.'

It is the policy of the Council to manage areas designated as 'Long Established Residential Areas' on Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning' that accompanies this part of the Plan so as to ensure the townscape character, setting and design of the 'Long Established Residential Areas' is protected, either in an individual or collective capacity, and that inappropriate intervention or redevelopment will not be permitted. In this regard, the Council will not permit new developments that would be incongruous with the general density and spatial pattern of development of the identified areas or that would result in a significant and material divergence from the form, scale and character of the existing built form unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal can be subsumed within the existing urban form in a manner so as not to represent a new dominant form within the area.

12.6.2 Archaeological Heritage

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Archaeological Heritage are contained in Section 7.3, Chapter 7 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.7 Natural Resource Development

12.7.1 Extractive Industry and Geology

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Extractive Industry and Geology are contained in Section 8.1, Chapter 8 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.7.2 Energy

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Energy are contained in Section 8.2, Chapter 8 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.8 Tourism

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Tourism are contained in Section 12.2, Chapter 12 of Part C and Chapter 9 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.9 Marine Resource and Coastal Management

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Marine Resource and Coastal Management are contained in Chapter 10 of Part B of this Development Plan.

12.10 Social, Community and Culture

Background

Letterkenny is well equipped with health services, being home to Letterkenny General Hospital. The hospital provides a wide range of acute hospital services on an in-patient, day-case and outpatient basis. Services include Intensive Care, Coronary Care, General Medicine, Geriatric Care, Renal Dialysis, General Surgical and Urology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatric Care (including a Neo-Natal Unit), Orthopaedics and Consultant-led Oncology and Haematology Services. In addition there is a full range of clinical and non-clinical support services available on site including four main theatres, CSSD Department, Pathology/Laboratory Department and a Pharmacy Department.

There are seven primary schools servicing the population of Letterkenny and Environs, three of which lie outside the boundaries of the Plan area. The issue of location of housing in relation to primary schools is one of considerable debate. There are four secondary schools, including the vocational post-primary school and the Gaelcholáiste, located in the town itself.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology provides third level education in the region has undertaken rapid physical and academic expansion since 1995 and as a result makes a significant contribution to the town in terms of economic impacts, social impacts, development of knowledge base, and retention of skill base.

Letterkenny possesses a vibrant arts scene including An Grianán Theatre, the focus of many local, national and international events, the Regional Cultural Centre. The area around the theatre and Regional Cultural Centre has become a distinct arts related area which can be described and marketed as the Cultural Quarter of the town.

An increase in the demand for indoor leisure and recreation facilities is a national trend and contributes to the quality of life agenda and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The Aura Letterkenny Leisure Complex at Sallaghagrane provides a 25-metre swimming pool, children's pool, multi-purpose sports hall, fitness gym, aerobics studio, health suites, all weather pitch and tartan running track. Throughout the town there are a number of other recreational pitches and open space parks including the Town Park, Ballymacool, Ballyboe Park and Crievesmith Park.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Social, Community and Culture objectives and policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.10.1 Social, Community and Culture Objectives Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-SCC -O-1:** To reserve land for community and institutional, cultural, recreational and amenity purposes.
- LK-SCC-O-2:** To reserve land for educational purposes which may include ancillary recreational and childcare facilities.
- LK-SCC-O-3:** To provide parks, open spaces and outdoor recreation areas which provide a range of active and passive open spaces for all sectors of the community.
- LK-SCC-O-4:** To protect and improve quality and amenity value of existing open spaces.
- LK-SCC-O-5:** To identify valuable natural open space resources, landscape settings and other opportunities to develop new open spaces and recreational facilities that will provide for the incremental growth of the town.

12.10.2 Social, Community and Culture Policies Specific to Letterkenny

LK-SCC-P-1: Development within the 'Strategic Community Opportunity'

On lands identified as 'Strategic Community Opportunity' on Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan, the Council will seek to achieve a an appropriate mix of health and/or educational and/or social and/or community development which may include hospital expansion, educational, recreational, community health, childcare facilities, affordable housing, community support housing, cemetery burial ground. Any other use not identified herein will be considered on its own merits provided it does not prejudice the objective and accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and environmental considerations.

The identification of lands for the provision of additional community related development and expansion, particularly in the areas of education and health is necessary in ensuring long-term supply of land to meet key strategic needs of these essential services. These lands are located close to the existing service provision at the Letterkenny General Hospital campus where linkages with the existing health uses may be appropriate. Also, the lands are located within reasonable walking distance of key transport corridors and therein are accessible to the Town Bus Service providing valuable opportunities for expansion of services provided through the Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

LK-SCC-P-2: Letterkenny Institute of Technology

The Council will support the continued growth and expansion of the Letterkenny Institute of Technology including the Mission and Vision set out in the Letterkenny Institute of Technology's Strategic Plan and including business development/incubation projects that are associated with the Institute subject to the following:

- (a) That any new development is of a high quality and innovative architectural design that will represent landmark buildings to identify this important site.
- (b) That any new development located on the Port Road side of the campus will be of a density that both maximises the site size and that provides for a Gateway entrance to the town whilst elsewhere on the site, new development will not impact negatively on residential amenities.
- (c) That any new development makes provision for permeability, ease of access and provision of appropriate infrastructure that will support walking, cycling and public transport.
- (d) That any new development will not give rise to unacceptable transport or environmental effects.
- (e) That proposals to integrate relevant social infrastructure, such as childcare, will be encouraged.

The Council recognises the important role of the Letterkenny Institute of Technology in terms of making provision for third level education in the region that contributes to the success of Letterkenny. The significant associated economic, social, cultural and cross border benefits of the work of the Institute are recognised and the continued expansion of Letterkenny Institute of Technology is considered to be an important catalyst in the retention of skills base, development of knowledge based industries and employment generation. In addition, the Council will support proposals within the campus in relation to business development/incubation projects that are associated with the Institute.

LK-SCC-P-3: Protection of Existing Open Space

It is the policy of the Council to protect land of recreation and open space value in order to ensure the provision of sufficient lands and amenities for the use and enjoyment of the public. There will be a presumption against development on open space.

There is a high demand for high quality recreational open space arising in part from increased recognition of the importance of personal health and increased opportunities from additional leisure time. As a result, existing open spaces are considered to be valuable. The clustering of community and social activities around and adjoining open spaces will result in the integration of the types of facilities and amenities required to serve a neighbourhood and the open space component can provide for appropriate pedestrian and cycle routes and a quality environment. Therefore, there may be cases where the loss of existing open space for purposes other than recreational or community uses may be acceptable subject to the adequate integration of the new uses with the surrounding open space.

LK-SCC-P-4: Cemeteries and Burial Grounds

The Council will facilitate the appropriate establishment of cemeteries/burial grounds/burial practices within the Plan area having had regard to all material planning considerations including the potential impacts on the environment and shall ensure compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The potential environmental impacts arising from a proposed burial ground will require detailed examination particularly in relation to protection of groundwater. Proposals will require assessment on a case-by-case basis and will include assessment of the site relative to features such as boreholes/springs/wells, sources in relation to drinking water supply, rivers, streams, watercourse, agricultural drainage systems and also in relation to geological setting and anticipated rate of burials per annum.

The Council recognise the need for the appropriate provision of burial facilities (including cemeteries and burial grounds) to serve the range of community needs within the area. In particular the Council note the need to establish an appropriate location in respect of multi- denominational facilities and in this regard will consider proposals on a case- by case basis within the Plan area. During the lifetime of this Plan, the Council will consider further opportunities to deliver this provision. In addition, the 'Community' and 'Strategic Community Opportunity' zonings (Map 12.1B: 'Letterkenny Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan refers) provide opportunities for further investigation of suitable sites.

12.11 Childcare Strategy

The goals of the Childcare Strategy for Letterkenny are as follows:

1. To provide a Land Use Planning Policy framework that will facilitate, encourage and increase the provision of the best possible childcare facilities in a safe and friendly environment to primarily meet the development needs of children, but also the social and economic requirements of the wider population and to ensure the improvement of the quality of childcare services for the community.
2. To provide a Land Use Planning Policy that strategically considers the need for childcare and amenities for children, especially with job creation initiatives, economic-based developments and residential/housing developments in the Letterkenny and Environs area.

3. To acknowledge and enhance the role of the Letterkenny Metropolitan Area in the North West City Region and its role as a key node and catalyst for the strategic development and growth of the northwest area, through the development of a strong supportive social infrastructure, especially concerned with provision of childcare facilities.
4. To improve the accessibility of childcare provision, through the consolidation of community based services in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Strategy. The Council will have special regard to the provision of childcare facilities in sites shared or adjacent to educational facilities and will also place an emphasis on the location of childcare facilities which should be at the most accessible point in any new development.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Childcare Strategy objectives and policies that are specific to Letterkenny are set out below:

12.11.1 Childcare Strategy Objectives Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-CS-O-1:** To enable the provision of quality sustainable and adaptable childcare facilities in a variety of locations within reasonable proximity of the population to be served and taking account of the spatial distribution of the population within the Letterkenny and Environs area.
- LK-CS-O-2:** To promote equality and address disadvantage/social exclusion in the provision of childcare facilities.
- LK-CS-O-3:** To promote and support the provision of both community and private operated childcare facilities.

12.11.2 Childcare Strategy Policy Specific to Letterkenny

- LK-CS-P-1:** The Council will consider the development of childcare facilities in areas, where the proposer can illustrate that there is a demonstrated need for the facility. The Council will require all childcare proposers to conduct a survey of the childcare facilities currently available within the area that the development is proposed. This survey will take account of the capacity per age cohort and type of facilities currently on offer to the residents of the area, including: crèche facilities (both sessional and full-time), nursery, drop-in facilities, playschools, pre-schools, Montessori facilities, Naíonraí and afterschool facilities. On receipt of this data, the Council will correlate this with the population projections for the area and deem whether or not a childcare facility is required within the immediate area.

Chapter 13 Buncrana

13.1 Introduction

This chapter relates to the detailed written text that is specific to Buncrana. It should be read in conjunction with the wider policies of this Plan. Three maps accompany this chapter as follows (refer A3 maps inserted at the end of Chapter 13; Maps 13.1A and 13.2 at AO size may be purchased from Donegal County Council for a fee of €10 per map):

- Map 13.1A: Buncrana Land Use Zoning.
- Map 13.2: Buncrana Land Use Zoning Extract
- Map 13.3: Area of Special Townscape character.

Background

Buncrana is identified as Layer 2A in the settlement structure set out in Chapter 2 of Part A of this Plan. The population of Buncrana in 2011 was 6,839 people making it the 2nd largest town in the County. As a Layer 2A town, it is described as a 'Strategic Town' serving a 'Special Economic Function' the further development of which is supported by the Core Strategy, Chapter 2. The primary nature of the towns 'Special Economic Function' relates to its potential in relation to tourism given its location along the Wild Atlantic Way and as a gateway to the Inishowen area and proximity to the most northerly Signature Point at Malin Head. In addition, the town shows vitality and vibrancy in the extent of service, retail, community, education and employment activity. Located close to the Northern Ireland border, Buncrana has a role to play in the cross border context and in particular has the potential to benefit from opportunities for inward investment in economic development as a result of Brexit. Significant lands are identified in the Plan area to supply this type of need through 'General Employment', 'Town Centre' and 'Opportunity Sites.'

Development Trends

The town centre in Buncrana displays a compact urban form largely based around historical street patterns and there is a notable character in the collective built heritage of the town centre. The trend in terms of the spatial concentration of housing development over the last decade is that it has occurred on the edge of the town rather than within the town centre or built up fabric of the town. This is evidenced in the 2011 census which shows the environs of the town having grown by 96% whereas the town area grew by only 4%. The town provides significant recreational and amenity opportunities for both visitors and residents through a substantial coastal green area and recreational space together with an extensive coastal walkway. The development of the Inner Relief Road has created a number of development opportunities particularly around Ardaravan Square. In addition, there are now a number of strategically important vacant and unoccupied brownfield sites, which were previously major employment centres.

Specific Provisions of the Core Strategy in Relation to Buncrana

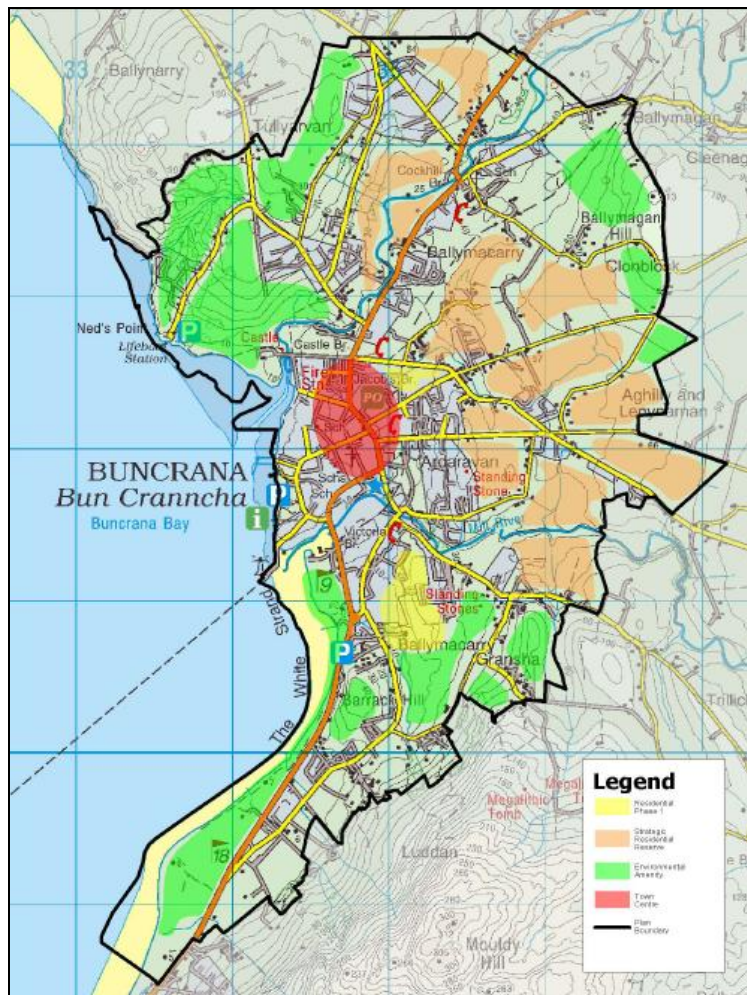
As outlined in the 'Background,' the Core Strategy of this Plan directs 36% of the projected growth in the County across Layer 2 in the settlement structure thus requiring the supply of appropriate lands for the purposes of housing to accommodate an additional 4,749 people to 2024. Table 13.1 entitled 'Core Strategy Table in Relation to Buncrana,' extracts the relevant information from the Core Strategy Table in respect of the entire county set out in Table 2.4, Chapter 2 of Part A of the Plan. Table 14.1 shows that circa 64 hectares of lands are identified as either 'Primarily Residential-Phase 1' or as part of a mixed use zone and the location of the lands identified are shown on Maps 13.1A; 'Buncrana Land Use Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan and Map 13.2: 'Buncrana Land Use Map Extract' contained in this part of the Plan. The lands identified have the potential to supply some 736 housing units (including 50% over zoning as provided under the Core Strategy Guidelines, 2010).

Table 13.1 shows that the quantum of lands identified for delivery of housing units to 2024, results in an excess of 64 units relative to the number of units required to meet the projected population and associated Housing Land Requirement (HLR). The excess makes provision for particular social housing need in the town and a monitor and manage approach will be implemented in relation to new housing proposals in Buncrana prior to the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

Table 13.1: Core Strategy Table in Relation to Buncrana

Core Strategy population allocation	No. of housing units required ¹³	HLR (Ha) ¹⁴	Potential no. of units that could be supplied through HLR	Existing zoning (As at 1 st Feb 2017)	No of housing units the existing zoning provides for	Proposed zoning (primarily residential (PR)- 1 st phase; Ha)	Proposed zoning (Other land) (Ha)	Housing yield from PR	Housing yield from other lands	Shortfall/excess
1,215	450	56	672	65	694	25.63	38.8	478	258	64

Figure 13.1: Areas in Buncrana Designated Areas for Significant Development



¹³ Based on average density of 2.7 people per household.

¹⁴ 12 units/ hectares plus addition 50%.

Areas in Buncrana Designated for Significant Development During the Period of the Plan

Figure 13.1 shows the main developed areas of Buncrana together with the proposed sites for 'Residential (Phase 1)' use and those 'Mixed Use' sites that are identified as having potential for an element of residential development, including a number of 'Town Centre' sites. The sites have been numbered (A-Z, M3, M4, M5 & M7) on Map 13.2: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map' extract and are also shown in the context of all zonings on Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana land use Zoning'.

