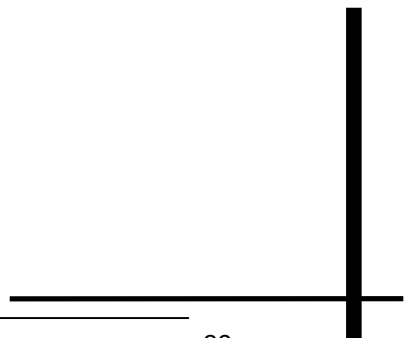


## **SECTION 2**

### **POLICIES & OBJECTIVES**



## **2.01 Urban and Rural Settlement Policies**

### **2.01.01 National and Regional Context**

#### **Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, 1997**

The focus of this document is on environmental protection and sustainable development and the integration of these considerations into policy at all levels of government to ensure balanced development. The strategy recognises the need for good spatial planning and the inclusion of sustainability concerns in urban and built environment policies. The document highlights the importance of development plans in protecting and enhancing the natural environment, in ensuring that developments are properly located, structured and designed and advocates the following: closer coordination between transport and land use planning, high residential densities in appropriate locations, clear demarcation between urban and rural land-use to help prevent urban sprawl, more sustainable development patterns in larger settlements, maintaining and integrating development into the rural landscape and accommodating genuine rural housing needs.

#### **National Spatial Strategy, 2002 - 2020**

The aim of the NSS is to improve the quality of life of all citizens, bringing jobs closer to where people live, improving our environment and building a strong sustainable economic future for our children and our selves. The strategy sets out a 20 year planning framework designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth in Ireland. The NSS provides guidance for future development by identifying a hierarchy of settlements to accommodate future growth, in order to achieve balanced regional development.

In order to redress this imbalance, the NSS 2002 identifies gateways and hubs that have the capacity to support the stronger urban-rural structure needed to drive the development of these regions.

#### **Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas**

The above guidelines are currently in draft form. Pending the formal adoption of the draft guidelines by the Minister of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Planning Authority will have regard to the policies and guidance contained in the consultative draft and accompanying manual as referred to in Section 1.03.

Planning guidance [see Section 2.01.03 and Table 2.2] for the Tier 1 Town of Carrick on Shannon will be contained in the statutory Local Area Plan for the town. The current plan will be reviewed following the adoption of the new County Development Plan.

Guidance for the Tier 2 towns is contained in the Urban Land-use Strategy and its accompanying maps. The previously prepared Urban Framework Plans for these settlements will continue to inform the Council in relation to the vision for the development of these towns.

Guidance for the Tier 3 towns is also contained in the Urban Land-use Strategy and its accompanying maps. The previously prepared Urban Framework Plans for the settlements of Drumahaire and Drumkeerin will continue to inform the Council in relation to the vision for the development of these towns. It is proposed, during the life of this Plan, to prepare Village Design Statements for the remaining Tier 3 town of Carrigallen, Dromod [and including adjoining Tier 4 town of Roosky], Kinlough /Tullaghan and Leitrim Village.

## **Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022**

The 2004 Guidelines set out a vision for the Region and nine key strategic goals that are required to achieve that vision. It is considered that the core elements of that vision remain valid, but it has been updated to reflect the changed circumstances of the Region since 2004. The key strategic goals have also been updated to reflect the new circumstances that this Region faces over the period of the Guidelines of 2010 – 2022.

***‘By 2022, the Border Region will be a competitive area recognised as, and prospering from, its unique interface between two economies, where economic success will benefit all, through the implementation of the balanced development model, which will provide an outstanding natural environment, innovative people, which in themselves, will be our most valuable asset’***

### **KEY STRATEGIC (Regional) GOALS**

The key Strategic Goals required to achieve this vision for the Region are as follows:

**SG.1** To foster the development of the Region’s most important asset, its people by providing an improved quality of life for all people and communities living, working and visiting the Region.

**SG.2** To ensure the development of the Gateways, Hubs, Drogheda and Carrick-on-Shannon as the strategic drivers of growth for the Region and to facilitate integrated sustainable development between urban and rural areas;

**SG.3** To improve intra and inter regional connectivity and mobility throughout the Region through the development of Strategic Radial Corridors and Strategic Links;

**SG.4** To promote innovation, economic growth, competitiveness and the development potential of the Region, and to facilitate emerging sectors in the Region that will provide sustainable jobs for the future;

**SG.5** To protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment and built heritage of the Region;

**SG.6** To co-ordinate a regional approach to the key environmental challenges facing the Region;

**SG.7** To co-ordinate and integrate key issues in National and Regional Spatial Planning Strategies and in particular, the National Spatial Strategy and the National Development Plan, and associated inter-regional development initiatives that support and promote strategic links;

**SG.8** To co-ordinate and integrate key aspects of cross border spatial planning strategies, and in particular, the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland and associated inter-regional development initiatives, that support and promote strategic links between the two economies.

**SG.9** To exploit the Regions unique location at the interface between two economies, by putting in place the drivers for economic growth, through the development of the Eastern Corridor, Atlantic Arc and the Central Border Area.

The Core Strategy for the County sets out the framework for the implementation of the aims and objectives of the RPGs. The aims and objectives set out herein are considered to interpret and support the RPGs in terms of National, Regional and in particular Local development.

### **2.01.02 Reinforcement of Existing Towns and Villages**

The Council is aware that much of the social and economic infrastructure of the County (post offices, schools, small shops and sports clubs, etc.) has been under threat from population decline.

**Policy 1.2**      **It is the policy of the Council to promote the viability of these facilities by encouraging new residential development to locate within the development envelope of existing towns, villages and other centres where these services are available.**

For its part the Council will seek to ensure these centres have adequate sewage treatment, water supply and other infrastructure. Subject to finance being available, the Council will seek to acquire and develop sites within these centres for residential, economic and social uses where the Council has identified a need for such facilities. In particular derelict and obsolete properties in towns and villages will be sought and refurbished or redeveloped as appropriate. The Council will also encourage the development of infill or backland sites within the built up area of towns, villages and other centres.