Key Areas for Intervention in Buncrana

A number of key areas in Buncrana will require the implementation of interventions through a range of mechanisms. Such areas include:

- Continued supports to further enhance the tourism offering in the town.
- Advancement of upgrade to Westbrook Pumping station.
- Completion of Cockhill Bridge road improvements.
- Delivery of other key strategic routes.
- The need to harness the economic potential of the heritage of the town in a sustainable way.
- The need to protect the environmental assets of the town and its environs.

General Location and Pattern of Development- Zoning Objectives

The zoning objectives should be read in conjunction with the wider policies contained in this Plan and with Map 13.1 entitled, 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning.' Applications may be granted where the Planning Authority considers that the proposed use or development would comply with the zoning objective of the area and would otherwise comply with the policies of the Plan and would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Table 13.2: Land Use Zoning Objectives (Refer to Land Use Zoning Map)

Zone	Objective
Residential (Phase 1)	To reserve land primarily for residential development as guided within the Housing Land Requirement of the Core Strategy.
Strategic Residential Reserve	To reserve lands as Strategic Residential Reserve, that may be considered for primarily residential growth over the longer-term period (i.e. beyond the life of this Plan).
Town Centre	To reserve lands for a diverse mix of commercial, retail, office, cultural, leisure/entertainment, residential and other uses appropriate to the town centre and to promote the Town Centre as the primary retail location thereby enhancing vitality and viability.
Community/ Service	To reserve appropriate land primarily for community, educational, institutional, health, cultural, recreational and amenity purposes.
Amenity/ Recreation	To conserve and enhance lands solely for formal and informal open spaces and amenity areas and to make provision for new recreation facilities.
Mixed Use/ Tourism	To reserve strategic lands/sites for a variety of appropriate mixed-use developments, including landmark buildings/tourism/cultural, educational, community and residential uses, provided that they are compatible with the wider area whilst recognising built, natural and habitat features of importance that are specific to the site.
General Employment	To reserve appropriate land for commercial, industrial and non-convenience retail purposes (in accordance with the Sequential Approach).

Zone	Objective
Established Development	To ensure the protection of the character and biodiversity of established areas and to allow for new development that is both appropriate and orderly in the context of the established area.
Infrastructure	To reserve land for the purposes of infrastructure and utilities.
Coastal Protection Area	To conserve and protect the scenic landscape character of these coastal lands.
Agricultural/Rural	To provide for a spatial development pattern that is sustainable and related in form and scale to the level of existing physical and social infrastructure in the area and that can be integrated and absorbed into the landscape.

13.2 Economic Development

13.2.1 General Economic Development

Background

Buncrana is well positioned to become a strong employment centre, with a focus on tourism, and there may be opportunities to attract investment from the IT, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, food processing and electrical/electronics sectors. The focus on tourism will be broad ranging and will be delivered through a variety of measures which will include the reservation of land for recreation and amenity, continued investment in recreation and amenity infrastructure, protection and enhancement of the built heritage of the town, appropriate marketing and promotion as well as cross border cooperation on mutually beneficial projects.

To facilitate the appropriate growth of the economy in Buncrana, the Development Plan identifies an appropriate mix of lands that will have sufficient capacity to accommodate new economic developments. In doing so, regard has been had to infrastructural capacity in relation to water and waste-water, environmental and conservation designations, vehicular access, opportunities for the clustering of economic developments, the capacity of the town centre and the capacity for new economic activity on brownfield or infill sites. In general terms and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, provision has been made for new economic development on lands zoned (a) 'General Employment' (b) Within the 'Town Centre' (c) At a number of identified 'Opportunity Sites' (referred to in more detail below) and (d) Within areas identified as 'Established Development' on Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan. Importantly, further lands have been identified as 'General Employment' to provide for the expansion of the existing Lisfannon Business Park which was transferred from the Industrial Development Agency to Donegal County Council in October 2010 and this included land assets of c. 2.2 hectares of land. Other 'General Employment' lands are located at Milltown Business Park and a number of vacant and derelict former business sites are suitable for appropriate use.

Walking and Cycling

Walking and cycling are the key components to movement and accessibility in towns and rural areas. They benefit the environment and the population by reducing pollution, noise and traffic congestion, as well as contributing to healthy more active lifestyles. They are also tourism assets to the area.

Buncrana has a well established network of popular cycle/walkways which primarily extends along the Shore Front into Swan Park (along the Crana River). It also extends along the shores of Lough Swilly to Ned's Point/Fr Hegarty's Rock and beyond to Stragill Strand.

The town has an active Walking and Cycling Group and in May 2012 the BunCrana Walking and Cycling Strategy was published which identifies potential routes. As the terrain is largely flat and scenic, there are endless opportunities to further develop resources for these activities.



Figure 13.2: Swan Park



Figure 13.3: Porthaw

Table 13.3: Walking and Cycling Routes

ROUTE NO.	POTENTIAL ROUTES	SOURCE
1	EXISTING WALKS / TRAILS	BUNCRANA WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY 2012 (MAP 4)*
2	EXISTING PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE	BUNCRANA WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY 2012 (MAP 1)
3	HISTORIC ROUTE	BUNCRANA WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY 2012 (MAP 5)*
4	SLÍ NA SLAINTE ROUTE	BUNCRANA WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY 2012 (MAP 6)*
5	CYCLE PATHS	BUNCRANA WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY 2012 (MAP 7)*
6	LANE / ACCESS FROM UPPER MAIN ST. (IMMEDIATELY RIGHT OF SUPER VALU) TO LANDS ALONGSIDE REAR CAR-PARK, BACK TO FERRIS' LANE	LAND REGISTRY 2013
7	LANE / ACCESS TO RIVER FROM MILL BRIDGE	LAND REGISTRY 2013
8	LANE / ACCESS WAY ALONGSIDE FLANAGHAN'S FURNITURE FACTORY	LAND REGISTRY 2013

*Walking and Cycling Strategy, May 2012

'Mixed Use' Sites

Seven sites have been identified by reason of their scale, strategic location and potential use, as 'Mixed Use' sites, the objective of which is to reserve strategic lands/sites for appropriate mixed use development; including landmark buildings/tourism/cultural, educational, community and residential uses, provided that they are compatible with the wider area whilst recognising built, natural and habitat features of importance that are specific to the site. One site in particular (Mixed Use 1- Ned's Point- M1) is specifically identified in response to the tourism potential that exists at this coastal location. The planning policy set out for each site forms a guide to the type of development that may be appropriate at each location. Any specific development proposals that are not referred to shall be

considered on their own merits subject to the constraints identified in the planning policies and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Buncrana Shorefront and Harbour Related Activities

Buncrana's shorefront location and proximity to Blue Flag beaches and a marina, creates opportunities to further develop the marine leisure sector on Lough Swilly. The harbour is a valuable recreational asset facilitating coastal walks, swimming, sailing, angling/fishing, boat touring and other water based activities. There are six piers and slipways providing access to the sea but these are concentrated in the heart of the town where parking and launching is very difficult.

Buncrana Pier provides berthage for the Lough Swilly Ferry, a number of small fishing boats and for the RNLi search and rescue boat. All of these services are vital to the area for the commercial and economic growth of the area. A large privately operated marina, located at Fahan provides berthage for up to 250 leisure craft.

The use of marinas and jetties needs to be carefully managed to prevent environmental degradation of the coastal area and to prevent conflict between recreational activities and the primary function of the harbour. Any development of ports, marinas and jetties will require Screening for Appropriate Assessment and, depending on the size and likely impact of development may be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Economic Development objectives and policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.2.1.1 Economic Development Objectives Specific to Buncrana

BC-ED-O-1: To facilitate the sustainable development of Buncrana as a Development Centre with specific focus upon Tourism.

BC-ED-O-2: To pursue the implementation of recommendations contained within the Buncrana Walking and Cycling Strategy 2012, including the development/ enhancement of routes labelled in Table 13.2.1 subject to compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and, where relevant, subject to compliance with the requirements of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EEC).

13.2.1.2 Economic Development Policies Specific to Buncrana

BC-ED-P-1: It is the policy of the Council to consider appropriate employment and mixed-use developments in the following locations, and subject to all relevant material planning considerations, national and regional guidance, environmental and conservation designations and subject to Policy BC-ED-P-2:

- (a) Within the defined 'Town Centre' or;
- (b) On lands zoned 'Mixed Use' or;
- (c) On lands zoned 'General Employment' or;
- (d) On lands zoned 'Established Development.'

BC-ED-P-2: It is the policy of the Council that any proposal for economic development use, in addition to other policy provisions of this Plan, will be required to meet all the following criteria:

- (a) It is compatible with surrounding land uses existing or approved;
- (b) It does not harm the amenities of nearby residents;
- (c) There is existing capacity in the water and wastewater infrastructure or alternatively, suitable developer-led improvements can be identified and delivered;

- (d) The existing road network can facilitate additional vehicular traffic generated by the proposed development or suitable developer-led improvements are identified and delivered to overcome any road deficiencies;
- (e) Adequate access arrangements, parking, manoeuvring and servicing areas are provided;
- (f) It does not create a noise nuisance;
- (g) It is capable of dealing satisfactorily with any emission(s);
- (h) It does not adversely affect important features of the built heritage or natural heritage including Natura 2000 sites;
- (i) It is not located in an area at flood risk and/or will not cause or exacerbate flooding;
- (j) The site layout, building design, associated infrastructure and landscaping arrangements are of high quality and assist the promotion of sustainability and biodiversity;
- (k) Appropriate boundary treatment and means of enclosure are provided and any areas of outside storage proposed are adequately screened from public view; and
- (l) It does not compromise water quality nor the programme of measures contained within the relevant River Basin Management Plan.

BC-ED-P-3: It is the policy of the Council to support the appropriate development of Business Park and Incubator units for Small and Medium Enterprises subject to all material planning considerations, all other relevant policies of the Plan and subject to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (where applicable), and the relevant Flood Risk Management Guidelines.

BC-ED-P-4: It is the policy of the Council to assess proposals for the development of lands identified as 'Mixed Use' sites having regard to all relevant material planning considerations, relevant policies of this Plan including the relevant policy BC-ED-P-5 to BC-ED-P-11 relating to each 'Mixed Use' site and other national/regional guidance and relevant environmental and conservation designations including compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

BC-ED-P-5: Mixed Use 1- Ned's Point (M1): This scenic coastal site comprises a battery and ordnance ground with stone revetments, ditches and a low tower dating from 1812, a small pier, a deep-sea diving centre and RNLI lifeboat station and slipway within a small clearing in a wooded area on the shores of Lough Swilly. Part of the site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The Fort is historically and architecturally important (NIAH), accordingly, any development proposal on these lands should seek to sensitively reuse/refurbish the existing structure as part of any redevelopment proposal. The site has potential for sensitive development as a tourist facility given its scenic location. Accordingly, the Council will seek the reuse of the fort in any development proposal advanced. Any proposal shall be of a massing and scale that respects the sensitive location of the site. Given that part of the site is NHA and SAC any development of the site must be sensitively designed and not damage nor detract from the natural environment. The existing coastal walk shall be protected as a public amenity.

BC-ED-P-6: Mixed Use 2 – Edge of Town Centre (M2): This is a flat open agricultural field and a prime 'edge of town centre' site and would lend itself particularly for Educational use, having regard to its proximity to the town, adjacent residential areas, room to expand and a range of access points which would enhance access to and from the site in a circuitous manner.

- BC-ED-P-7:** Mixed Use 3 – Brownfield Site Shorefront (M3): This brownfield site was the former Fruit of the Loom dyeing plant and remains occupied by this vacant commercial / industrial building of substantial size and scale. This site is coastal, and resides between low-density residential lands to the north and east and a large public amenity area to the south. The western side forms part of a coastal walk from Buncrana pier (M4) through to Ned’s Point (M1), and further north along the coast. This site could lend itself to a mixed-use development of high architectural design that may include appropriate commercial, residential, retail and leisure uses that should harness the amenity, coastal and tourism elements at this prime location. Any proposed development will be required to ensure the protection of the amenity shore walk and the SAC and NHA. Any proposal shall be of a massing and scale that respects the sensitive location, and the scale and massing of any surrounding properties. Any proposal may also be considered on a phased basis subject to proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- BC-ED-P-8:** Mixed Use 4 – Brownfield Site and Pier (M4): The brownfield site housed the former Swilly Hotel. It is a locally prominent site and forms a vista from various parts of the town and surrounding hinterland. The location which is easily accessible is close to the town centre and existing public amenity areas and would lend itself to residential, leisure, tourism, marine and mixed development. Any development must be of a high architectural and environmental quality having regard to the coastal, prominent location adjoining a SAC and NHA. Any proposed architectural design shall be of an informed resolution considering historical evolution, context, neighbouring building heights and orientation and, will be subject to a visual impact assessment to ensure any development does not detract from any aspect to/from the shorefront and/or from any of the approach roads into/out of the town and to ensure that it reflects that the former Swilly Hotel site is one of the most important and prominent sites within the town, not only historically and culturally but importantly visually. Any proposed development at this location shall consider traffic movements that may be associated with the development in the context of the existing traffic movements and flows associated with the ferry service. Any proposal shall be of a massing and scale that respects the sensitive location.
- BC-ED-P-9:** Mixed Use 5 – Brownfield Site – Ballymacarry (M5): This site (12.6 Ha) comprises the former Fruit of the Loom factory, a comparison goods outlet and undeveloped lands. Adjacent uses are industry/enterprise and residential. The site benefits from key access on the southern side of the town to the Letterkenny – Derry economic corridor and also benefits from proximity to the Inner Relief Road. Development on this site may be appropriate for a mix of uses within the overall site including community, education, residential, light industrial and bulky goods retail. Developments should have regard to the existing adjacent road network and the residential amenities of adjoining properties. There are potential flooding issues associated within this large flat site, which resides under a steep hill, therefore any proposal will be required to comply with the Flood Risk Objectives and Policies of this Plan.
- BC-ED-P-10:** Mixed Use 6 – Cockhill Road (M6): This ‘Edge of Town Centre’ site is located west of Mixed Use 2. It has strong potential for ‘Educational/Community’ uses and is located beside high quality community and recreational facilities. The site is also close to Swan Park and the historic access to Buncrana Castle (a Protected Structure) and regard must therefore be had to the overall context and setting of the protected structure, and also the need to provide protection to the views and character of the area, as read from the public walkways that exist and that are delineated in this Plan. Therefore, any proposals must ensure that the development would provide for the integration and protection of the context and setting of the protected structure, and the integration of existing and proposed walkways in such a manner so as to

harness these historical, cultural and environmental resources. All existing mature trees within the site should be integrated within any development proposal.

BC-ED-P-11: Mixed Use 7 – Tullyarvan (M7): This site is located immediately north of the extensive sylvan riverside landscape of Swan Park, which links the historical sites of Tullyarvan Mill to east, Ned’s Point to west, Bunrana Castle (a Protected Structure) to south and the Town Centre and the substantial built up fabric of the town located within walking distance to east. The site consists of a number of low lying fields along the southern portion of the site that are formed by mature trees and hedgerows. The fields within the northern portion of the site slope upwards, towards established housing development on more elevated and prominent lands to north. Linear detached housing fronts the public road to east. This site has significant constraints to development, including absence of access to wastewater sewers by gravity flow, lack of adequate capacity at the Westbrook wastewater pumping station to facilitate significant development, road network deficiencies at Wilson’s Bridge and the environmental sensitivity of Swan Park, Crana River and the Coastline, which is a Natura 2000 site. Notwithstanding, having regard to the identification of Bunrana as a Tourism Development Centre for the County and to the location of this site in proximity to strategic walkways, to the coastal environment and to Swan Park, this site provides for an opportunity to consider tourism, community, sport, leisure, allotments, garden centres, open space, recreational amenities and tourism facilities that are appropriately sited and designed so as to integrate with the sensitive landscape, cultural and environmental assets. Any such development shall also:

- (a) Ensure the adequate and appropriate provision of infrastructure including waste water pumping facilities to public sewer network and upgrading of access to Cockhill Road. As regards wastewater disposal, best and most efficient use of the site shall be required where connection to existing gravity flow sewer network can be achieved and thereafter any proposal shall be required to demonstrate, in consultation with Irish Water, the appropriate provision of strategically located wastewater pumping facilities that will have the capacity to service the wider area.
- (b) Provide for the appropriate retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and natural landscape features.
- (c) Consider flood risk in accordance with the Flood Risk Objectives and Policies set out in Section 5.4, Chapter 4 of art B of this Plan.
- (d) Ensure compliance with relevant policies of this Plan and have regard to environmental and conservation designations including the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

In addition the Council shall consider other appropriate development formats that can demonstrate compatibility with the sensitive assets of this site, including provision of one-off housing, subject to all relevant material planning considerations, relevant policies of the Plan, other regional and national guidance and relevant Environmental Designations.