As a general rule major developments will be encouraged to locate within the development envelope of town, village and other centres, in accordance with the Local Area Plans and the Land Use Strategy for Selected Towns, Villages and other centres as set out in section 2.01.03 below. Appendix D details the land use strategy maps.

The Council will encourage the efficient and economic use of services by encouraging new development towards locations where there is capacity in existing infrastructure and facilities and serviced land is being underused.

Some areas within the catchments of individual towns and villages are not zoned and are without specific land use policies. Whilst such areas will, generally, remain as they currently exist, this does not mean that land use change will not be allowed. Proposals for the development of individual sites will be considered on their individual merit and within the general context, as set by the plan's land use guidance.

*Refer also to Sections 3.01.02 Development Management Requirements, 3.01.03 Location of Development and 3.01.04 Town & Village Boundaries for further guidance.*

### **2.01.03 Land Use Strategy for Tier 2, 3 and 4 Towns and Villages**

The purpose of the Land Use Strategy is wide ranging and is not intended for use as a rigid development control tool. Rather, the aim is to address the following issues, in consultation and discussion with the relevant stakeholders:

1. To implement and reinforce the settlement strategy as defined in the Leitrim County Development Plan.
2. To define, enhance and strengthen the existing character of each of the Centres
3. To secure attractive and vibrant places in which to live, work and visit.
4. To provide guidance and direction for those proposing to develop lands within each of the Centres

5. To protect and enhance areas, structures and associations, which contribute to the identity of the area, and provide a good sense of place.
6. To counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social background.

The Land Use Strategy has been formulated in order to give better definition to the aims of the County Development Plan in respect to the strengthening of towns, villages and other centres and in order to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

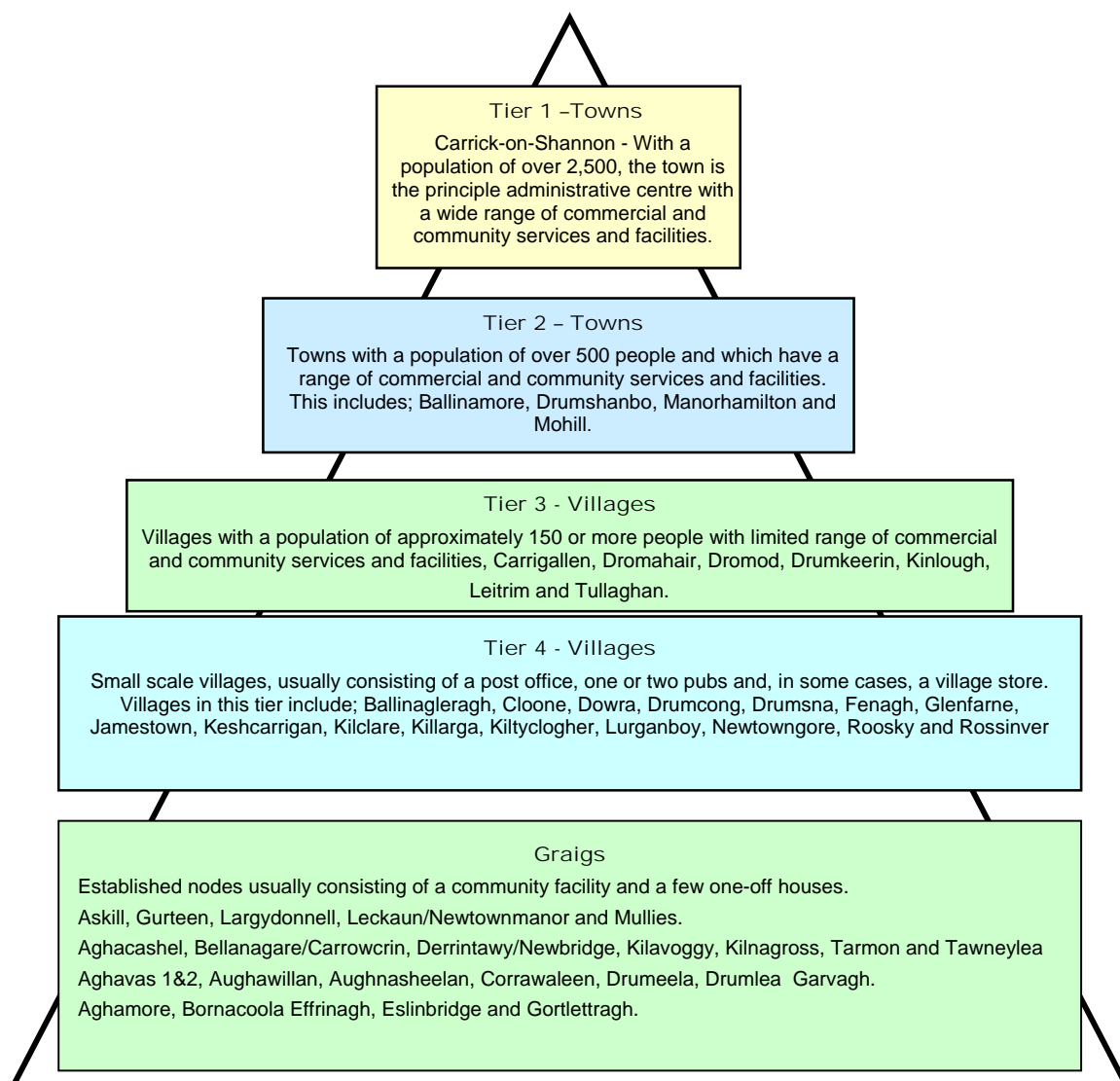
The lands identified in the Strategy are zoned in order to promote the sustainable growth of each centre and direct development towards particular areas and maximise the return on the Council's investment in infrastructure. A key response to the strengthening of structurally weak areas such as County Leitrim is the strengthening of the structure of towns and villages. A vital aspect of achieving sustainable development and vibrant urban and rural communities is that these centres are allowed to evolve and grow in an orderly manner. As such these centres will act to provide both urban and rural communities with a range of services, facilities and employment opportunities.

The Land Use Strategy will also act to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. In this regard it is proposed to include requirements in respect to Part 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, relating to Social and Affordable Housing Supply to certain Tier 2 and Tier 3 Centres. Mohill and Drumkeeran have been excluded from Part 5 requirements due to the existing level of social housing in these towns.