BC-ED-P-12: It is the policy of the Council to support the implementation of proposals for the appropriate development of tourism flagship projects, such as a Marine Discovery Centre subject to all material planning considerations, national and regional guidelines, all relevant policies of this Plan and having regard to environmental and conservation designations including the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

BC-ED-P-13: It is the policy of the Council to encourage the development of amenity walks/ cycleways along the indicative routes as identified on the Map 13.1A: ‘Bunrana Land Use Zoning Map’, that accompanies this part of the Plan, and recorded within Table

13.2.1 subject to all material planning considerations and to compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (where applicable).

13.2.2 Retail Strategy

Background

The town centre of Buncrana is concentrated around Upper and Lower Main Street, and extends eastwards from Lower Main Street into a new quarter at Ardaravan Square. The retailing offer in the town is diverse with provision across the retailing types and is characterised by a mix of both independent businesses and a number of larger footprint national stores. Vehicular accessibility through the town centre has been improved by means of the linkages to Ardaravan Square, which has, in particular, alleviated congestion along the Main Street. The square is also accessible from the new Inner Relief Road, which has also enabled access to be provided for the Garda Station and Social Welfare Office.

Backland Development

While most development has occurred along Main Street, the development of Ardaravan Square has demonstrated how underutilised and/or landlocked backlands can provide major development opportunities within the Town Centre. Some of these lands are difficult to develop due to problems with access, configuration/complex land assembly and protection of amenities of surrounding development, however the development of these backlands would contribute to the reinforcement of the vitality and vibrancy of Upper Main Street in particular and are considered to be a positive measure in terms of protecting and enhancing the role of the wider town centre.

Car Parking

In recent years a number of car parking areas have been developed around the Town Centre. This has created enhanced trading/business opportunities and surplus parking facilities are available. The practice of each development proposal making provision for onsite car parking can have a negative impact upon the ability to deliver an appropriate development proposal within an urban context and thus the preference in this Plan is for developments to utilise public parking facilities where surplus car parking is available within easy walking distance or where public parking facilities are to be delivered at a location that will facilitate the development. In those circumstances it will be necessary for the developer to make a financial contribution towards the provision of those facilities.

Town Centre Land Use Survey

A town centre land use survey was undertaken in 2013 which identified the following land uses: Community, Financial, Office, Residential, Retail, Services and Utilities. Donegal County Council intends to prepare a Local Area Plan for Buncrana in due course and as part of this process a further detailed land use survey will be undertaken within the town.

Trends and Analysis

The core retail area of the town is established and operating predominantly in the area of Upper Main Street, Lower Main Street and Ardaravan Square. It is these areas into which new retail development should be guided so as to protect the existing vitality and viability of these core retail areas. At present, the predominant land uses are as follows:

- Upper Main Street: Mixed uses which are predominantly retail, services, financial, offices and residential. The high percentage of residential units indicates a high level of living above the shop although there are a number of units along Upper Main Street that are residential use in their entirety. Vacancy and dereliction rate is high indicating a threatened decline in the town centre function.
- Lower Main Street: Mixed uses that are predominantly residential, retail and service.
- Cockhill Road: Primarily residential uses with some retail uses.
- Ferris Lane: Primarily residential.

- Church Street: Primarily residential.
- St. Mary's Road: Primarily residential with a small percentage of community, offices, retail and services.
- Maginn Avenue: Primarily residential.
- St. Oran's Road: Mixed uses including residential and retail. NB: Only the eastern side of the road is recorded within the Town Centre.
- Millbrae: Primarily residential.
- Ardaravan Square: Primarily residential, retail, services and financial. Higher percentage of residential than retail indicating efficient use of living over the shop within the new build properties along this street.
- Castle Avenue: Mixed uses including residential, financial, services and retail.

Floorspace

The retail function of the town continues to operate mainly through independent retailers, although there are four major convenience retailers in the town (LiDL, EuroSpar, ALDI and Super Valu), that provide approximately 5,900m² of retail floorspace (i.e. Aldi = 1250m², Lidl = 1320m², Super Valu = 2,300m² and 1,000m²).

The Milltown Business Park also accommodates approximately 2,900m² floorspace over two factory/retail units, which provides a diverse range of retail, services and supplies. In addition, Hegarty's Furniture shop on Upper Main Street comprises approximately 1,400m² floorspace at ground floor level.

Vacancy/Dereliction Rates

In 2007, the level of vacancy recorded in a survey of the entire area of the town centre was 12.37% of the total number of units. A further town centre land use survey carried out in March 2013 recorded vacancy across the entire town centre at 9.66% of the total number of existing units (N.B. this also includes residential units). Commercial vacancy continues to be an issue in Buncrana and the Geoview Commercial Vacancy Report for Q4 of 2016 identified a vacancy rate of 15.3% in the town, thus emphasising the need to encourage and facilitate where appropriate the re-use and redevelopment of vacant or derelict lands or buildings within the town centre for retail use.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Retail objectives and policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.2.2.1 Retail Objectives Specific to Buncrana

- BC-R-O-1:** To facilitate the development of a Casual Trading Area(s) within the town centre.
- BC-R-O-2:** To promote retailing as part of the town's tourism economy.

13.2.2.2 Retail Policies Specific to Buncrana

- BC-R-P-1:** It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the character of the Area of Special Townscape Character, as part of any public realm improvements or public infrastructure schemes. Such works/developments shall;
- (a) Ensure the protection and where necessary the reuse of historic street furniture, such as kerbing, paving, lamps, plaques etc.
 - (b) In new development, use materials appropriate to the character of the area and promote high quality urban design.

- BC-R-P-2:** It is the policy of the Council to seek to secure the vitality and viability of the retail function of the town centre. In doing so, the Council shall implement the following measures:
- (a) To make provision for additional public car parking at alternative suitable locations that may become available over the life of this Plan.
 - (b) To review traffic management measures, to improve circulation within the town centre.
 - (c) To consider opportunities that can underpin the role of Market Square, to act as a shared space that delivers strong linkage between the Main Street and the new retail quarter at Ardaravan Square.
 - (d) To encourage the appropriate regeneration and reuse of vacant, derelict and rundown buildings.
 - (e) To pursue completion of the Inner Relief Road to relieve congestion in the town centre and to pursue the preferred route of the Outer Relief Road.
 - (f) To encourage the development of strong street frontage along the Inner Relief Road.
 - (g) To encourage appropriate proposals for alternative transport options within the town centre including opportunities for public transport and for implementation of dedicated cycle and pedestrian pathways.
 - (h) To explore opportunities to establish a programme to 'green' the town centre by means of protection of existing trees, hedgerows, green spaces together with new planting to augment and complement existing biodiversity.
 - (i) To protect archaeological heritage and buildings of cultural or architectural heritage.
 - (j) To ensure compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

- BC-R-P-3:** Proposals for retail uses outside the town centre shall only be considered where it satisfies policy RS-P-7 (Section 4.2, Chapter 4 of Part B of the Plan) or alternatively where the following can be demonstrated:
- (a) That the sequential approach can be satisfied demonstrating that it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the town centre in terms of size, availability, accessibility and feasibility; and
 - (b) That there will be no material adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the existing town centre by demonstrating that the proposal would:
 - Not diminish the range of activities and services that the town centre can support.
 - Not cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail areas of Upper Main Street, Lower Main Street and Ardaravan Square that is likely to persist in the long term.
 - Ensure a high standard of access by private car, public transport and by foot.
 - Link effectively with the existing retail core of Upper Main Street, Lower Main Street and Ardaravan Square.
 - Not cause an adverse impact on the retail core of Upper Main Street, Lower Main Street and Ardaravan square either by itself or cumulatively when taken with other existing or permitted retail developments.
 - Accord with other policies and objectives of this Plan and the proper planning and sustainability of the area; and
 - (c) Complies with other retail policies within this Plan.
 - (d) That there will be no negative impact on environmental assets or environmental and conservation designations.

13.3 Infrastructure

13.3.1 Transportation

Roads

Bunrana is linked to Letterkenny and Derry by the N13 and R238 respectively. The R238 is the towns' regional road link between Bridgend/Derry and Carndonagh. These corridors are important routes and form part of the County's 'Strategic Road Network' as identified in Map 5.1.2: 'Strategic Transport Map', contained in Part B of this Plan, and in particular the Bridgend to Bunrana route is treated as a National Road for planning purposes in order to safeguard the carrying capacity of the road. The existing local road network is of varying quality particularly in more peripheral areas.

Having regard to the limitations in terms of alternatives to the private car, there is a strong basis on which to continue to assess and invest in walking routes within the town, that serve both a daily and functional need as well as the better known tourism type walkways. The Council's policy in this regard is set out in policy BC-ED-P-13, in Section 13.2.1 of this part of the Plan.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Transportation objectives and policies that are specific to Bunrana are set out below:

13.3.1.1 Transportation Objectives Specific to Bunrana

- BC-T-O-1:** To protect the corridors and routes and acquire the lands necessary for transportation improvement and projects as identified in the Map 13.1A: 'Bunrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan, subject to all other objectives and policies contained within this Plan.
- BC-T-O-2:** To achieve quality strategic links between Bunrana and other strategic settlements in particular to the Letterkenny-Derry linked Metropolitan Area and the wider North West City Region and to Carndonagh.

13.3.1.2 Transportation Policies Specific to Bunrana

- BC-T-P-1:** It is the policy of the Council to support and facilitate an improved roads infrastructure, and improved connectivity from Bunrana to both the Letterkenny-Derry Metropolitan Area and North West City Region and to Carndonagh, building on the role of Bunrana as a 'Strategic Town, Layer 2A' within the North West City Region subject to environmental, safety and other planning considerations.
- BC-T-P-2:** It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the provision of the proposed Outer Relief Road, delineated on Map 13.1A: 'Bunrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan and to protect the route from development subject to the following:
- (a) New individual accesses (excluding farm access) will not be permitted direct access onto the proposed Outer Relief Road. Consideration may be given where it is demonstrated that no alternative access exists and that the access shall not prejudice the carrying capacity or safety of the road.
 - (b) New development affected by the relief road corridor shall be designed to anticipate and mitigate the operational and environmental impacts of the road, including noise impact. A noise impact assessment report may be required in the assessment of any planning application and the setback requirement that will be required will be informed by that assessment.

- BC-T-P-3:** It is the policy of the Council to investigate new and improved linkages between the R238/Inner Relief Road junction (No. T5) (Ballymacarry) and the L1671 and/or L1641 (Tullyarvan) roads subject to environmental, safety and other planning considerations.
- BC-T-P-4:** It is the policy of the Council to require that developments that will generate high volumes of vehicular traffic will be required to provide an appropriate traffic management plan in order to fully assess the suitability of the proposal.
- BC-T-P-5:** It is the policy of the Council to require the provision of ducting for broadband and all other utility services when developing new roads/repairing existing roads.
- BC-T-P-6:** It is the policy of the Council to seek provision, improvement and extension of public footpaths and lighting at appropriate locations subject to environmental, safety and amenity considerations.
- BC-T-P-7:** It is a policy of the Council to require that all development proposals comply with the Development and Technical Standards' set out in Appendix 1 of Part B of this Plan to promote road safety.

13.3.2 Water

Background

The Crana and Mill Rivers flow through Buncrana. Over the past 20 years the Crana River at Westbrook and the Mill River at Tullydish have maintained 'Good' water quality status (see Table 13.3.1). However the Crana River at Ballymagan and the Mill River at the Railway Bridge have experienced a deterioration in water quality from 'High' and 'Good' status respectively to 'Poor' in both cases. It is an objective of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) to ensure these rivers return to Good or High water quality status. Accordingly, the Council will seek to manage development to safeguard these waters.

Table 13.4: River Water Quality Values

Year	Crana River /Westbrook	Crana River / Ballymagan	Mill River/Bridge	Mill River/Tullydish
1991	4-5	5	4	5
1996	4	4-5	3-4	5
1998	4	3-4	4	4-5
2001	4	4		
2004	4	4	4	4
2007	4	4	3	
2010	4	3	3	4
Q Legend	Good	Poor	Poor	Good
Q Linear	4	3	3	4

Please note the Q values are only one element of WFD status.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Surface Water policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.3.2.1 Surface Water Policy Specific to Buncrana

BC-SW-P-1: It is the policy of the Council to require the disposal of surface water run-off in an appropriate and environmentally sensitive manner. Developments that fall within the immediate catchment of the Crana River, Mill River and Lough Swilly may require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

13.3.3 Environmental Services

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Environmental Services are contained in Section 5.2, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.3.4 Flooding

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Flooding are contained in Section 5.4, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.4 Housing

Background

In line with the Core Strategy (Chapter 2 of Part A of the Plan), the Council's strategy in relation to housing in Buncrana is to ensure that adequate provision is made to accommodate the projected growth in persons of an additional 1,215 persons by 2024. Therefore, using an evidenced based methodology, the most appropriate lands have been identified to supply the first phase quantum of need, totaling 65 hectares, and are identified on Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan.

The 1st phase quantum consists of a combination of sites identified as 'Residential (Phase 1)' and other sites identified as 'Mixed Use.' Generally, these are focused on lands located proximate to the centre of the town and where the facilities to service development are readily available or can be made readily available without the need for mechanical or electrical plant/equipment. In relation to the 'Mixed Use' sites, a number of these are located within the defined Town Centre and therefore it is expected that a percentage of each mixed use site will yield residential units and contribute to the quantum of housing units provided for in the Core Strategy. In addition, a number of other 'Mixed Use' sites are important brownfield sites, the regeneration of which are sustainable and will add to the character of the town. Again, a percentage of these 'Mixed Use' sites are expected to yield residential units in conjunction with other appropriate uses.

A further 101 hectares of land are identified as 'Strategic Residential Reserve' that will supply need over a longer term time frame, beyond the life of the current Plan. The release of this land will be considered through future reviews of the Plan and managed through a clear and transparent evidenced led approach that will involve annual assessment of the uptake of land zoned 'Residential (Phase1)'.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Housing objectives and policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.4.1 Housing Objective Specific to Buncrana

BC-H-O-1: To identify the appropriate quantum and range of lands to meet future housing need in Buncrana including social housing need.

13.4.2 Housing Policies Specific to Buncrana

BC-H-P-1: It is a policy of the Council that new housing development in Buncrana shall be guided to those lands identified as 'Residential (Phase 1)' and to those lands identified 'Mixed Use' on the accompanying land use zoning map (Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers). In addition, consideration will be given to appropriate proposals for development at other locations as follows:

- (a) Within lands identified as 'Established Development.'
- (b) Within the town centre.
- (c) Within an entire existing unfinished housing development where the entire development has commenced, or, within that part of an existing unfinished housing development where only part of the development has commenced. The number of residential units that may be permitted shall not exceed the number of units permitted within the unfinished development, or part thereof as applicable.

All proposals shall be subject to all relevant material considerations, relevant policies of the Plan, other regional and national guidance and relevant Environmental designations.

BC-H-P-2: It is a policy of the Council to ensure the adequate supply of future strategic landbank through the identification of lands as 'Strategic Residential Reserve' for the purposes of supplying housing needs beyond the life of the Plan and subsequent to the sufficient and appropriate uptake of lands zoned 'Residential (Phase 1)' and 'Mixed Use' sites 'M3, M4, M5 and M7' together with appropriate uptake of supply available through extant planning permissions, vacant houses and unfinished developments. The Council will examine and manage the appropriate release of 'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands on the basis of a clear and transparent evidenced led approach that will involve annual assessment of the uptake of land zoned 'Residential (Phase 1)' and having regard to relevant environmental designations. Release of 'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands shall only be carried out in the context of a variation or review of the Development Plan or through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

BC-H-P-3: It is the policy of the Council that proposals for new residential development shall demonstrate that a housing density appropriate to its context is achieved, and provides for a sustainable pattern of development whilst ensuring the highest quality residential environment. Lower density ranges may be required having regard to the density and spatial pattern of development on lands that abut the site. In addition, housing densities will be considered in the light of all other relevant objectives and policies of this Plan, including the objectives and policies set out in Chapter 2, Core Strategy. The range of densities referred to in Table 13.4.1 are to be taken as an indicative guide and may be deviated from subject to appropriate justification and subject to consideration in the context of the uptake of 'Town Centre' Sites A-F,

'Residential (Phase 1) sites A-ZA' and 'Mixed Use sites M3, M4, M5 and M7' and in the context of the Core Strategy.