This strategy has been formulated in respect to Tier 2, 3 and 4 Centres as outlined below. In the case of Ballinamore, Drumkeeran, Drumshanbo, Manorhamilton, and Mohill, the strategy has been informed by the Urban Framework Plans which have been adopted by the Local Authority, for these towns. The Urban Framework Plans will continue to inform the Council in relation to the vision for the development of these towns.

In general terms, lands located in Tier 2 and 3 centres have been zoned; "Mixed Use", "Primarily Residential", "Enterprise and Employment", and "Social and Community". Areas zoned Tourism has been identified in some of the centres. The smaller-scale Centres [Tier 4] have been zoned 'General Development' with 'Social and Community' and 'Amenity' type zoning being common to all.

Where land is zoned for a particular use, permission may be refused if, in the opinion of the planning authority, the infrastructure is not adequate to service the proposed development. Planning permission may also be conditional on the provision of certain key pieces of infrastructure.



**Table 2.2: Hierarchy of Towns and Villages and other Centres**

**Tier 1 Centres**

Carrick on Shannon with a population of 2,595 (2006 CSO) is the key service, administrative and retail

**Tier 2 Centres**

Tier 2 Centres are generally those with a population over 500 and have a range of commercial and community services and facilities . They include; Ballinamore, Drumshanbo, Manorhamilton and Mohill.

**Tier 3 Centres**

Tier 3 Centres are generally those with a population of 150 or more and a limited range of commercial and community services and facilities. They include; Carrigallen, Dromahair, Dromod, Drumkeeran, Kinlough, Leitrim and Tullaghan.

#### **Tier 4 Centres**

Tier 4 Centres consist of the remaining villages and settlements within the County, namely; Ballinagleragh, Cloone, Dowra, Drumcong, Drumsna, Fenagh, Glenfarne, Jamestown, Keshcarrigan, Kilclare, Killarga, Kiltyclogher, Lurganboy, Newtowngore, Roosky and Rossinver.

#### **2.01.03a The Purpose and Aims of Land Use Zoning Strategy**

The purpose of land use zoning strategy is to indicate the Planning Authority's intentions in respect to the use of all lands within the boundaries of each of the Centres. The land use zoning objectives are outlined below and details of the lands zoned are shown in Appendix D "*Land Use Zoning Maps for selected towns and villages*". A range of land uses are listed in the matrix in Table 2.3, together with an indication of their broad acceptability in the different land use zones

#### **2.01.03b Social and Affordable Housing (Part 5 of the Act).**

The requirements Part 5, in respect to Social and Affordable Housing, under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, applies to Carrick-on-Shannon, Ballinamore, Drumshanbo, Manorhamilton, Carrigallen, Dromahair, Dromod, Kinlough, Leitrim and Tullaghan. In determining the extent to which Part 5 requirements applies, consideration has been taken of the existing level of social and affordable housing within each of the centres and the capacity of the centre to absorb such a requirement without inhibiting their sustainable development.

#### **2.01.03c Zoning Classification in Respect to Tier 2, 3 and 4 Centres**

##### **Enterprise and Employment**

One of the most common conflicts between neighboring land uses is traffic generation. In general, the strategy has been designed to cluster the heavier traffic generating activities, associated with enterprise, towards the edge of the centre, with good access where possible onto the Regional/National road network and ensuring minimal impact on residential areas. Other common conflicts between land uses that may arise; include visual, noise, odour and light pollution. Employment generating development likely to lead to such nuisances will be directed to the area zoned 'Enterprise and Employment'. Developments including; retail warehouses, be-spoke office development, to which the public will not normally have access will be open for consideration within these areas. Other employment generating development that is not likely to create a significant nuisance may be acceptable in the areas zoned 'Mixed Use' and 'Primarily Residential'.

##### **Primarily Residential**

Residential development will be encouraged in the town centre and lands zoned 'Primarily Residential'. The Council seeks to encourage high quality residential schemes, with convenient and safe access to local services and a safe and pleasant local environment. The Council will strive towards the ideal of mixed residential neighbourhoods, where people of different social and economic backgrounds and of different ages live in proximity and harmony.

It is envisaged that the bulk of residential development will take place on lands zoned 'Primarily Residential'. Other development, that does not negatively impact on the residential use of neighbouring lands, will also be open for consideration in this zone.

Certain institutional and community uses, small-scale enterprises and shops can enliven residential areas and ensure local services are easily available. The key to their acceptability will be their impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

### **Residential Reserve/Support**

These lands are identified primarily to serve the long term housing requirements of the Centre in which they are located. These lands will also be considered as suitable for the accommodation of development that would be compatible with residential use. Whereas residential development (other than that set out below) will not be permitted on these lands during the lifetime of the Plan they may be considered for residential development in future Plans.

The following residential type development may be considered acceptable on lands zoned Residential Reserve/Support;

- 1) Where there is a live permission for residential development that has not been activated. The life of these permissions may be extended in accordance with the Provisions of Section 42A of the Planning & Development Act 2010, as amended. New permission will not be considered.
  
- 2) A proposal for a dwelling house where;
  - a) the unit to be provided will serve as the permanent place of residence of the landowner or a member of his/her immediate family
  - b) **and** where it can be clearly demonstrated that the provision of such a unit would not compromise the development of the adjoining lands (lands from which the site is being annexed),
  - c) **and** the unit to be provided would easily integrate with the future development of the lands and those in the vicinity.
  
- 3) 3 In exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated by the developer that there is a significant difficulty in the release or identification of lands for a specific residential type development, consideration will be given to the release of lands zoned Residential Reserve/Support, subject to established planning criteria and including in particular;
  - a) The requirement to remain within the overall residential land use targets as set out in the 'Core Strategy'.
  - b) Compliance with the 'Justification Test' (refer to details below)
  - c) Compliance with the 'Sequential Approach' (refer to Section 2.01.03e of CDP)

### **Mixed Use**

Zones designated as 'Mixed Use' have been identified in the core of the Centre within which a mix of residential and commercial activity takes place. More generally, buildings designed and located so as to be capable of adaptation to a range of other uses will be encouraged. In determining the suitability of development within this zone regard shall be given to the environmental impact of the proposed development on neighboring uses.

### **General Development**

This designation relates primarily to Tier 4 Centres and includes residential, commercial activity and enterprise and employment. In determining the suitability of development within this zone regard shall be given to the environmental impact of the proposed development on neighboring uses.



**Social and Community**

This zone includes; community buildings, schools, hospitals and health centres, football pitches and other generic or specific social and community uses.

**Open Space and Amenity**

This zone includes; open space, public walkways, and public recreational areas.

**Tourism Related Development**

This zone relates includes developments which are linked to tourism and includes; guest houses, hotels, hostels, holiday homes, restaurants, pubs and other tourism related developments.

**2.01.03d Definition of terms used in Zoning Matrix****Acceptable in Principle ('y')**

The Council will seek to ensure the development of lands and properties in accordance with the Zoning Objectives set out in this section of the plan. Land uses designated under each zoning objective, as 'Acceptable in Principle' are generally permissible, subject to compliance with the relevant policies, standards and requirements set out herein.

**Open for Consideration ('o')**

Land uses shown as 'Open for Consideration' are uses that are not considered acceptable in principle in all parts of the relevant use zone. However, such uses may be acceptable in circumstances where the Council is satisfied that the proposed use would not conflict with the general objectives for the zone and the permitted or existing uses as well as being in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Not Acceptable ('n')**

Land uses which are indicated as 'Not Acceptable' in the Land use Zoning Matrix (Table 2.3) will not be favourably considered. However uses which are clearly ancillary uses may be considered acceptable.

**Other Uses**

Proposed land uses not listed in the matrix will be considered on the merits of the individual planning application, with reference to the most appropriate use of a similar nature indicated in the table and in relation to the general policies and zoning objectives for the area in question of the Plan.

**Non-Conforming Uses**

Existing established uses that are inconsistent with the primary zoning objective, where legally established by continuous use for the same purpose prior to 1st October 1964 or by a planning permission, will not be subject to legal proceedings under the Act in respect of their continued use. Where extensions or improvements of premises accommodating these uses are proposed each shall be considered on its merits in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The extension or intensification of undesirable uses will not be permitted.

### **Transitional Areas**

While the zoning objectives indicate the different uses acceptable in each zone it is important to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use at the boundary of adjoining land use zones. In these areas it is necessary to avoid developments that would be detrimental to amenity.

In zones abutting residential areas, particular attention will be paid to the uses, scale, density and appearance of development proposals and to landscaping and screening proposals in order to protect the amenities of residential properties.

Development abutting amenity and open space will generally facilitate the passive supervision of that space, where possible by fronting onto it.

When interpreting table 2.3 "Land Use Matrix", a degree of flexibility will apply in the immediate vicinity of abutting zones in terms of the appropriateness of the uses pertaining to each zone, i.e. a certain degree of cross-fertilization in terms of land uses may be considered appropriate in these transitional areas so as to allow for a soft transition between abutting zones.

#### **2.01.03e Sequential Release of Lands**

Cognisance will be had of the need to consolidate settlements by keeping them as physically compact as possible and applying the sequential approach to the release of lands for housing developments. (as set out in Chapter 5 of NSS and Section 28 Guidelines, such as the Development Plan Guidelines and Sustainable Urban Residential Development Guidelines). In the interest of orderly development priority will be given to the release of lands close to the core of the settlement, as identified in the zoning maps, for this purpose. The lands surplus to the identified housing needs, which have been identified as 'residential reserve/support', will be regarded as a strategic reserve and that proposals for the development of such lands for housing will not be considered for development purposes during the plan period, other than by testing through the sequential approach and where justification in terms of housing demand can be demonstrated. Lands which are located at the periphery of the settlement may only be developed for residential development where it is demonstrated that both lands, zoned for residential development, and lands, identified as residential reserve, have been exhausted, or where it can be demonstrated that these lands cannot be developed for reasons related to their ownership status or tenure.

In this regard and within the context set out above, as a general rule, priority will be given to the development of lands that can be served by means of a gravity sewer as opposed to proposals that rely on pumping. Additional pumping stations will not be permitted while lands capable of being serviced by an existing gravity sewer, or by an existing pumping station, remain undeveloped.

#### **2.01.03f Preserving the Urban Form and Avoiding Urban Sprawl**

The design and layout of development within the envelope of each Centre shall respect, and where possible enhance, the inherent character of the area in terms of its built form.

*Refer to Sections 3.01.02 Development Management Requirements and 03.02.07 Residential Development in Towns and Villages for further guidance.*

In order to preserve the urban form of towns and villages and avoid ribbon development, particular planning control measures will operate along the approach roads to each of the towns and villages. In this regard a compelling justification as to the applicants need for a one-off dwelling house at the location proposed will be required to support such a proposal. *Refer to Section 3.02.02 Ribbon Development for further guidance.*

Development of proposals for one-off dwellings located along that section of the former National Primary route between Roosky village and Dromod that has been replaced by the Roosky-Dromod By-Pass, will only be permitted, where the applicant has an intrinsic link to the area and a clear need to locate in the area is established.

**Policy 1.3a** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the scale, density, design, site layout and pattern of development within each of the Tier 2, 3 and 4 Centres shall respect, and where possible enhance, the inherent character of these centres in terms of their built form.