Table 13.5: Indicative Density for Residential Development on Zoned Lands in Buncrana

Ref.	Proposed Zoning	Area of Site (Ha)	SEA Impact ⁴ (Low/Medium/ High)	Approximate Housing Yield
Town centre sites (identified with residential potential)				
A	Town Centre, Residential (Phase 1) and Car Park	4.17	Low	70-90
B	Town Centre and Residential (Phase 1)	0.93	Low	20-30
C	Town Centre and Residential (Phase 1)	1.0	Low	25-40
D	Town Centre (Primarily Retail and some Residential (Phase 1))	1.58	Low	10-20
E	Town Centre (Primarily Retail and some Residential (Phase 1))	1.0	Low	5-10
F	Town Centre and Commercial and Residential (Phase 1)	0.67	Low	8-13
Total from Town Centre sites (identified with residential potential)	--	9.35	N/A	138- 203
Total Residential (Phase 1) sites				
G	Residential (Phase 1)	1.13	Low	35-45
H	Residential (Phase 1)	0.91	Low	25-50
I	Residential (Phase 1)	0.31	Low-Medium	6-8
J	Residential (Phase 1)	1.22	Low-Medium	50-60
K	Residential (Phase 1)	0.16	Low	1-2
L	Residential (Phase 1)	0.35	Low-Medium	6-12
M	Residential (Phase 1) (These lands appear on PFRAM mapping and while there is development potential, this may only be considered through mitigation/ site engineering solutions).	0.82	Low	7- 15
N	Residential (Phase 1) (These lands appear on PFRAM mapping and while there is development potential, this may only be considered through mitigation/ site engineering solutions).	0.28	Low	2- 3
O	Residential (Phase 1)	3.4	Low	80-100

Ref.	Proposed Zoning	Area of Site (Ha)	SEA Impact ⁴ (Low/Medium/ High)	Approximate Housing Yield
P	Residential (Phase 1)	1.06	Low	25-35
Q	Residential (Phase 1)	0.32	Low	2- 3
R	Residential (Phase 1)	0.46	Low	7- 9
S	Residential (Phase 1)	0.19	Low	2
T	Residential (Phase 1)	7.61	Low	76- 114
U	Residential (Phase 1)	0.14	Low	4
V	Residential (Phase 1) ⁵	0.25	Low	4
W	Residential (Phase 1) ⁶	1.22	Low	1
X	Residential (Phase 1) ⁷	0.1	Low	6
Y	Residential (Phase 1)	0.8	Low	11
Z	Residential (Phase 1)	4.9	Medium	49-95
ZA	Residential (Phase1)	0.41	Medium	12-15
Totals in relation to Residential (Phase 1) sites		26.04	Low	411-594
Mixed Use Sites (with an element of residential)				
M3	Mixed Use 3	2.4	Medium	25-35
M4	Mixed Use 4 and Residential (Phase 1)	2.0	Low-Medium	15-20
M5	Mixed Use 5 (Non Convenience Retail) and Educational	12.6	Low-Medium	30- 38
M7	Mixed Use 7	12.45	Low-Medium	5- 7
Total in relation to Mixed Use Sites	--	29.45	--	75-100
TOTAL (Combining sites identified as Residential (Phase 1) and sites identified as Mixed Use with an element of Residential)	--	64.84	--	624-897

BC-H-P-4: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate an appropriate provision of one-off housing in 'Agricultural/Rural' areas where the applicant can demonstrate that they need a new house at this location and can provide evidence that they, or their parents, have resided in those areas for a period of at least 7 years. All proposals shall be subject to all relevant material considerations, relevant policies of the Plan, other regional and national guidance and relevant Environmental Designations.

13.5 Natural and Built Heritage

13.5.1 Natural Heritage

Buncrana and Environs is host to many natural heritage resources in the form of special designations (SACs, SPAs and pNHAs), woodland areas, shorefront, tree lined rivers and parkland. These resources are important environmental assets in the town and contribute to the quality of life and character of Buncrana, which is particularly important in attracting tourism.

Specifically, EU and national protected sites are set out in Table 13.5.1. Located on the Lough Swilly SAC and SPA, the protected sites include the wooded valleys that follow the Mill and Crana Rivers into Lough Swilly. Porthaw Glen is also an important natural habitat, which has European protection, i.e. SAC. The Swilly shoreline has a number of important designations, including SAC, SPA and pNHA. It is also a designated shellfish water and has a Blue Flag beach at Lisfannon.

Figure 13.4: Crana River

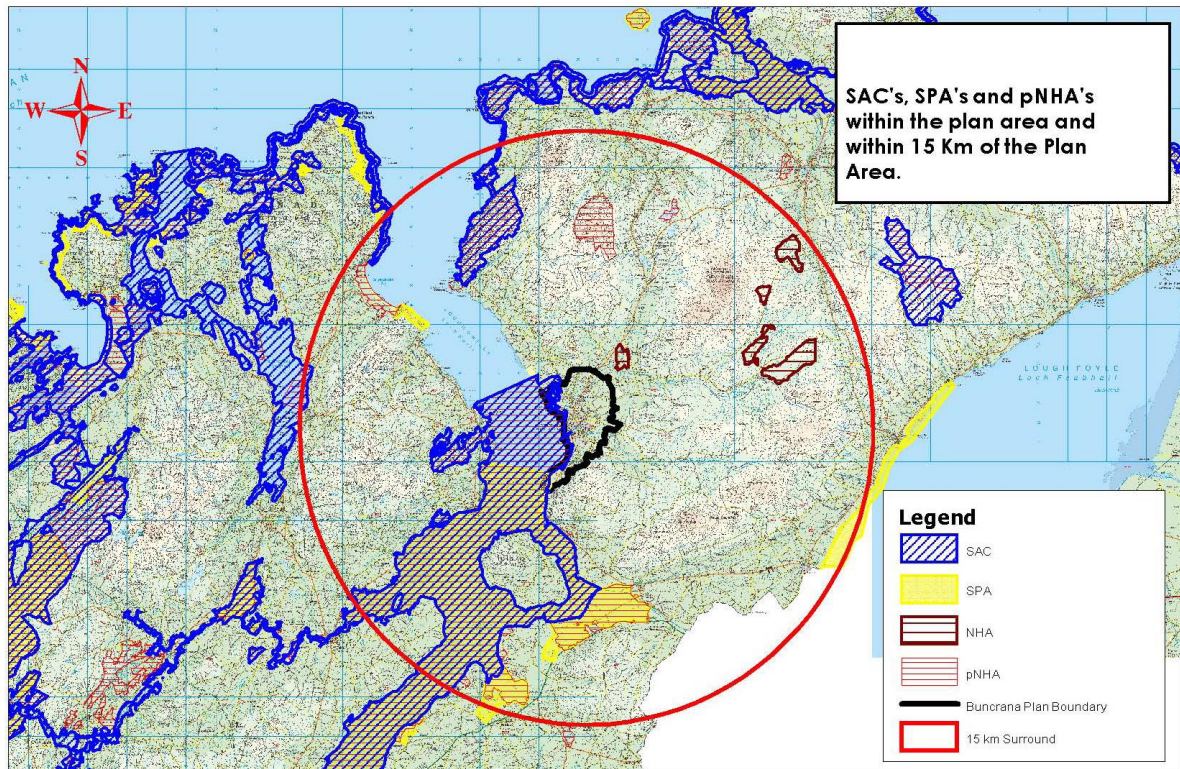


Table 13.6: Natura 2000 Sites and Natural Heritage Areas

Site	Code	Name
Special Area of Conservation	002287	Lough Swilly
Proposed Natural Heritage Area	000166	Lough Swilly including Big Isle, Blanket Nook and Inch Lake
Special Protection Area	004075	Lough Swilly

A Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment of the Development Plan have been carried out, in which the protection of the natural heritage of the town is emphasized. The strategy of this Plan in relation to natural heritage ensures that, cumulatively, the objectives and policies of the Plan provide appropriate protection to environmental assets and designated sites and that implementation shall provide adequate mitigation where relevant. Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) specifically requires the protection of the designated species and habitats of Natura 2000 sites. Therefore any project with the potential to impact on the conservation objectives of designated sites is required to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats species as well as significant disturbance of species for which areas have been designated and maybe subject to Appropriate Assessment.

Figure 13.5: Natura 2000 and NHA designations



In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.5.1.1 Natural Heritage Policies Specific to Buncrana

BC-NH-P-1: It is the policy of the Council to safeguard and enhance the local landscape and natural environment, including the seascape, by ensuring any new developments do not detrimentally impact on the character, integrity, distinctiveness or scenic value of the area.

BC-NH-P-2: It is the policy of the Council to conserve and protect the lands identified as 'Coastal Protection Area' on Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan, with the exception of appropriate agricultural or recreational development. Proposals for agricultural or recreational development within the identified area will be considered having regard to all material planning considerations, all other relevant policies of the Plan, national/regional guidelines and having regard to all environmental and conservation designations.

13.5.2 Built Heritage

An Area of Special Townscape Character (ASTC) has been identified in Buncrana and illustrated on Map 13.3: 'Area of Special Townscape Character' contained in this part of the Plan. This area has been informed by the concentration of valuable and unique architectural heritage evident throughout the Plan area that can positively contribute to Buncrana's sense of place.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Built Heritage objectives and policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.5.2.1 Built Heritage Objective Specific to Buncrana

BC-BH-O-1: To investigate the potential of designating appropriate Architectural Conservation Areas within Buncrana.

13.5.2.2 Built Heritage Policies Specific to Buncrana

BC-BH-P-1: It is the policy of the Council to continue to seek funding to carry out and publish a detailed research project within the 'Area of Special Townscape Character' in Buncrana, which shall:

- (a) Record the architectural history of the area.
- (b) Identify the elements of the area that inform the character of the area, such as railings, boundary condition, architectural detail, landscape, key views and prospects, landmark buildings.
- (c) Identify design guidance and policies in relation to appropriate forms of new development.
- (d) Raise awareness and understanding of the special aspects of the townscape using consultation and information exchange as a key element of the project.
- (e) Promote the area as an attractive place to live and invest in identifying the area as a key asset in encouraging tourism potential.

BC-BH-P-2: It is the policy of the Council to protect the character and integrity of the 'Area of Special Townscape Character' in Buncrana, including the promotion of a higher quality built environment and to carefully consider all elements, which make this up including lighting, benches, paving, bins, signage, parking, wirescape etc. The following principles shall be considered.

- (a) Buildings identified within the ASTC shall be re-used/refurbished as a preference to demolition.
- (b) Traditional railings, stone kerbing, steps, gates and boundary condition shall be retained.
- (c) Use of appropriate heritage range colours will be encouraged. Bright neon colours shall not be permitted.
- (d) New proposals respect the context and setting of key existing buildings that contribute to the character of the area. Key existing buildings are those referred to on the Record of Protected Structures and on any survey/data on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.
- (e) Existing building lines shall be retained.
- (f) Buildings included on any National Inventory of Architectural Heritage listing are to be reused/refurbished as a preference over demolition.
- (g) New proposals reflect the proportion, scale and massing of the existing streetscape.
- (h) The protection of amenity and open space associated with buildings and groups of buildings.

BC-BH-P-3: It is the policy of the Council to manage Long Established Residential Areas in Buncrana so as to ensure the townscape character, setting and design of these unique neighbourhoods are protected. As such inappropriate intervention or

redevelopment, as identified, which may negatively impact upon these streetscapes, will not be permitted.

13.5.3 Archaeological Heritage

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Archaeological Heritage are contained in Section 7.3, Chapter 7 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.6 Natural Resource Development

13.6.1 Extractive Industry and Geology

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Extractive Industry and Geology are contained in Section 8.1, Chapter 8 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.6.2 Energy

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Energy are contained in Section 8.2, Chapter 8 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.7 Tourism

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Tourism are contained in Chapter 9 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.8 Marine Resource and Coastal Management

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Marine Resource and Coastal Management are contained in Chapter 10 of Part B of this Development Plan.

13.9 Social, Community and Culture

Background

Buncrana performs as an important service centre in the County where the appropriate level and mix of community, education and health facilities contributes to the capacity of the town to meet the needs of its growing population. Continued support for vibrant and diverse community, education and health sectors within the town is critical in sustaining a good measure of quality of life and in terms of building upon the strategic function of Buncrana as a key service centre. As outlined in the following paragraphs, the type of services established in the town within the community, education and health sectors are of a strategic nature, designed so as to meet needs at a high level in terms of the hierarchy of service provision and, in a spatial context to service the town as well as a wider geographical catchment within Inishowen.

In terms of community activity, there is a very active voluntary and community sector in Buncrana evidenced by the large and diverse range of clubs, societies and sporting organisations. Many of these groups have ambitions to further develop facilities and services.

The education needs of the town and the surrounding wider catchment are served by 5 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and an Adult Education and Training Centre. 550 students were enrolled at Crana College in February 2011, while Scoil Mhuire had around 660 students. A number of these schools are currently proposing to extend their facilities to cater for rising demand. Accordingly there is a need to facilitate this growth through the identification of appropriate objectives, policies and land use zoning that will be sufficient to supply future education needs, in a manner consistent with the relevant Code of Practice published by the Department of Education and Skills.

The following schools are currently seeking new/improved accommodation:

- Crana College (Post Primary). Currently sited on 2.76 acres.
- Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha (All Irish Primary School), currently located in temporary accommodation at the Bunrana Youth and Community Co. Ltd) - approximately 170 pupils.
- Coláiste Chineal Eoghain (All Irish Post Primary), which has been granted provisional recognition by the Department of Education and Skills, currently operating in rented accommodation at Tullyarvan Mill Complex.

Within the town centre and the outer edge of the town centre, vibrancy in terms of community facilities is evidenced through religious institutions, a library, cinema, pubs and restaurants and a number of charity based retail activities.

Sporting needs are serviced through Bunrana Leisure Centre, which offers a host of facilities including a swimming pool, fitness suites, running track, tennis courts, basketball courts, grass and all weather pitches, as well as a training programme. The town benefits from a vibrant GAA Club, which facilitates both Gaelic Football and Hurling whilst young people are targeted through the work of a youth club (including a youth drop- in centre) and soccer club at Cockhill and Castle Avenue. Other sporting facilities are also provided in a private capacity in the town such as the Bunrana Golf Club, Bunrana Angling Club and the Deep Sea Diving Centre at Ned's Point. These groups contribute to the community vitality of the town and also make a significant contribution to the economy, particularly in relation to tourism.

Bunrana has a wealth of natural amenity and recreational lands particularly along the riverbanks and along the shoreline including an excellent coastal walkway from the Shorefront extending to Stragill Beach some 1 km north of the Plan area. These amenities add to the identity of the town as a clean and healthy environment and are supported by pockets of open space and recreational space throughout the Plan area. The Plan strategy recognises these areas as important assets of the town and aims to harness the existing natural amenity areas so as to provide quality recreation and amenity facilities, to protect these areas from unsuitable developments and to deliver on the potential and opportunity that is presented so as to add to the tourism product and resource in the town. These areas are zoned 'Amenity/Recreation' on Map 13.1A: 'Bunrana Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan.

Health services in Bunrana are provided through the health centre, managed by the HSE and through Bunrana Community Based Hospital with 30 beds provided for elderly people and day care services also. Other services include respite care, convalescence, rehabilitation, palliative care, short term continuing care, mental health services, physiotherapy, and chiropody services. Bunrana Health Clinic offers dental, speech and language therapy, Public Health Nursing, Psychology and Social Worker services.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Social, Community and Culture objectives and policies that are specific to Buncrana are set out below:

13.9.1 Social, Community and Culture Objectives Specific to Buncrana

- BC-SCC-O-1:** To integrate the planning and sustainable development of the town with the community, education and health requirements of its population.
- BC-SCC-O-2:** To develop Buncrana as an attractive place to live and work through the development of vibrant and sustainable communities.
- BC-SCC-O-3:** To facilitate the continuing promotion, protection, harnessing and sustainable development of the community, education and health sectors in Buncrana subject to environmental designations and considerations.
- BC-SCC-O-4:** To facilitate a coordinated approach to the delivery of community, education and health infrastructure and provision of services through the work of the various Council Directorates, as well as inter- agency liaison and co-operation with statutory and other relevant organisations including cross border initiatives.