**Policy 1.3b** It is the policy of the Council to seek the development of land in accordance with the land use objectives set out in Table 2.3

<p><b>Objective 1.3a</b> It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development of one-off housing does not give rise to the coalescence of towns and villages and other centres</p>
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Land Use	Mixed Use	Primarily Residential	Residential Reserve/Support	Enterprise & Employment	General Development	Open Space & Amenity	Social & Community	Tourism Related Development
Dwelling	y	y	n <sup>1</sup>	n	y	n	o	o
Guest house/hotel/hostel	y	y	y	o	y	n	o	y
Restaurant	y	o	o	o	y	n	o	y
Pub	y	o	o	o	o	n	o	y
Shop (convenience)	y	y	y	o	y	n	n	o
Shop (comparison)	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n
Retail warehouse	n	n	n	o	o	n	n	n
School	y	o	o	o	y	n	y	n
Medical and Related Consultant	y	y	y	o	y	n	y	n
Health centre	y	o	o	o	y	n	y	n
Nursing home	y	y	y	n	y	n	y	n
Community hall & Sports halls	y	o	o	o	y	o	y	y
Recreational buildings/marina	y	o	o	o	y	o	y	y
Cultural uses library	y	y	y	o	y	o	y	y
Offices	y	o	o	y	y	n	o	o
Garages car repairs	n	n	n	y	o	n	n	n
Petrol station	o	n	n	y	o	n	n	n
Motor sales	o	n	n	y	o	n	n	n
Car parks	y	y	y	y	y	o	o	y
Heavy commercial vehicle parks	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n
Cinema dancehall disco	y	n	n	o	o	n	o	o
Warehouse (wholesale)	n	n	n	y	o	n	n	n
Repository store depot	o	n	n	y	o	n	n	n
Industry	n	n	n	y	o	n	n	n
Industry (light)	n	o	o	y	o	n	n	n
Workshops	o	y	y	y	o	n	o	o
Playing fields	o	y	y	y	o	y	y	y
Place of worship	y	y	y	o	y	o	y	o
Park/playground	y	y	y	o	y	y	y	y
Tourist camping site	n	o	o	o	o	o	n	y
Tourist caravan park	n	o	o	o	o	o	n	y
Halting site	n	y	y	y	y	o	y	n

<sup>1</sup> For exceptions refer to Section 2.01.03 'Residential Reserve/Support'

Cattle-shed/slatted unit	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Broiler house	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Stable yard	n	n	n	n	n	o	n	n
Amusement Arcade	o	n	n	n	o	n	n	o
Hot food take-away	o	n	n	o	y	n	n	o
Utility structures	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Funeral homes	o	o	o	o	y	n	n	n
Crèche/playschool	y	y	y	o	y	o	y	n

**Table 2.3: Land Use Zoning Matrix**

'y' Acceptable in principle, 'o' Open for consideration, 'n' not acceptable.

With regard to determining the suitability of retail developments, applications will be assessed having due regard to the current County Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

In the case of lands at risk of flooding, the types of uses mentioned above may be further constrained having regard to the policies, objectives and guidelines of this Plan and in particular the guidelines outlined in the document: "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities" Nov. 2009

<b>Objective 1.3b</b>	To seek the development of lands zoned 'Mixed Use' for commercial residential, health, community, educational, cultural, retail and related uses.
<b>Objective 1.3c</b>	To seek the development of lands zoned 'Primarily Residential' for residential and associated uses. Open space and recreational facilities must be provided in association with residential development in accordance with the standards set out in the County Development Plan
<b>Objective 1.3d</b>	To seek the development of lands zoned 'Enterprise and Employment' for employment generating uses.
<b>Objective 1.3e</b>	To seek the development of lands zoned 'Social and Community' for; amenity, recreational, educational and health uses.
<b>Objective 1.3f</b>	To seek the development of lands zoned 'General Development' for a suitable mix and pattern of development types as outlined in a), b) and c) above.
<b>Objective 1.3g</b>	To seek the development zoned 'Tourism' for tourist related development and activities.

### **2.01.03g Design Criteria Relating to Rural and Urban Housing**

In order to ensure the integration of dwellings into their respective settings it is considered appropriate to provide clear guidance for the public and developers with respect to house design, siting and boundary treatment for rural housing and boundary treatment in the case of housing schemes.

*Refer also to Sections 3.02.05 Site Boundaries, 3.02.04 Individual Houses, 3.02.07 Residential Development in Towns and Villages, 3.02.10 Density, 3.02.12 Open Space Provision in Housing Schemes and 3.02.15 Apartments for further guidance.*

<b>Objective 1.3h</b>	It is an objective of the Council to produce a design guide in respect of the treatment of boundaries in housing schemes and rural sites.
<b>Objective 1.3i</b>	It is an objective of the Council to update and review the current Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses in the Countryside.

### **2.01.03h Existing Housing Stock**

It is clear from a comprehensive housing survey completed by the Council in the last quarter of 2010 that the level of vacant and under construction housing units will meet a significant level of the housing requirements during the Plan period, and in some instances beyond.

Considering the foregoing and in particular the need to ensure the utilization of the existing stock of residential units and the proper release of zoned lands for residential type development the following 'Justification Test' shall apply.

### **2.01.03i Justification Test**

A justification test in terms of the market demand for new residential development will generally be required in the case of all new applications for residential schemes (two or more dwellings), pending a narrowing of the supply and demand of residential units in those centres where there remains a wide divergence. Certain developments that can demonstrate a strategic element (e.g. a significant commercial or social element), may be deemed acceptable. Developments that satisfy a 'Niche' housing market may also be deemed acceptable. Normally the requirements of a justification test will be in the form of a 'Property Development Surveyors Report'.

### **2.01.03j Unfinished/Unoccupied Estates and Commercial Property**

Unfinished/unoccupied estates and commercial property are a manifestation of a systemic failure to properly manage the property sector. This has led to unprecedented social and economic difficulties, particularly within the housing sector. The Council fully recognises and acknowledges this legacy and has to date done much work, from a planning perspective, to help address these difficulties.

Notwithstanding this legacy, unfinished/unoccupied buildings represent a significant resource that needs to be resolved in a pragmatic and sustainable way. In the interest of clarity, and not to deflect from the responsibilities of the Council, it must be stated from the outset, that the primary responsibility in relation to the completion of unfinished estates and commercial property lies with the developers and property owners.

Nevertheless, given the scale, extent and complexity of the social, economic and environmental issues involved, public intervention may be required. Resolution of the issues involved will require a joint, sustained and measured response with some innovative solutions needed and indeed a considerable commitment in terms of resources. It is therefore a key Planning issue that will continue to be addressed by the Council and kept under review.

At a National level the Department of the Environment is working on measures to resolve the issues with a particular focus on unfinished estates. The Council will be guided in its approach by the forthcoming final version of the document to be issued by the Department of Environment entitled; "Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments - Guidance Manual" and any subsequent Guidance in this regard. With this in mind the Council is anxious to fully support any such measures falling within its remit and as resources permit.