13.9.2 Social, Community and Culture Policies Specific to Buncrana

- BC-SCC-P-1:** It is the policy of the Council to develop parks and public amenity areas in appropriate locations subject to all material planning considerations including environmental designations together with ensuring compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This shall be achieved through the following measures:
- Support for existing parks and amenity/recreation areas and promotion of new public amenity areas and walkways throughout, to establish a network of quality recreational areas.
 - Support for the development of walkways and a linear recreational area along the banks of both the Mill River and the Crana River as identified on the Land Use Zoning Map (Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map', that accompanies this part of the Plan, refers) and ensure that new development does not detract from the visual sensitivity of the shorefront.
 - Support for the development of the Shorefront and coastal fringe of Buncrana as a recreational and amenity area as identified on Map 13.1A: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map' and Map 13.2: 'Buncrana Land Use Zoning Map Extract contained in this part of the Plan and Map 13.3: 'Area of Special Townscape Character' contained in this part of the Plan.
- BC-SCC-P-2:** It is the policy of the Council to protect the recreational, environmental and conservation integrity, and the visual quality of all beaches within and adjacent to the Plan area, including Lady's Bay Buncrana and Lisfannon Beaches.

Chapter 14 Bundoran

14.1 Introduction

This chapter relates to the detailed written text that is specific to Bundoran. It should be read in conjunction with the wider policies of this Development Plan. One map accompanies this chapter as follows (refer A3 Map at the end of Chapter 14; nb. this Map may be purchased from Donegal County Council for a fee of €10 per map):

- Map 14.1: Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map.

Background

Bundoran is identified as Layer 2A in the settlement structure set out in Chapter 2 of Part A of this Plan. The population of Bundoran in 2011 was 1781 making it the 7th largest town in the County. As a Layer 2A town, it is described as a 'Strategic Town' serving a 'Special Economic Function' the further development of which is supported by the Core Strategy in Chapter 2 of Part A of this Plan. The primary nature of the towns 'Special Economic Function' relates to its strong role as centre for tourism, located along the Wild Atlantic Way as one of the first centres for tourists on the route through Sligo. It therefore performs a particular function as a strategic tourism location through which the regionality of the Wild Atlantic Way is to be promoted in the Donegal context in order to retain tourists and draw increased numbers of visitors northwards. It provides for a diverse range of tourist accommodation including hotels, hostels, caravanning and holiday homes as well as other entertainment functions associated with tourism. Given the level of holiday homes within the town, vacancy of residential units is notable outside of peak season. The town is harnessing its coastal location and its distinct interactions between the land and the sea having developed a particular identify for surfing which is promoted further through the annual Sea Sessions festival.

The Core Strategy directs 34% of the projected growth in the County across all of the Layer 2 towns during the life of the Plan and beyond to 2038 and this provides for an additional population across Layer 2 of 4,749 people by 2024 and a further 12,332 people by 2038. In addition to its 'Special Economic Function' and due to the current and imminent infrastructural capacity in Bundoran, the Core Strategy provides for a reasonable level of housing land supply within the town, projecting its population to 2,485 by 2024.

Development Trends

Prior to 2009, Bundoran experienced a rapid rate of development and in particular the growth in the retail sector within the town centre and residential growth has been significant. Since then there has been a marked slowdown in growth, demand for development and implementation of planning permissions in line with national economic trends.

Specific Provisions of the Core Strategy in Relation to Bundoran

As outlined in the 'Background,' the Core Strategy of this Plan directs 36% of the projected growth in the County across Layer 2 in the settlement structure thus requiring the supply of appropriate lands for the purposes of housing to accommodate an additional 4,749 people to 2024. Table 14.1 entitled 'The Core Strategy Table in Relation to Bundoran,' extracts the relevant information from the Core Strategy Table in respect of the entire county set out in Table 2.4 in Chapter 2 of Part A of the Plan. Table 14.1 shows that circa 23 hectares of lands are identified as either 'Primarily Residential-Phase 1' or as part of a mixed use zone and the location of the lands identified are shown on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan. The lands identified have the potential to supply some 332 housing units (including 50% over zoning as provided under the Core Strategy Guidelines, 2010).

Table 14.1 shows that the quantum of lands identified for delivery of housing units to 2024, results in an excess of 128 units relative to the number of units required to meet the projected population and associated Housing Land Requirement (HLR). The excess makes provision for housing land needs to accommodate holiday accommodation in addition to projected population growth. This provision is essential in terms of supporting the economy of the town as Bundoran is a premier tourist town and as such is a desirable holiday home destination. However the importance of maintaining a strong resident population is recognised in order to sustain the vitality and viability of the town throughout the year and therefore, in order to achieve this it is acknowledged that an appropriate balance between residential and non-residential population is necessary. Therefore, a monitor and manage approach will be implemented in relation to new housing proposals in Bundoran and the excess will be addressed further through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

Table 14.1: Core Strategy Table in Relation to Bundoran

Core Strategy population allocation	No. of housing units required ¹⁵	HLR (Ha) ¹⁶	Potential no. of units that could be supplied through HLR	Existing zoning (As at 1 st Feb 2017)	No of housing units the existing zoning provides for	Proposed zoning (primarily residential (PR)- 1 st phase; Ha)	Proposed zoning (Other land) (Ha)	Housing yield from PR	Housing yield from other lands	Shortfall/excess
332	140	17	204	22.86	332	22.93	0	307	25	128

Areas in Bundoran Designated for Significant Development During the Period of the Plan

Figure 14.1 shows the main developed areas of Bundoran together with phase 1 and phase 2 residential areas which are clearly identifiable as sequential extensions to the already established residential areas (shown in grey). Bundoran is a linear settlement stretching along the established Main Street and coast line and as a result there are five distinct established residential areas identified within the settlement. Most of the proposed growth is targeted to the east of the town adjacent the commercial centres which will facilitate the sustainable growth of Bundoran over the Plan period.

Key Areas for Intervention in Bundoran

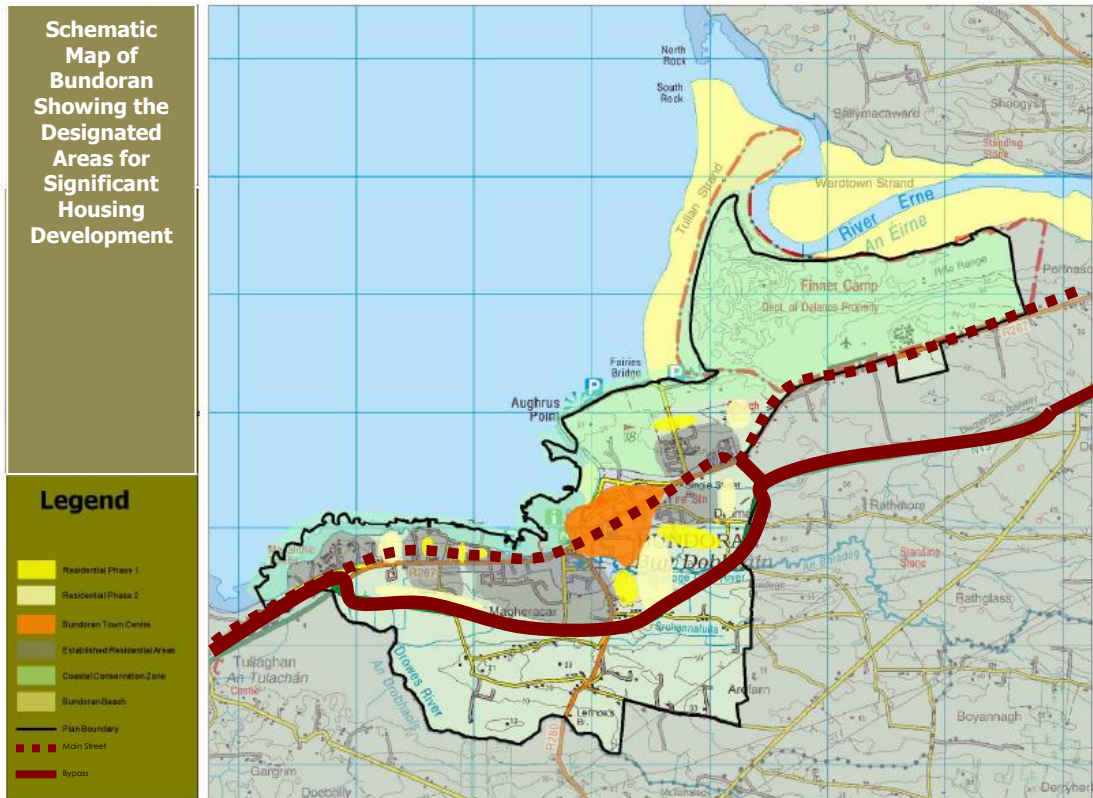
A number of key areas in Bundoran will require the implementation of interventions through a range of mechanisms. Such areas include:

- Continued supports to further enhance the tourism offering in the town.
- Completion and commissioning of Bundoran Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Urban and public realm enhancement throughout the town centre including visual appearance of the entrance gateways to the town.
- Delivery of key housing lands.
- Resolution of unfinished housing developments.

¹⁵ Based on average density of 2.7 people per household.

¹⁶ 12 units/ hectares plus addition 50%.

Figure 14.1: Areas in Bundoran Designated Areas for Significant Development



General location and pattern of development- Zoning Objectives

The zoning objectives should be read in conjunction with the wider policies contained in this Plan and with Map 14.1: ‘Bundoran Land Use Zoning’. Applications may be granted where the Planning Authority considers that the proposed use or development would comply with the zoning objective of the area and would otherwise comply with the policies of the Plan and would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Table 14.2: Zoning Objectives in relation to Bundoran

Zone	Objective
Open Space/ Amenity	To conserve and protect the identified lands from any new development, save for the development of amenity walkways and recreational developments.
Caravan Park	To allow for development, enhancement and retention of existing caravan park and associated tourist facilities.
Coastal Conservation Zone	To restrict development of this area to ensure the adequate protection of these coastal lands.
Coastal Management Zone	To ensure that this area remains free from development but facilitates access as an important local amenity.
Community Facilities	To reserve land for community, civic, educational, institutional, cultural, recreational and amenity purposes.
East and West Gateway Opportunity Sites	The ‘East Gateway Opportunity Site’ will facilitate mixed use employment and enterprise type development. Such development will be architecturally designed to increase the visual amenity of this prime site which heralds the entrance to the town from the remainder of the county.

Zone	Objective
	<p>The 'West Gateway Opportunity Site' will also facilitate mixed use employment and enterprise type development. Again, such development will be architecturally designed to increase the visual amenity of this prime site which heralds the entrance to the town from the Leitrim/Sligo area.</p> <p>It is the policy of the Council to promote/facilitate development on such lands to maximise their dominant strategic gateway locations/entrance to the town. Developments should actively address road frontages and the entrance to the town and should demarcate these significant locations by appropriately scaled and designed developments which make a significant and positive contribution to the town. No direct access onto the bypass will be permitted from these sites.</p>
Enterprise / Employment	To reserve land for mixed-use, commercial, industrial and employment related uses.
Established Development	To conserve and enhance the quality and character of the area, to protect residential amenity and allow for development appropriate to the sustainable growth of the settlement subject to all relevant material planning considerations, all the policies of this Plan, relevant National/ regional policy/guidance including environmental designations and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
Established Development Rural	To facilitate an appropriate provision of one-off housing where the applicant can demonstrate that they need a new house at this location and can provide evidence that they, or their parents, have resided in those areas for a period of at least 7 years.
Finner Camp Opportunity Site	To provide, should the Department of Defence relinquish their ownership of this site in the future, the Council will have the authority to ensure that it is appropriately developed in accordance with the proper and sustainable planning and development of the lands in particular for tourist related development opportunities.
Liable to Flood	To implement a managed approach to Flood Risk in areas of lands that have records of flood events.
Opportunity Sites	To identify lands with specific development opportunities, including employment and/or retail uses that are appropriate in terms of mix of use and compatibility with the wider area whilst recognising features of importance that are specific to the site. These areas provide and require opportunities for high architectural quality and signature building design.
Proposed Road Alignments (Indicative)	To ensure that development proposals provide for connectivity between development lands and maximise the development opportunities identified through the new developer led road linkages.
Protected Structures and National Monuments	To protect those Protected Structures, National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, National Monuments and Architectural Conservation Areas.
Provision of Walk/ Cycleways	To protect those identified amenity corridors to enable the continued and future development of public amenity walkways/cycleways and to provide connectivity between development lands.
Recreational/ Leisure	To make provision for new and maintain existing recreation facilities.
Residential Phase 1	To reserve land primarily for residential development.
Residential Phase 2	To reserve land for residential development as a long-term strategic land bank.
Tourist Facilities	To allow for development, enhancement and retention of existing tourist facilities.
Town Centre	To protect and enhance the vitality, viability and character of the Town Centre by providing for and improving retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a developing town.

14.2 Economic Development

Background

This section sets out specific policies and development management objectives relating to the fostering of existing employment and creation of economic growth in Bundoran and its environs. These policies and objectives are to be read in conjunction with the policies and objectives contained in Chapter 4 of Part B of this Development Plan.

The strategic vision for Bundoran is to encourage the expansion of existing industries and to concentrate development into the town centre and to facilitate the growth of employment opportunities for the residents of the town in a sustainable manner. The focus on sustainable employment creation will be based upon consolidating the strong job generation capacity of the tourist industry and harnessing the advantages of the tourist economy into related business opportunities coupled within the evolution of new non-tourism based industries within the Plan area.

The tourism 'industry' in Bundoran is unequivocally linked to the employment resource and potential of the town and tourism will remain a central focus for employment patterns within the locality. It is also a factor that the town relies on the neighbouring towns of Sligo, Ballyshannon and Donegal, for example, to provide employment opportunities. It is an objective of this Development Plan to create and diversify employment opportunities locally without impacting or adversely affecting the town's coastal and scenic qualities and natural environment.

14.2.1 Strategic Economic Development Objectives Specific to Bundoran

- BD-SO-ED-1:** To work in partnership with other government agencies and the private sector to promote the sustainable economic development of Bundoran and to provide employment opportunities for its inhabitants.
- BD-SO-ED-2:** To support and strengthen the town's role as a family orientated seaside resort, broadening the range of tourist facilities available, developing its tourism potential to complement the existing tourist resources to combat the seasonality of the tourism market and attract year-round visitors.
- BD-SO-ED-3:** To identify lands and specific opportunity sites whereby employment related land uses can consolidate and benefit from locational advantage whilst maintaining the environmental and scenic advantages of the town's coastal location.

14.2.2 General Economic Development

Employment Location

The various zoning objectives for different land-uses within the town boundary area are intended to generally guide developers in assessing the acceptability or otherwise of employment generating development proposals. However, they relate only to land use. Factors such as density, height, massing, traffic generation, public health, landscape character and features, design criteria, visual amenity and potential nuisance by way of noise, odour and pollution are also of significance. These are also important in establishing whether or not a development proposal conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the economic development policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.2.2.1 Employment Location Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-ED-P-1:** Employment generating development should be located on suitably zoned industrial, commercial and town centre lands or opportunity sites as identified on the Land Use Zoning (Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan refers) accompanying this part of the Plan and as detailed in policy BD-ED-P-2 below. This shall enable the consolidation of existing employment developments and encourage future growth near transport nodal locations.
- BD-ED-P-2:** Proposals for employment generating development on lands other than those zoned for such development will only be permitted where there are no other suitably zoned lands available and the proposed use does not conflict with other zoning objectives and policies within the Plan.
- BD-ED-P-3:** The Council will consider proposals for small scale employment generating development near or within residential areas while having regard to residential amenities and traffic safety issues, only where the enterprise or service is of a scale that is appropriate to serve the local community and has a localised catchment with little associated traffic implications.

Supply of Employment Generating Lands

The town has many positive attributes as a location for business and industrial development including its location, attractive environment, land availability and supply, a well educated and adaptable workforce and good communication links and infrastructure, including the newly completed bypass. However, there has been relatively little development of these sectors. Overreliance on seasonal employment from the tourism sector means that economic activity within the town diminishes considerably during the winter months. There is a need to make provision for sustainable year-round employment. It is vital that an adequate supply of employment-generating lands is zoned, not just with short term gains in mind but also with the long term goal of a balanced economy and environment. In this regard, the following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the economic development objectives and policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.2.2.2 Supply of Employment Generating Lands Objectives Specific to Bundoran

- BD-ED-O-1:** To ensure that an adequate choice of sites is maintained within the town area in order to provide for the needs of local firms and inward investment, having regard to the need to maintain an adequate stock of land for both immediate and long-term needs whilst also ensuring the protection of the environment into the future.
- BD-ED-O-2:** To support the diversification of tourism and the local economic base to enable Bundoran to function as a 'self sufficient development centre' through the creation of more year-round employment opportunities that complement the existing economic base.

14.2.2.3 Supply of Employment Generating Lands Policies Specific to Bundoran

BD-ED-P-4: Proposals for employment generating uses will be considered in the following locations:

- i. land zoned enterprise/employment,
- ii. land zoned mixed-use as part of the identified opportunity sites,
- iii. land with established employment generating uses, and
- iv. land zoned Town Centre, and having regard to the scale and nature of the use in respect of its impact upon neighbouring amenity, the provision and ability of the use to be linked directly to the water services network and that it does not impinge in any way upon the scenic qualities nor the natural environment of the Plan area.

BD-ED-P-5: Proposals for the development of small scale/home based business (e.g. crèche, office etc.) shall be permitted within the town where:

- i. the proposed development (in terms of function and/or appearance) would not result in the loss of residential amenity, be detrimental to the character of a residential area, or give rise to adverse environmental or traffic effects,
- ii. the proposed scale of the development is appropriate to the location, and
- iii. the proposed development is in accordance with other policies and requirements, as set out in this Plan.

14.2.3 Retail Strategy

Background

Bundoran is predominantly a seasonal tourist town with a noticeable turnover in independent retailers that set up mainly to serve the tourists, which continues to impact on the viability and vitality of the town at off-peak periods. Whilst the retail sector of the town received a significant boost with the opening of a retail park on Station Road, the arrival of a Lidl discount foodstore to the town, and a new town centre development on previous backlands adjacent to the town's civic offices, a large percentage of the inhabitants of Bundoran continue to travel to larger towns in the vicinity for shopping purposes and as such there is inherent leakage not only from the Town but the County in respect of the convenience and comparison shopping offer.

Despite the aforementioned relatively new developments, Bundoran's town centre remains synonymous with the traditional retail core of the town – which is focused on the town's Main Street and which can be classified as the town's "primary retail core". This area of the town is geared primarily for the tourist market, with land uses being dominated by lower order comparison goods shops, amusement arcades, and pubs/restaurants.

The Westend area of the town has a small variety of mixed uses. However, the main land use type is characterised by residential/vacant buildings. In contrast, the Eastend provides a relatively high level of mixed land uses, with residential and pub/restaurant/fastfood uses providing the dominant type of land use in the area. The area is also characterised by a relatively high percentage of comparison units, non-retail service units, and amusement arcades.

In effect, Bundoran has evolved in such a manner that it is possible to identify two separate retail cores in the town:

1. The 'Primary Retail Core' of the town. This area encompasses the traditional retail core of the town along the Eastends' Main Street, and provides shops and services geared specifically towards the tourist.

2. The 'Secondary Retail Core' of the town. This encompasses the backland area along Station Road, which has witnessed considerable development in recent years, and provides retail activities geared specifically towards providing for the needs of the local inhabitants of the town.

Future retail development in Bundoran must have reference to these two separate 'retail cores', with policies and objectives specifically formulated so as to protect the existing/emerging vitality and viability of these two retail cores, and to sustain their future growth and strengthening.

Retail Proposals within the Town Centre

The most important role of any town centre is to provide for the retail requirements of the surrounding population. Bundoran is unique in this regard, in that it has a function to provide for both the retail requirements of the resident population and the tourist population. It has been noted that both the 'Primary Retail Core' and the 'Secondary Retail Core' have evolved to take account of these specific retail demands.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Retail objectives that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.2.3.1 Retail Objectives Specific to Bundoran

- BD-R-O-1:** The Plan recognises the importance in preserving the vitality and viability of the two separate retail cores in Bundoran:
- i. The 'Primary Retail Core' in the main street which is focused towards providing for the needs of the tourist;
 - ii. The 'Secondary Retail Core' which is focused more on convenience and comparison requirements of the day to day needs of the local community.
- BD-R-O-2:** It is necessary to ensure that the cumulative effect of new development emphasises a compact town centre pattern to support both resident and tourist populations throughout the year.

Retail uses within the 'Primary Retail Core'

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the following Retail uses within the 'Primary Retail Core' policy is specific to Bundoran:

14.2.3.2 Retail Policy (Primary Retail Core) Specific to Bundoran

- BD-R-P-1:** Promote the development of land uses which are geared specifically towards meeting the needs of the tourist, i.e. shop units (Class 1, as defined under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended), restaurants, cultural uses. Applications for these uses will be considered subject to meeting the following criteria: 1. Adequate servicing in terms of infrastructure, access, car parking. 2. Appropriate linkages both vehicular and pedestrian to the wider town centre area. 3. Appropriate and high quality architectural design that responds to the need to create a high quality urban environment that does not detract from the town's streetscape.

The provision of non-retail uses or classes of development outside of Classes 1 and 2 of the 'Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) - Classes of Use' are considered to detrimentally impact upon the activity and ability to 'comparison shop' on foot and such breakages in the retail frontage should be discouraged as reducing the vitality of the retail area.

Retail uses within the 'Secondary Retail Core'

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the following Retail uses within the 'secondary Retail Core' policy is specific to Bundoran:

14.2.3.3 Retail Policy (Secondary Retail Core) Specific to Bundoran

BD-R-P-2: Promote the development of a multiplicity and mix of land use types in these areas particularly retail, residential, office and service. Proposals for such development will be subject to the following: 1. Appropriate mix of uses dependant on the location and surrounding established uses. 2. Appropriate scale and massing in the context of surrounding properties. 3. High quality of architectural design that responds to the creation of a quality urban environment and that may include the provision of public/civic space. 4. Appropriate vehicular and pedestrian linkages with Upper and Lower Main Street and/or with the most conveniently located public car parking provision. 5. Adequate provision of infrastructure and services.

The development of the 'Secondary Retail Core' will contribute to the survival of the East End in particular and the promotion of accessible pedestrian linkages and associated vehicle trip linkages will be considered to be a positive measure in terms of protecting and enhancing the role of the wider town centre. In essence a visit to either of the identified retail areas will allow for multi-use trips and the complementary nature of the uses should assist in the consolidation of the retail core i.e. single trip visits supporting a multiple of functions i.e. shopping, banking, civic (Library and Council), childcare, restaurants etc.

Town Centre Environment

Town Centres present a visual image of a town to visitors and investors alike and the Main Street in Bundoran is no exception. It is increasingly necessary for town centre's to present an attractive shopping environment and as such the physical built environment is as important as the retail offer to survive in a competitive marketplace. In Bundoran it is noted that whilst the differing uses, architectural styles, and facades of the hotels, shop fronts and amusement arcades and interesting juxtaposition of uses contribute to a diverse physical streetscape, in some locations, it appears to be unsympathetic and the delivery of appropriate environmental improvements could increase the town's physical and retail attractiveness.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Town Centre objectives and policies specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.2.3.4 Town Centre Objective Specific to Bundoran

BD-TC-O-1: To enhance the towns attractiveness as a shopping environment through the delivery of a programme of environmental streetscape and shopfront improvements and the promotion of a high standard of architectural design and finishes for new development to provide a consolidated high quality town centre environment.

14.2.3.5 Town Centre Policies Specific to Bundoran

BD-TC-P-1: Development proposals in the identified town centre area of Bundoran will be expected to contribute to the environmental improvement of the streetscape via the necessary upgrading of the public highway (roads and footpaths) and the delivery of complementary street furniture to a standard which will ensure they are not a public safety issue and to make the town fully accessible for the disabled.

BD-TC-P-2: Proposals for tourism related retail proposals will be positively considered where they are not detrimental to the Town or County's retail strategy.

BD-TC-P-3: Proposals for retail floorspace outside the designated town centre in Bundoran area will be restricted to complimentary scaled retail associated with residential zoned lands or the identified opportunity sites at gateway locations on the eastern and western extremes of the town.

14.2.3.6 Lands on the Seaward Side of the Town Centre Policy Specific to Bundoran

BD-TC-P-4: No new freestanding developments will be considered. Only established development proposals, which extend in a northerly direction, not vertically and not in an east west direction and/or are directly associated with the host structure, will be considered. Proposals must be sympathetic to their surroundings and of a scale and character to that of their immediate environment.

Amusement Arcades

The Council recognises the role that amusement arcades play in providing employment and in acting as an attraction for the area. The numerous arcades along the Main Street indicate the importance of this type of attraction. The Council will, however, monitor the existing provision of amusement arcades and the consideration of new proposals for amusement arcades will take place in consultation with the Council in light of the need to retain the vitality and viability of the town centre.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Amusement Arcade objectives and policies specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.2.3.7 Amusement Arcade Objective Specific to Bundoran

BD-TC-O-2: It is an objective of the Plan to ensure that amusement arcades exist to provide vitality and viability respectful of residential amenity and physical built amenity.

14.2.3.8 Amusement Arcade Policy Specific to Bundoran

BD-TC-P-5: Proposals for amusement arcades will be considered within the 'Town Centre' zone; provided that their development: (a) is not located within or adjoining premises consisting of residential accommodation, schools or churches; (b) is not contributing to the over concentration of arcades in a given area causing excessive noise, litter and anti-social hours of operation; and (c) contributes to the enhancement of streetscape and vitality and viability of the area.

14.3 Infrastructure

14.3.1 Transportation

Background

Bundoran is strategically well placed in terms of transport infrastructure provision and ease of accessibility due in part to its proximity to Sligo Town. Sligo airport is only 43km from Bundoran.

At present there is no direct rail access to Bundoran and the primary means of access to the town is by road. However Sligo has a rail link to Dublin and a limited bus service between Sligo and Bundoran.

Roads and Parking

The development of the N15 Bundoran/Ballyshannon Bypass Scheme has alleviated congestion, reduced journey times and improved road safety. However, it does not address the problems associated with destination tourism traffic which effects the town during the peak summer months.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the roads and parking objectives and policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.3.1.1 Roads and Parking Objectives Specific to Bundoran

- BD-T-O-1:** To prepare and implement a Traffic Management Plan for Bundoran and its environs which caters for all aspects of traffic and transportation and implement a programme of local measures to improve road safety as resources allow including traffic calming measures and the pedestrianisation of streets as appropriate.
- BD-T-O-2:** To introduce pedestrian priority measures along Atlantic Way, Main Street and other locations as appropriate and in conjunction with the introduction of a one-way system within the town centre.

14.3.1.2 Roads and Parking Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-T-P-1:** Development proposals will be considered against the need to promote road safety as a high priority and implement local measures to improve road safety including traffic calming, signage, signalisation, pedestrianisation, street lighting, coordinate a review of street furniture in conjunction with a scheme of environmental improvements as resources allow and implement a programme of road construction and improvement works closely integrated with existing and planned land uses as resources allow.
- BD-T-P-2:** Development proposals will be considered against the competing needs of the car user and the visual amenities of the Main Street to promote the control of on-street parking in the interests of the viability, vitality and amenity of town and district centres.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the pedestrian and cycle route network objectives and policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.3.1.3 Pedestrian and Cycle Route Network Objective Specific to Bundoran

- BD-T-O-3:** To require planning applications to demonstrate the development proposal's accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists and to require the provision of secure cycle parking facilities convenient to points of pedestrian access at new developments including office blocks, apartment developments, shopping centres, public transport interchanges, community facilities and to promote the provision of such facilities at other appropriate locations.

14.3.1.4 Pedestrian and Cycle Route Network Policy Specific to Bundoran

BD-T-P-3: Development proposals will be required to facilitate good pedestrian and cycle access facilities through new developments, promote the provision of secure cycle parking facilities, protect existing cycle routes and footpaths from inappropriate development and to prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists in proximity to public transport nodes.

Access to Backlands and Zoned Land by means of a Distributor Link Road

The backland pattern of permanent residential development and holiday accommodation in Bundoran has continued to be developed along its traditional linear structure through the town and beyond. While this creates a visual impression of a substantially developed town as viewed along the town's main artery, it has resulted in substantial parcels of more centrally located, zoned backlands remaining undeveloped. These undeveloped backlands, located to the south of the town lie in close proximity to the town centre and local services with a substantial portion falling within the existing wastewater catchment area.

The Council will take a holistic approach to the short and long term development of this area and reserve a strategic link route to ensure adequate access is provided and maintained to this area throughout the life of the Plan.

The optimal location for the distributor road shall be determined through the undertaking of a detailed road design scheme. Until such a time as a scheme has been prepared and the route incorporated into the Plan, the Council will reserve a 25m indicative corridor that makes provision for a 7m wide carriageway adjoining 4m wide footpaths incorporating cycle paths with an additional 5m to either side to allow for future expansion/maintenance/provision of public transport corridor.

Proposed Indicative Road Alignments are highlighted on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan. Applications for development of lands affected by proposed indicative alignments will be required to demonstrate how they facilitate permeability and linkages between neighbouring landholdings. Developments which prejudice such linkages will be necessarily refused as contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Council cannot predict the level of demand for accessibility to this area and anticipate the distributor road will be delivered and financed largely from direct financial developer contributions on a site-by-site basis that will directly benefit from the provision of the new link road. The Council may also seek to establish a 'Supplementary Development Contributions Scheme' to facilitate the construction, linkages and completion of the new roads.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Access to Backlands and Zoned Land policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.3.1.5 Access to Backlands and Zoned Land Policies Specific to Bundoran

BD-T-P-4: Development will be regulated in the suggested 'phased' manner and within the bypass in order to consolidate development within the town in a sustainable manner.

BD-T-P-5: To safeguard the route for the development of a distributor link road as identified on the Land-use Zoning Map to provide access to new development lands within the bypass. Proposals that would interfere with or obstruct the detailed route of the distributor road and any associated link roads shall not be permitted.

BD-T-P-6: In the absence of a detailed design scheme, the Council shall consider the construction of the roadway by private developers as the land is developed. The

Roadway shall follow the route of the indicative road as indicated on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan. In the case of the lands south and west of Drumacrin Road the sole vehicular access shall be taken from this indicative road.

- BD-T-P-7:** Applications for development of lands affected by proposed indicative alignments will be required to demonstrate how they facilitate permeability and linkages between neighbouring landholdings. Developments which prejudice such linkages will be necessarily refused as contrary to the proper and orderly planning of the Plan area.
- BD-T-P-8:** All new development within the wider area south of the town will be required to provide contributions for the provision of the distributor link, in accordance with the adopted Development Contributions Scheme.
- BD-T-P-9:** All development proposals, which are adjacent to the N15 by-pass route shall include noise and vibration mitigation measures. Said proposals shall be submitted in consultation and to the satisfaction of Donegal County Council National Road Design Office.

14.3.2 Water

Water Quality

The Council recognises that beaches and their associated bathing waters provide a unique natural resource that offers a high value leisure environment. This is of particular regard to maintaining the Blue Flag Status of local beaches. The Council recognises the aims of the Water Framework Directive to maintain the 'high status' of waters where it exists, preventing any deterioration in the existing status of waters and achieving at least 'good status' in relation to all waters.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the following water quality policy is specific to Bundoran:

14.3.2.1 Water Quality Policy Specific to Bundoran

- BD-WQ-P-1:** The Council will have full regard to the objectives of the Water Framework Directive for coastal and freshwater areas and will refuse any development proposal that would have an adverse effect on water quality in the area or that would threaten the Blue Flag Status of the beach and will:
- (a) Ensure the enhanced protection and improvement of water quality by reducing/phasing out coastal discharges and piped emissions to sea,
 - (b) ensure the provision of appropriate wastewater treatment facilities for Bundoran Town, and
 - (c) Ensure that diffuse sources of water pollution, which pose a risk to water quality in the area, are identified and that mitigation measures are required where feasible.

Water Supply

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Water Supply are contained in Section 5.2, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

Surface Water Drainage

Development within Bundoran has led to an increase in surface water and the need for adequate disposal methods to prevent flooding and contamination of ground water and the beach environment. In order to manage the effect of development on the aquatic environment throughout Bundoran but

particularly where surface water out-falls affect the beach, the Council will require all proposed developments to demonstrate that the proposed surface water outfall is sufficient to accommodate the proposed development and would not result in adverse effects on the beach or coastal environment.

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Surface Water Drainage are contained in Section 5.2, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

Surface Water Quality

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Surface Water Quality policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.3.2.2 Surface Water Quality Policies Specific to Bundoran

BD-SWQ-P-1: To protect, maintain, improve and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses and rivers in the Plan area, and promote access, walkways and other recreational uses of their associated public open spaces, subject to a defined strategy of nature conservation and flood protection.

BD-SWQ-P-2: Development proposals will be expected to establish, where feasible, riparian corridors, free from development, along all significant watercourses in the Plan area, restrict where feasible, the use of culverts on watercourses in the Plan area and to seek the continued improvement of water quality, bathing facilities and other recreational opportunities in the coastal, estuarine and surface waters in Bundoran and Environs.