The Council has established a dedicated team within the Planning Department to deal with planning issues relating to unfinished estates in particular. This team will continue to identify record and monitor the status of unfinished estates within the County and will actively engage with the relevant stakeholders in an effort to resolve the Planning issues involved. The Council is currently working with Developers, Financial and Legal

institutions, the Department of Environment, and other relevant parties in order to secure the satisfactory resolution of any unfinished estates.

A range of measures will continue to be developed and deployed by the Council in relation to resolving planning matters associated with Unfinished/Unoccupied estates and commercial property, including;

- Appropriate and timely action where deemed necessary on significant issues of Public Health and Safety.
- Prioritising site resolution of occupied/unfinished estates.
- Providing direction to, and securing the co-operation of, developers and other relevant stakeholders in an effort to secure compliance with planning permission..
- Taking enforcement action and the 'calling-in' of bonds and cash deposits in order to complete the developments, where appropriate.
- Accommodating (under the development management process) appropriate revisions to the design, layout and/or use of the permitted development in order to secure their completion/occupation.
- Restricting (under the planning process) certain additional development types in areas where there is a surplus.
- Implementing key infrastructural and community based works including Town and Village Improvement Schemes, thereby making Towns and Villages more attractive places in which to live, work and visit.
- Increased efforts towards facilitating and promoting opportunities for enterprise and employment.

**Policy 1.3c**     **It is the policy of the Council to operate a pro-active approach, and to work with other relevant parties, towards achieving a sustainable resolution to the difficulties associated with unfinished/unoccupied estates and commercial property within the County.**

#### **2.01.03k Flood Risk Management**

It is the aim of the Council to ensure, where appropriate, that proposed developments in areas at risk of flooding shall conform with the "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities", Nov. 2009 or any subsequent version of this document issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, during the lifetime of the Plan. It should be noted that Carrick-on-Shannon has been identified in the Border Regional Guidelines as a Regionally Strategically Important Town and as such has been identified as a growth centre. Accordingly, its status as such will be taken into consideration when assessing certain type developments within areas at risk of flooding.



<b>Policy 1.3d</b>	<p>It is the policy of the Council to require, where appropriate, * that developments of a type that may be considered sensitive to flooding are subject to a 'justification test'. Where a justification test is required it shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that;</p> <p>a) Such proposals apply the 'sequential approach' as outlined in Section 3 of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Nov. 09. In particular, the proposal shall demonstrate that there are no alternative sites available at a more suitable location within the town that would meet the requirements of the development:</p> <p>b).The area comprises significant previously developed and/or underutilised lands within the urban envelope;</p> <p>c) The development of the area is essential to facilitate regeneration or town centre expansion;</p> <p>d).Environmental/hydrological assessment has been undertaken to identify the impact of flood risk as a result of development and that the development would not result in increased or new flood risk elsewhere and if possible will reduce the overall flood risk;</p> <p>e) The proposal includes measures to minimise flood risk to people, property, the economy and the environment as far as is reasonably possible;</p> <p>f) The development proposed includes measures to ensure that residual risks to the area and/or development can be managed to an acceptable level as regards the adequacy of existing flood protection measures or the design, implementation and funding of any future risk management measures and provisions for emergency services access;</p> <p>g) The proposal complies with other relevant policies and development standards as set out in the County Development Plan and this Local Area Plan.</p>
* In general, but	<p>not exclusively, the justification test will only apply to lands that are affected by the flooding as set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009).</p>
<b>Policy 1.3e.</b>	<p>It is the policy of the Council to seek to ensure that proposals within flood risk areas exclude high vulnerability uses such as residential care homes, hospitals, emergency services, residential use at ground floor level and certain strategic infrastructural services and facilities.</p>
<b>Policy 1.3f.</b>	<p>It is the policy of the Council to protect the floodplain of the Shannon. Planning permission for development on the floodplain will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and where the Council is satisfied that downstream (and upstream) consequences are insignificant. The Council must be satisfied that all floor levels in such developments are sufficiently high above the maximum recorded flood levels.</p>

Refer to Section 2.07.09 and Appendix E – Guidelines on Flood Risk and Development.

The Council will continue to work in conjunction with the OPW and other relevant bodies towards the management of flood risk with particular reference to the OPW flood risk

mapping and other documentation under the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS) project and having regard to the availability of resources.

**Policy 1.3g** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that development would not overload or otherwise compromise the proper operation of the Public Wastewater Treatment Plants. Such development will not be permitted, notwithstanding the zoning of lands.

**Policy 1.3h** It is the policy of the Council to manage the development of settlements in accordance with the Core Strategy and as detailed in Section 2.01.03 – Land Use Strategy for Tier 2, 3 and 4 Towns and Villages.

#### **2.01.04 Land Use Strategy in Respect to Rural Housing in the Countryside**

The County has undergone significant change during the currency of the existing Development Plan in terms of residential development and population change. This change has not been consistent throughout the County. A feature of this change has been the high level of residential vacancy. There are areas within the countryside that are under pressure from development in terms of one-off housing, particularly along the approach roads to towns and villages. Having regard to the foregoing and in order to achieve the basic aims of the Council as set out above in term of increasing the population of the County it is considered appropriate to formulate a land use strategy in respect to the accommodation of residential development within the countryside. In doing so it is the aim of the strategy to protect those areas under pressure from excessive levels of one-off rural housing and thereby provide for the needs of people with a strong justification to live in these areas while at the same time encouraging residential development towards areas of relatively low population growth and vacancy levels.

##### **2.01.04a Policy Formulation**

Having regard to the foregoing a two-track approach has been taken towards the accommodation of residential development in the countryside. In the first instance small-scale settlements were identified and are referred to herein as 'Graigs'. These are nodes with an established identity that were considered suitable for the development of small scale housing schemes and/or single dwelling houses.

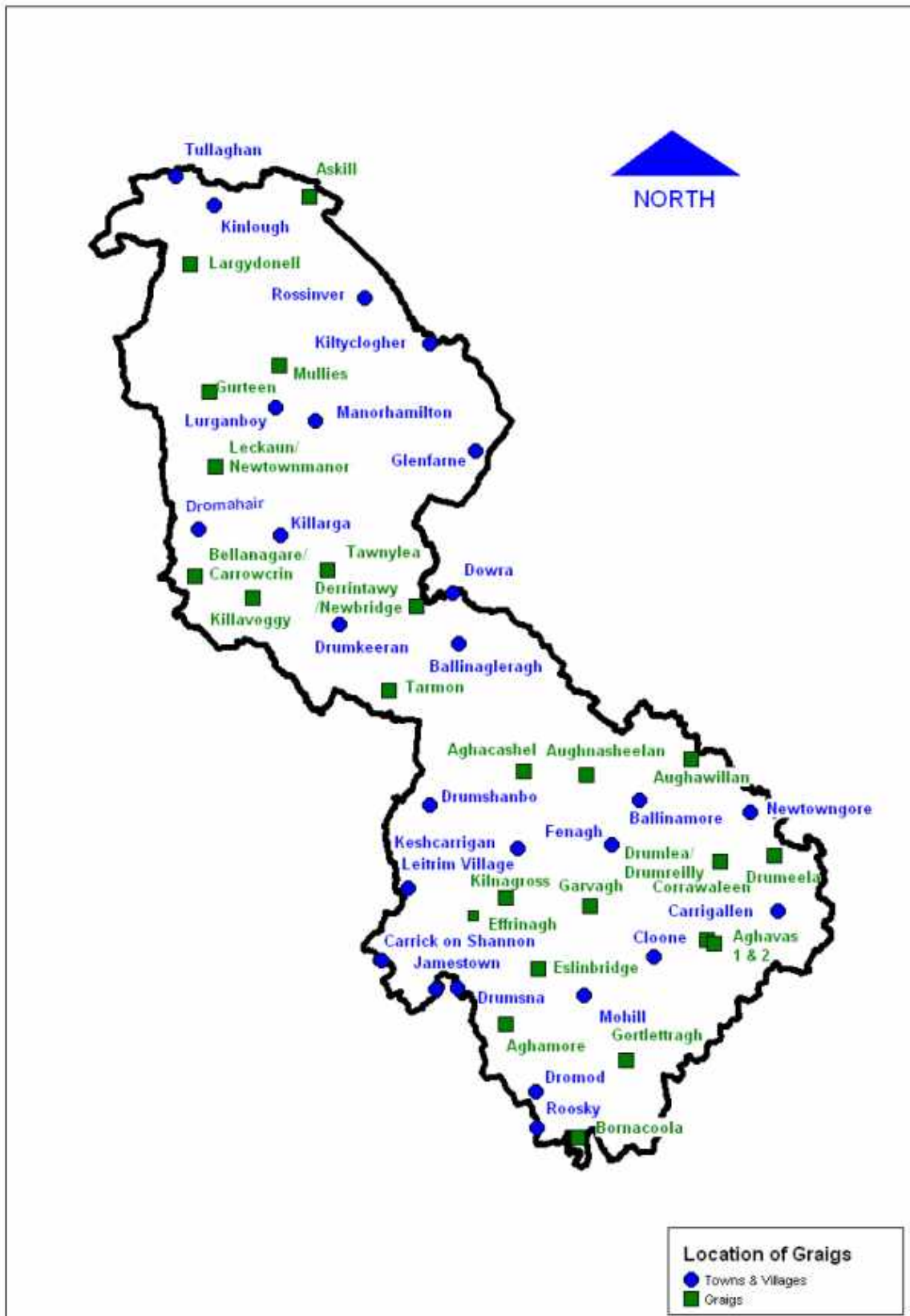
The second part of the approach was to determine the capacity of the countryside to absorb one-off housing having regard to issues in terms of environmental sensitivity, population trends, vacancy rates and the existing level of development in the area. In this regard the following actions were taken;

1. Environmentally sensitivity areas including; – Special Areas of Conservation, Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's) and Areas of High Visual Amenity (HVA's) were identified and mapped.
2. Population trends have been mapped in terms of each District Electoral Division (DED). The period taken was from 1996 to 2006.
3. Vacancy rates were mapped in relation to each electoral division. The information was based on the vacancy rate given in the 2006 census.
4. Local areas within each DED that are clearly under significant development pressure were mapped. The information was gleaned from the 2007 Geo-directory.

#### **2.01.04b Identification of 'Graigs'**

Existing settlements that clearly have an established identity, containing a community facility such as a school, a retail unit e.g. a post office, a church, and community centre with some housing in the vicinity were identified as suitable areas for small-scale residential developments. It is considered appropriate that such areas should be reinforced in order to sustain the social capital of the area and provide suitable alternative type locations for residential development. This approach is consistent with policy 1.2 of the plan in terms of securing the social and economic infrastructure of the county and the location of new residential development. These centres are referred to as 'Graigs'. See Map 2.1, page 58.

In general terms vehicular access points to developments within Graigs will be directed onto local roads as opposed to regional roads. There will be a presumption in favour of the development of one-off housing within the Graigs and similarly for the development of small-scale housing schemes served by suitably designed and strategically located community wastewater treatment units, which shall be suitable and capable of being expanded to service additional development and eventually to be taken in charge by the Local Authority. Development will be directed so as to consolidate existing development in the first instance and thereafter to provide for the organic growth of the centre as appropriate. All proposals for development will have to comply with normal planning requirements in terms of site section, site layout, building design, road safety and in particular the treatment of wastewater.



Map 2.1: Location of Graigs

The following is a list of the Graigs, which have been identified;

<b>Manorhamilton Electoral Area</b>	<b>Ballinamore Electoral Area</b>
Askill	Aghavas 1 & 2
Gurteen	Aughawillan
Largydonnell	Aughnasheelan
Leckaun/Newtownmanor	Corrawaleen
Mullies	Drumeela
	Drumlea
	Garvagh
<b>Dromahair Electoral Area</b>	<b>Carrick on Shannon Electoral Area</b>
Aghacashel	Effrinagh
Bellanagare/Carrowcrin	Eslinbridge
Derrintawy/NewBridge	Aghamore
Kilavoggy Tarmon	Gortlettragh
Kilnagross	Bornacoola
Tarmon	
Tawneylea	

### **Manorhamilton Electoral Area:**

#### **Askill**

Askill is located close to the northern part of Lough Melvin, approximately 7 Km from Kinlough to the west and close to the Leitrim/Donegal county boundary. It consists of a former national school now used as a community building and a number of dispersed one-off dwelling houses.