Waste Water Treatment

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Waste Water Treatment are contained in Section 5.2, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

14.3.3 Environmental Services

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Environmental Services are contained in Section 5.2, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

14.3.4 Telecoms

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Flooding are contained in Section 5.3, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

14.3.5 Flooding

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Flooding are contained in Section 5.4, Chapter 5 of Part B of this Development Plan.

14.4 Housing

Background

In line with the Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of Part A of the Plan the Council's strategy in relation to housing in Bundoran is to ensure that adequate provision is made to accommodate the

projected growth in persons of an additional 377 persons by 2024. Therefore, using an evidenced based methodology, 22.93 hectares of lands have been identified to supply the first phase quantum of need and are identified on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan. Phase 1 residential areas are generally focussed in the east of the Plan area, on lands proximate to existing established residential areas and are therefore sequential extensions of the existing fabric. In addition, the lands identified as Phase 1 can either be readily serviced via existing or planned infrastructure or are located so as to be integral to the appropriate strategic provision of infrastructural services that will assist in the facilitation of development over future life cycles of the Plan. As outlined in Section 14.1 of Part C and in Part A, Chapter 2, there is an oversupply of 1st phase residential lands in Bundoran through this Plan and this is provided to take account of the considerable holiday home market in Bundoran. Part A, chapter 2 outlines that the further excess in Bundoran is to be addressed through a monitor and manage approach and will be considered in more detail through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

A further 71.81 hectares of land are identified as 'Residential- Phase 2' that will supply need over a longer term time frame, beyond the life of the current Plan. The release of this land will be reviewed and managed through a clear and transparent evidenced led approach that will involve annual assessment of the uptake of land zoned 'Residential- Phase 1' and will only occur through a review or variation of the Development Plan or through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the housing objectives and policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.4.1 Housing Objective Specific to Bundoran

BD-H-O-1: To identify the appropriate quantum and range of lands to meet future housing need in Bundoran including social and affordable housing need.

14.4.2 Housing Policies Specific to Bundoran

BD-H-P-1: It is a policy of the Council that new housing development in Bundoran shall be guided to those lands identified as 'Residential-Phase 1' on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan'. In addition, consideration may be given to appropriate proposals for housing development at other locations as follows:

- (a) Within 'Established Development.'
- (b) Within the area identified as 'town centre'
- (c) Within an entire existing unfinished housing development where the entire development has commenced, or, within that part of an existing unfinished housing development where only part of the development has commenced. The number of residential units that may be permitted shall not exceed the number of units permitted within the unfinished development, or part thereof as applicable.

All proposals shall be subject to all relevant material planning considerations, relevant policies of the Plan, other regional and National guidance and relevant environmental designations.

BD-H-P-2: It is a policy of the Council to ensure the adequate supply of future strategic landbank for the purposes of housing beyond the life of the Plan through the identification of circa 72 hectares of lands as 'Residential- Phase 2.' The Council shall examine and manage the appropriate release of 'Residential- Phase 2' lands on the basis of a clear and transparent evidenced led approach that will involve annual assessment of the uptake of land zoned 'Residential- Phase 1' and having regard to relevant environmental designations. Release of 'Residential- Phase 2' lands shall

only occur through a review or variation of the Development Plan or through the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

BD-H-P-3: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the appropriate provision of one- off housing within areas identified as 'Established Rural Development' on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan, where the applicant can demonstrate that they need a new house at this location and can provide evidence that they, or their parents, have resided in those areas for a period of at least 7 years. Any such proposals shall be considered in the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, all relevant policies of this Plan, relevant National/ regional guidance and in relation to conservation and environmental designations.

BD-H-P-4: It is the policy of the Council to consider proposals relating to residential development within areas identified as 'Established Development' on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan, where it can be demonstrated that the development can integrate appropriately with the surrounding area, that the proposals is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and in compliance with all other policies of this Plan including the 'Land use Zoning Objective' set out in section.

14.5 Natural and Built Heritage

This chapter sets out policies in relation to conservation of Bundoran's natural and built heritage which seek to identify, manage and protect the sensitive and sustainable use of Bundoran's natural and built resources for use by visitors and local residents.

The natural and built heritage exists in two forms: (a) in terms of the environment, it relates to biodiversity, wildlife habitats flora and fauna and (b) in terms of the built heritage, it relates to urban form and the material heritage that is apparent to us. The area of the Bundoran and Environs consists of many resources in terms of the natural and built heritage, in the form of special designations (SACs, NHAs), foreshore, beaches, cliffs, the Bradogue River, archaeological monuments and protected structures. These provide opportunities for a variety of tourism and recreational activities while historic buildings and archaeological remains and other local features contribute to the rich diversity of heritage and local identity of the town.

The protection and enhancement of these resources is important for the following reasons:

1. It is a representation of Bundoran; how the town evolved and what the history of Bundoran is and it is therefore a record of our past, contributes to our sense of place/identity and can be used as an educational tool.
2. It contributes to positioning Bundoran as an attractive place to live and invest as it adds to the special character of Bundoran. This contributes to building critical mass/population on a year round basis and adds to the local economy.
3. It represents a key tourism resource and if recognised, promoted and marketed will add to the local economy.

14.5.1 Strategic Natural and Built Heritage Objective Specific to Bundoran

BD-SO-BH-01: The protection of Bundoran's physical heritage (including archaeology, ecology and historic buildings) is a tangible representation of the towns past and is a sound basis for economic growth and regeneration.

14.5.2 Natural Heritage

Landscape, Scenic Views and Prospects

Preserving the character of the marine landscape including seaward views and prospects, the impressive open (designed and natural) landscape of the golf course and other places and features of natural beauty that contribute to Bundoran's 'sense of place' are key issues for the Plan. The Council recognises that there are a number of scenic views throughout the town that contribute to the character and unique setting of Bundoran. Such views and prospects identified on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan.

The Council shall protect and enhance the amenity value of existing and proposed prospects; development that would intrude so as to cause a negative effect on the amenity value of any existing or proposed prospects shall not be permitted.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Landscape, Scenic Views and Prospect objectives and policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.5.2.1 Landscape, Scenic Views and Prospects Objective Specific to Bundoran

BD-LSP-O-1: To require that any necessary assessments, including visual impact assessments, are made when undertaking, authorising or approving development.

14.5.2.2 Landscape, Scenic Views and Prospects Policy Specific to Bundoran

BD-LSP-P-1: To protect from inappropriate development the views identified on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan and to restrict development on major ridgelines.

Inland Waters including the River Bradogue

The Bradogue River flows relatively unnoticed through the back of the town but becomes a significant amenity feature at the mouth of the river below Bundoran Bridge where the river meets the sea. The mouth of the river has been much enhanced as a result of the pedestrian footbridge constructed under the Seafront Environmental Improvement Programme.

River and stream banks and riparian zones (i.e. the areas close to the banks) are also home to a range of different habitats and species. They are important in terms of biodiversity because they contain a range of habitats and species which are different from those in the surrounding landscape. They also function as ecological 'stepping-stones' or 'corridors' which enable species to move from place to place. Wetlands associated with rivers and streams, such as wet grasslands and marshes, also provide many benefits; important for biodiversity, reducing the flow of pollutants to both surface waters and groundwaters, providing recreational benefits for the local community and tourists and to ease the impacts of flooding by retaining floodwaters and releasing them slowly back into the river or stream. Groundwater is also an important natural resource, it supplies water and is important in maintaining wetlands and river flows during dry periods.

The River Bradogue and other inland waters will be maintained in an open semi-natural condition, wherever possible, its corridor will be protected and maintained for their biodiversity and landscape values, including flood protection. This will be achieved by strictly controlling development along its length implementing sustainable drainage systems for commercial and residential developments. Groundwater resources will be protected and managed in a sustainable manner.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Inland Water policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.5.2.3 Inland Waters Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-IW-P-1:** Development proposals adjacent to the Bradogue River will ensure the retention of a 10 metre strip from bank edge on which new development will not be permitted. The reservation strip shall be required to be set aside from the development and incorporated as residual open space and will form an ecological corridor, floodplain buffer and provide for an amenity walking route.
- BD-IW-P-2:** Development proposals adjacent to the Bradogue River shall demonstrate that they would not be detrimental to the integrity of the river as a natural, heritage, amenity and recreational corridor and be of a high architectural standard and orientated to face onto the river.

14.5.3 Built Heritage

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Built Heritage are contained in Section 7.3, Chapter 7 of Part B of this Development Plan.

Architectural Heritage and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's)

Heritage buildings and archaeological features are an important resource representing an integral part of the character of Bundoran. The linear development of the town, principally along the Main Street has resulted in the development of a well defined streetscape and although a lot of the development in Bundoran is reasonably new, there are some fine buildings of architectural quality that give Bundoran a unique sense of place. Bundoran's role as a traditional Irish seaside resort is manifest in its past and present built environment and that aspect of its heritage should not be overlooked.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) empowers the Planning Authority to designate architectural conservation areas (ACA's). The criteria for designation to which the Planning Authority has regard are (i) to preserve the character of a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest or value or (ii) contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

The inclusion of ACA's within the Development Plan affords greater statutory control over the form of development, and reduces instances of inappropriate development, demolition, and change of use within the designated areas. It is important to note that the character of an ACA depends on a number of factors, including, street patterns, boundary treatment, design detailing, and open spaces. Therefore cumulative piecemeal alterations may dramatically undermine the overall character of the ACA. ACAs are identified in the objectives listed below and have their boundaries defined on the Development Plan Maps. The identification of new ACAs and the modification of existing ACAs may be proposed during the lifetime of the Plan. An owner or occupier of a protected structure, may make a written request to the Council, to issue a declaration as to the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure.

The 2004-2010 Bundoran Development Plan designated the nine terraced houses that comprise Bayview Terrace as a ACA. This area is still considered to be of special architectural and townscape value, and accordingly under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the terrace has been designated as an ACA. The boundary of the ACA is defined on the Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Architectural Conservation Areas policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.5.3.1 Architectural Conservation Areas Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-AH-P-1:** Development proposals must protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Bundoran and its Environs and in particular conserve and enhance the character and appearance of Bayview Architectural Conservation Area and structures contained (or proposed to be contained) within the Record of Protected Structures. Development proposals for any of the proposed protected structures on the Record (RPS) shall be required to demonstrate that measures have been included to protect, conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the structure(s).
- BD-AH-P-2:** Proposals for development on lands adjacent to the Bayview Architectural Conservation Area shall only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will not materially affect the character or integrity of the area.
- BD-AH-P-3:** Development, modifications, alterations, or extensions affecting a protected structure, adjoining structure or structure within an ACA will be sited and designed appropriately, and will not be detrimental to the character of the structure or to its setting or the general character of the ACA.

It is noted that a significant amount of archaeological potential has been established in the Bundoran area due to the significant finds made during the construction of the N15 Bundoran/Ballyshannon bypass.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Archaeological Heritage policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.5.3.2 Archaeological Heritage Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-AH-P-4:** To protect historical burial grounds and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.
- BD-AH-P-5:** To encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the Town's archaeological heritage and facilitate and enhance public access to, and understanding of, the archaeological heritage and to provide for the dissemination of information and advice on the archaeological heritage to prospective developers and the general public. The onus shall be on the developer to comply fully with legislation and Council policy.

14.6 Natural Resource Development

14.6.1 Extractive Industry and Geology

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Extractive Industry and Geology are contained in Section 8.1, Chapter 8 of Part B of this Development Plan.

14.6.2 Energy

The objectives and the policies of the Council in relation to Energy are contained in Section 8.2, Chapter 8 of Part B of this Development Plan.

14.7 Tourism

Background

Bundoran has historically been a seaside resort and tourist destination. It retains a strong tourism function and character based on its seaside location and natural amenity. Bundoran serves as a gateway to the County and provides a strong accommodation and touring base for visitors to the County.

The tourism industry in the town is well established with its origins as a nineteenth century seaside retreat. The attractiveness of Bundoran as a destination resort is largely based on the high quality natural environment, which has historically drawn visitors from Scotland and Northern Ireland in particular. The profile of the tourism industry in the town is characterised by a high level of repeat visits with many families returning annually. The most recent manifestation of this has been the large-scale investment in holiday homes, largely fuelled by tax incentive based schemes.

The coastal element of Bundoran is an extremely important and valuable tourism and amenity resource to the town and it shall be an objective of the plan to conserve and enhance this existing resource for both amenity and tourism purposes. The success of tourism in Bundoran relies mainly on the natural resources of the town in particular its rivers and coastline. The plan policies shall also aim to achieve a sustainable tourism industry that is vital, viable and enduring. The plan shall promote, support and develop marine based tourism facilities including marine sports/activities and recreational activities.

Marine related employment opportunities naturally co-exist with the Town's prominence as a surfing destination. Surf shops, schools and related accommodation has developed on the basis of Bundoran's popularity and it remains an opportunity as an example for 'surf' related product manufacturing to locate within the area.

The natural resources of Bundoran including its landscape, seascape, rivers and its proximity with Lough Melvin are its most important tourism resource and attraction. These natural features and resources on which the tourism product depends are not finite and have limited capacity to accommodate new development. In this context it is of fundamental importance that sustainable tourism is promoted so that new developments avoid adverse impacts on the natural environment on which the industry is based.

Bundoran's role as a premier holiday resort must be strengthened and enhanced through the protection of its coastal setting, cliff walks and Blue Flag beach status and by capitalising on the other opportunities which exist locally in terms of its proximity to the Dartry Mountains and Lough Melvin in the growing market for short break and activity holidays.

The tourist season in Bundoran is short at present, the summer remains the peak period. This has resulted in seasonally restricted employment opportunities, economic instability for local businesses and seasonal pressure on the town's infrastructure. The extension of the tourist season would help to address these problems, promote a more stable and diverse economic base and reduce the pressure on local services.

There is a need to develop year-round facilities to attract visitors off-season which could serve to strengthen the existing tourism product and also provide important recreational and social opportunities for the permanent resident population throughout the year.

There are a number of key locations within the plan area that may be suitable for such a facility or indeed a new flagship tourist development. Three such sites have been identified. Notwithstanding the existing uses on these sites, such sites are considered appropriate due to their strategic location; their ability to consolidate the existing built form and their contribution to the long-term development of the town. The sites are identified on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan, and include an existing caravan park on Station Road, an existing

caravan park adjoining Astoria Road and the West End car park, which lies well below the level of the public road. These sites have the potential to create new central landmark attractions to compliment the existing tourist base.

Bundoran has a well established accommodation infrastructure base comprising hotels, bed and breakfasts, caravan parks and holiday homes. The Council recognises the importance of supporting and promoting improvements to tourist accommodation as a priority, including the refurbishment of existing hotels and guesthouse accommodation, thereby increasing the quality of such facilities and the overall tourist product. As such, the Council will support in principle the development of new facilities, including where appropriate, new hotels and accommodation to provide for the needs of visitors as well as to act as a source of employment for the local population.

The provision of permanent and touring caravan parks contributes to the variety of accommodation facilities within Bundoran. However a number of these parks are located within the town centre and while these are attractive locations, this results in a series of 'dead' inactive spaces throughout the significant off-peak periods of the year. In terms of developing the town centre, this use limits the opportunities for the development of alternative more compatible town centre uses that can be utilised on a year-round basis.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Tourism policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.7.1 Tourism Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-TO-P-1:** Development proposals which promote the marine resource (cliffs, coast and sea) as an important natural amenity and enhance access via improved pedestrian links and appropriately scaled development within the Seafront and Harbour areas will be favourably considered subject to other Plan policies.
- BD-TO-P-2:** Proposals for a new harbour development shall be located within the existing harbour area (the maximum extent of which, has been highlighted on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan), in close proximity to the town centre and shall include proposals for upgrading the existing harbour wall.
- BD-TO-P-3:** Proposals for development in the harbour area shall seek to prioritise the protection of the 'Peak' and the enhancement of the town's setting and coastline and shall assess the effect of the proposal on the marine/ coastal environment.
- BD-TO-P-4:** Proposals for year-round and all-weather facilities will be encouraged where they are accessible to both the tourist and resident population and are of a high architectural standard with quality landscaping.
- BD-TO-P-5:** No new caravan parks shall be permitted to locate within the defined town centre. Extensions to existing caravan parks within the town centre shall be permitted subject to natural screening of the extended area of both the established park and the proposed expansion.

14.8 Marine Resource and Coastal Management

Background

The coastline at Bundoran is characterised by an indented rocky shoreline with cliffs, beaches and river mouths in addition to the built environment of the town and coastal amenities. The quality of the coastal environment is of significant amenity value for Bundoran, which is of National, Regional and Local tourism importance. It is the objective of the Council:

"To create an attractive, safe, and vibrant coast and an ecologically sound and inspiring landscape at Bundoran."

The Council therefore recognises that the coastal zone is an important natural asset to the town with limited capacity to absorb development and will seek to maintain and enhance the high quality natural and built environment for both visitors and those residing in the town.

The coastline is defined by the geographic extent of coastal natural processes and human activities related to the coast. The Council will seek to balance environmental, economic, social, cultural and recreational policy objectives affecting the coastline at Bundoran.

Sustainable development in coastal areas is best achieved through a process of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). ICZM is the management of human activities and natural processes at work in coastal areas and aims to promote a partnership approach to planning and management in the coastal zone involving all stakeholders. It is the objective of the Council to support the principle of ICZM and to co-operate with the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine, as required. It is also the objective of the Council to promote the development of ICZM initiatives in Bundoran in partnership with the local community, environmental groups, user organisations and other statutory authorities.

The areas in which development and its management are to effect the coastline are in respect of the following; built activity and its physical proximity, protection of the coastline in terms of views and prospects, establishment and maintenance of walking routes, water quality issues, biodiversity, leisure activities (marine and land based) long term effects on the coastline. There are also external factors that will affect decision making processes in forward planning namely climate change, sea level rise and change in frequency and severity of storms for example. The coastal amenities of Bundoran include the beaches, surfing, swimming, scenic views, coastal walks, public open spaces, the seafront promenade, golf course, hotel and Bundoran Pier.

It is recognised that the coastline undergoes constant processes of physical change where this change is affected by the physical activities of development or man they will sought to be effectively monitored and controlled.

The Coastal Conservation Zone is identified on Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan, and extends to all areas seaward of the coastal walking routes in addition to other coastal lands designated for the purposes of the Coastal Conservation Zone as identified on Map 14.1.

The Coastal Conservation Zone will be managed in a balanced way with a particular emphasis on ensuring the protection of the natural heritage of the coastal environment while promoting and enhancing the amenity of the area for both passive and active recreational uses.

The Coastal Management Zone consists of the intertidal area between the Coastal Conservation Zone and the low tide mark. Works affecting the Coastal Management Zone will be required to obtain a Foreshore License and the Local Authority shall be notified of any proposed works in this area.

There is a growing demand for marinas and jetties for the purposes of water based recreational activities. The Council recognises that new development for the purposes of the marine leisure sector, such as water skiing, jet skiing and power boating must be strictly controlled.

These activities and the infrastructure associated with the operation of such activities can interfere with the sensitive character and enjoyment of the coastal zone in terms of noise pollution and public safety and raise particular concerns for the use of coastal amenities by other members of the public and damage to the natural heritage amenities of the area.

The Council recognises the potential of Bundoran Pier as a land-to-sea access point for marine leisure activities. In addition the Council recognises the important role of the Bundoran Lifeboat Station to the locality.

The 18 hole Golf Course and Great Northern Hotel at Aughrus Point is located within the Coastal Conservation Zone. It is the objective of the Council to ensure that these lands are managed appropriately due to the high amenity value of these lands for Bundoran.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the Coastal and Marine policies that are specific to Bundoran are set out below:

14.8.1 Coastal and Marine Policies Specific to Bundoran

- BD-CM-P-1:** The seafront area and coastal walkways shall be protected and enhanced as important tourism, recreational and amenity resources for Bundoran.
- BD-CM-P-2:** Proposals for development located along the seafront shall only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal:
- i. would contribute positively to the character and visual amenity of the seafront area,
 - ii. would not interfere with the integrity of the Seafront Improvement Programme; and
 - iii. would ensure the provision of linkages to adjoining amenities and urban areas.
- BD-CM-P-3:** To facilitate and upgrade pedestrian linkages between the Cliff Walk and the Rougey Walk recognise and support the economic, social and environmental benefits of coastal walking routes and to ensure that all improvements to coastal walking routes will be sensitive to the visual amenity and natural environment of the Coastal Conservation Zone.
- BD-CM-P-4:** All new development will be designed to contribute positively to the visual amenity of the area and in this respect the Council shall ensure that the protected views of Map 14.1: 'Bundoran Land Use Zoning Map' that accompanies this part of the Plan, are not adversely affected by the provision of new structures or coastal features and will include important landward views as protected views from designated points on Map 14.1.
- BD-CM-P-5:** To ensure that the County's natural coastal defences, such as beaches, grassy headlands and rocky shoreline are not compromised by inappropriate works or development. The Council will consult the 'Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine' regarding any proposals for development that may have an impact on coastal erosion.
- BD-CM-P-6:** It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the character, setting, and natural heritage of the Coastal Conservation Zone in order to ensure its existing and future amenity and recreational value. In recognition of the area's scenic value and vulnerability to development pressure, this area will be maintained free of further residential and commercial development as an important local amenity area.
- BD-CM-P-7:** The Council will require any development proposal for extensions or alterations to existing structures within the Coastal Conservation Zone to display the highest standards of design and siting, to provide sufficient information to show how the proposal will impact upon the area, and will include proposals for appropriate amelioration.
- BD-CM-P-8:** Environmental improvement works, which seek to enhance access to and use of the area such as lighting, signage, seating, shelters and surfacing will be of a high quality and will be sensitive to the natural and visual amenity of the coastal area.

- BD-CM-P-9:** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that no development will be permitted on lands on or adjacent to Tullan strand (the sand-dunes) or adjoining Department of Defence lands.
- BD-CM-P-10:** Development proposals which enhance access will be favourably considered where they protect beaches and coastal areas from motor vehicles in the interest of public safety, quality of amenity and environmental integrity including the promotion of a Beach Management Plan for the conservation of local beaches and sand-dunes at Bundoran.
- BD-CM-P-11:** To encourage the development of marinas, jetties and harbour facilities for maritime leisure developments where the siting of such installations and their supporting infrastructure will not detract from the visual amenity and environmental quality and stability of an area, or public access to beaches, or detrimentally affect the surf and/or breakwater at the 'Peak'.
- BD-CM-P-12:** To require that planning applications for water based leisure activities will be accompanied by a management plan indicating projected number of users, hours of operation, seasons of operation and an undertaking to protect the natural environment in the form of a risk assessment with appropriate amelioration measures in the areas of flora, fauna, hydrology, geology and soils and including the following considerations:
- i. to reserve the right to impose conditions relating to hours of operation and noise levels in respect of marinas, jetties and other maritime leisure developments, and
 - ii. to require any associated buildings, jetties and hard standing areas to be kept to a minimum and to be sited as unobtrusively as possible making best use of topography and existing buildings for this purpose and
 - iii. to ensure compliance with article 6 of the Habitats Directive and have regard to the relevant conservation objectives, qualifying interests and threats to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.
- BD-CM-P-13:** Development proposals which have a significant negative impact upon the use of the Pier facility for the Bundoran Lifeboat Station shall not be permitted. Notwithstanding this, the promotion of the pier for land-to-sea users including commercial vessels and small recreational watercraft will be promoted and enhanced and public accessibility in association with the promotion of public safety at the waterfront area of Bundoran Pier and the surrounding area will be maintained to act as the principal land to sea access point, This policy should be read in conjunction with the Harbour policies and objectives contained within this Plan subject to compliance with article 6 of the Habitats Directive and having regard to the relevant conservation objectives, qualifying interests and threats to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.
- BD-CM-P-14:** To ensure that future development and or expansion of the golf course at Bundoran respects the landscape character and that any development works and hard standing associated with the golf course, shall be kept to a minimum and shall be sited as unobtrusively as possible making best use of topography and existing buildings. Any development proposals in this respect shall:
- i. be accompanied by a detailed landscaping plan, detailing information relating to any changes in ground levels associated with the development,
 - ii. be accompanied by a Visual Impact Statement and an Environmental Management Plan, and
 - iii. promote enhanced bio-diversity on coastal lands adjoining the golf course.

BD-CM-P-15: Development proposals for Harbour Area will be encouraged to support the development of boating and other water based activities in the harbour area and to advance the tourism potential for the area.

14.9 Social, Community and Culture

14.9.1 Community Use of School Facilities

Schools and other educational premises represent a valuable resource in terms of land and buildings, which generally are only used on a limited basis. For much of the time the premises are unavailable for wider community use. The dual use of educational facilities, where it does not conflict with the delivery of the education service (i.e. outside school hours and during school holidays), can contribute to meeting the wider needs of the community, by helping to satisfy demand for a variety of activities.

In addition to the other objectives and policies of this Plan, the following Educational Facilities policy is specific to Bundoran:

Parks and Public Amenity Policy Specific to Bundoran

BD-SCC-P-2: Developments will not be permitted where they negatively impact upon the provision of the existing and proposed network of open spaces, amenity areas and associated footpath and coastal path network. Conversely shorefront proposals which enhance upgrade and support the shorefront as a coastal resource and amenity will be positively encouraged.

Chapter 15 Settlement Frameworks

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set out spatial planning frameworks and associated land use zoning objectives to guide development within 60 settlements of Layer 2 and Layer 3 of the Settlement Structure set out in the Core Strategy in Chapter 2A of Part B of this Plan. These frameworks have been termed settlement frameworks and are listed (with their associated map numbers) in Table 15.1 below.

The settlement frameworks are designed to be sufficiently geographically specific to successfully manage the overall pattern and type of development in these urban areas in order to achieve the following planning objectives:

- Create compact urban forms, protect the rural character of adjoining rural areas, and delineate the geographical extent of urban and rural policies of this Plan by setting an outer development envelope/boundary for each settlement.
- Comply with the Core Strategy in terms of the provision of housing units by identifying a specific amount of residential land for each settlement.
- Ensure that new residential development is located in close proximity to local services, infrastructure and amenities and takes place in a sequential manner outwards from the settlement core.
- Create vibrant, consolidated, and accessible town centres which are the core of retail, commercial, cultural and community life within the settlements.
- Provide an adequate level of recreational and environmental amenity by protecting existing open/green spaces, reserving sufficient land for amenity purposes and protecting pedestrian linkages.
- Reserve sufficient land for educational, community and tourism purposes in appropriate locations.
- Protect specific development opportunities through the designation of opportunity sites.
- Provide for future road development by protecting infrastructural corridors.

To this end the Settlement Frameworks identify settlement envelopes, town centre boundaries, and zone land for inter alia residential, amenity, community and opportunity purposes.

In addition each Settlement Framework also consists of lands that, although not positively zoned for a particular use, can be used a variety of purposes such as community, educational, recreational, health and employment on a case by case basis and will thus help to achieve the abovementioned planning objectives.

The Settlement Frameworks are not designed to be exhaustive in the presentation of all the relevant matters that may be considered in the determining of a planning application, as further issues may evolve over time or may be pertinent in certain site specific cases. Policy frameworks and land zoning maps for the towns of Letterkenny, Bunrana and Bundoran (which supersede the Development Plans for these towns) have been set out in Chapters 12, 13 and 14 of this part of the Plan.

Table 15.1: List of Settlement Framework Maps

MAP NUMBER	SETTLEMENT
LAYER 2A STRATEGIC TOWNS	
MAP 15.1	AN CLOCHÁN LIATH (DUNGLOE)
MAP 15.2	BALLYBOFEY/STRANORLAR
MAP 15.3	BALLYSHANNON
MAP 15.4	CARNDONAGH
MAP 15.5	DONEGAL TOWN
MAP 15.6	KILLYBEGS
LAYER 2B STRATEGIC TOWNS	
MAP 15.7	AILT AN CHORRÁIN (BURTONPORT)
MAP 15.8	AN BUN BEG/DOIRÍ BEAGA (BUNBEG-DERRYBEG)
MAP 15.9	AN CHARRAIG (CARRICK)
MAP 15.10	AN FÁL CARRACH (FALCARRAGH)
MAP 15.11	ARDARA
MAP 15.12	BALLYLIFFEN
MAP 15.13	BRIDGEND
MAP 15.14	DUNFANAGHY
MAP 15.15	GLENTIES
MAP 15.16	GREENCASTLE
MAP 15.17	LIFFORD
MAP 15.18	MALIN
MAP 15.19	MOVILLE
MAP 15.20	RAMELTON
MAP 15.21	RAPHOE
LAYER 3 RURAL TOWNS AND OPEN COUNTRYSIDE	
MAP 15.22	ANAGAIRE (ANNAGRY)
MAP 15.23	BALLINTRA
MAP 15.24	BRUCKLESS
MAP 15.25	BURNFOOT
MAP 15.26	CARRAIG AIRT (CARRIGART)
MAP 15.27	CARRIGANS
MAP 15.28	CARROWKEEL
MAP 15.29	CASTLEFINN
MAP 15.30	CILL CHARTAIGH (KILCAR)
MAP 15.31	CLONMANY
MAP 15.32	CONVOY
MAP 15.33	CREESLOUGH
MAP 15.34	CULDAFF
MAP 15.35	AN DÚCHORAIDH (DOOCHARY)
MAP 15.36	DUNKINEELY
MAP 15.37	FAHAN
MAP 15.38	BAILE NA FINNE (FINTOWN)

MAP 15.39	FROSSES
MAP 15.40	GLEANN CHOLM CILLE (GLENCOLMCILLE)
MAP 15.41	GLENEELY
MAP 15.42	GORT AN CHOIRCE (GORTAHORK)
MAP 15.43	KILLEA
MAP 15.44	KILLYGORDON
MAP 15.45	KILMACRENNAN
MAP 15.46	LAGHY
MAP 15.47	LOCH AN IÚIR (LOUGHANURE)
MAP 15.48	MANORCUNNINGHAM
MAP 15.49	MILFORD
MAP 15.50	MOUNTCHARLES
MAP 15.51	MUFF
MAP 15.52	NA DÚNAIBH (DOWNINGS)
MAP 15.53	NEWTOWNCUNNINGHAM
MAP 15.54	PETTIGO
MAP 15.55	PORTNABLAGH
MAP 15.56	PORTSALON
MAP 15.57	QUIGLEYS POINT
MAP 15.58	RATHMULLAN
MAP 15.59	ROSSNOWLAGH
MAP 15.60	ST JOHNSTON

Land Use Zoning Objectives

The zoning objectives set out in Table 15.2 relate to land zoned in the settlement frameworks and should be read in conjunction with the wider policies contained in Part B of this Development Plan.

Relevant land use zoning objectives in respect of Letterkenny, Buncrana and Bundoran are contained in the relevant chapters of this part of the Plan.

On zoned lands within the Settlement Frameworks, applications may be granted where the Planning Authority considers that the proposed use or development would comply with the zoning objective of the area and would otherwise comply with the policies of the Plan and would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Table 15.2: Land Use Zoning Objectives relating to Settlement Framework Maps

LAND USE ZONE	OBJECTIVE
Residential	To reserve land primarily for residential development
Amenity	To reserve and enhance land for formal and informal amenity and open space purposes, and to make provision for new recreation, leisure and community facilities
Opportunity Sites	To provide for specific development opportunities that are appropriate in terms of mix of use and compatibility with the wider area whilst recognising features of importance that are specific to the site
Town Centre	To sustain and strengthen the core of towns as the centres for commercial, retail, cultural and community life
Education	To reserve land for educational purposes which may include ancillary recreational and childcare facilities
Tourism	To reserve land for tourism related activities
Community Facilities	To reserve land for community and institutional, cultural, recreational, healthcare and amenity purposes
Town Centre	To sustain and strengthen town centres as the core for commercial, retail, cultural and community life
Infrastructure/Utilities	To reserve land for provision of infrastructure, utilities and services
TEN-T PRIPD/Amenity¹⁷	To reserve and enhance land for formal and informal amenity and open space purposes, to make provision for new recreation, leisure and community facilities and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ¹⁸
TEN-T PRIPD/Established Development¹⁹	To conserve and enhance the quality and character of the area, to protect residential amenity, to allow for development appropriate to the sustainable growth of the settlement and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ²⁰
TEN-T PRIPD/ Opportunity Site²¹	To reserve land for specific economic developments that are appropriate in terms of mix of use and compatibility with the wider area whilst recognising features of importance that are specific to the site and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ²²
TEN-T PRIPD/ Local Environment²³	To provide for limited one- off housing and small scale economic development so as to ensure the continued settlement pattern and sequential and transitional development of the towns through to rural areas and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ²⁴
TEN-T PRIPD/ Recreation and Amenity²⁵	To reserve and enhance land for formal and informal open space and amenity purposes, and to make provision for new amenity and recreation facilities and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ²⁶
TEN-T PRIPD/ Strategic Residential Reserve²⁷	To reserve land for residential development as a long term strategic landbank and to provide for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. ²⁸

¹⁷ As inserted by the Variation to the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2014 in respect of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (Variation No. 1).

¹⁸ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

¹⁹ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²⁰ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²¹ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²² As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²³ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²⁴ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²⁵ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²⁶ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²⁷ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.

²⁸ As inserted by the abovementioned variation.