#### **Gurteen**

Gurteen is located approximately 7 Km west of Manorhamilton and 7 Km east of the Leitrim/Sligo Boundary and a short distance north of National Primary Route N16. It consists of a church, a small-scale local authority housing scheme and a number of one-off houses in the vicinity. The National School is located approximately 1.5 Km west of the church beside the junction of local road LT 4138-1 and the N16. Development will be directed towards consolidating the area in the vicinity of the church and the small-scale local authority housing scheme.

#### **Largydonnell**

Largydonnell is located approximately 5 Km south of Kinlough along Regional Road R280. There is a former post office located a short distance to the north and a church approximately 1 Km to the south. There are a number of one-off dwelling houses in the vicinity, also a bottle bank and a burial ground.

#### **Leckaun/Newtownmanor**

Leckaun/Newtownmanor is located approximately 5 Km north of Dromahair and approximately 1 Km west of that section of Regional road R286 which links Dromahair with the National Primary Route N16. It is also approximately 4 Km east the Leitrim/Sligo boundary and the rural area known Fivemilebourne. The former post office has been abandoned and is in need of essential repairs. Local facilities are dispersed with the National School located a short distance to the west, a community centre to the south and a church further south. Whereas the school is located within an area designated as an Area Outstanding Natural Beauty the former post office is outside this designation. There are a number of dwelling houses located in the area between the school and the vicinity of the former post office. It is considered appropriate that new development should be directed towards area of the former post office. The road fronting the former post office and the national school is part of Regional road R286. The creation of multiple vehicular access points onto the regional road is discouraged at this location.

#### **Mullies**

Mullies is located approximately 5 Km north of Manorhamilton. It consists of a church and a number of scattered one-off dwelling houses. While there is potential for some small-scale development in the vicinity of the church, it is restricted on the eastern side of the road by overhead electrical cables and by ground slopes to the west.

**Dromahair Electoral Areas:**

**Aghacashel**

Aghacashel is located approximately 8 Km east of Drumshanbo and 5 Km west of Auhgnasheelan. There is a shop/post office with 5 no dwelling houses in the vicinity.

**Ballinagar/Carrowcrin**

Ballinagar/Carrowcrin is located approximately 3 Km south of Dromahaire and 2 Km east of the Leitrim/Sligo boundary. Ballinagar where there is a community centre, a church and 4 No dwelling houses is located approximately 3/4 Km north of Carrowcrin. There are a number of one-off houses and the burial grounds located between these two centres. Carrowcrin consists of a national school with 10 No dwelling houses in the vicinity. The area in the vicinity of the national school is located near a stream leading to the Bonet River, which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation. The ground in the vicinity of the school would appear to be poor as regards the accommodation of a wastewater treatment system. Having regard to the foregoing any development in the vicinity of the school will be require to clearly demonstrate that it would not give rise to a risk of pollution.

**Derintawy/Newbridge**

Derrintawy is located towards the northern part of Lough Allen along Regional Road R200. It lies near the Leitrim/Cavan boundary, approximately 7 Km east of Drumkeeran and 3 Km west of Dowra. It consists of a church, a former national school, which is now used as a community building. There are some one-off dwelling houses in the vicinity. The creation of new access points onto the Regional road would prove difficult due to the poor alignment of the road. It is therefore envisaged that development should be accessed from the local road at this location.

**Kilavoggy**

Kilavoggy is located at the junction of two local roads within a relatively remote and sparsely populated rural area, approximately 7 Km southeast of Dromahair. It consists of a church with 6 No dwelling houses in the vicinity. It is considered appropriate that development would be focused on the area near the church.

**Kilnagross**

Kilnagross is located approximately 10 Km northeast of Carrick on Shannon at a crossroads. It consists of a shop/P.O./dwelling house, a national school and 4 other dwelling houses in the vicinity.

**Tarmon**

Tarmon is an established node located along Regional road R280, approximately 11 Km north of Drumshanbo and 6 Km south of Drumkeeran. It consists of a church, a national school that are located on the western side of the R280. There are 6 No dwelling houses in the vicinity of the church and school. The former Tarmon National School is in need of essential repairs and is located a short distance to the north of the church and on the eastern side of the R280. There is a civic amenity site located beside the former national school. The road in the vicinity is governed by an 80 Km/hr speed limit, traffic movement is relatively fast moving. The speed limit is likely to be increased to 100 km/hr. Having regard to the foregoing the creation of multiple access points onto the regional road this location is discouraged.

### **Tawneylea**

Tawneylea is located approximately 6 Km north of Drumkeeran and approximately 2 Km east of Regional Road R280. It consists of a church, a dwelling house, public telephone kiosk and a roadside P.O. collection point. There is a national school located approximately 600 metres northwest of the church.

### **Ballinamore Electoral Area:**

#### **Aghavas 1 and 2**

Aghavas is located approximately 6 Km west of Carrigallen and 11 Km northeast of Mohill. It is divided into two centres, the northern part being located beside Regional road R201 and consists of a pub, a post office, a sports grounds, a small scale local authority housing scheme and a few dispersed one-off dwelling houses. The southern part consists of a church, a national school and a number of one-off houses located within the vicinity.

#### **Aughawillan**

Aughawillan is located approximately 5km east of Ballinamore. To the south is located a national school and community centre. The church is located a short distance to the north. There are a number of dwelling houses in the vicinity of the school and church.

#### **Aughnasheelan**

Aughnasheelan is located approximately 4 Km northwest of Ballinamore. It consists of a church/graveyard, a small-scale local authority housing scheme and a small scale private housing scheme presently nearing completion. This centre is served by a recently constructed and strategically located wastewater treatment system. There is a community centre located towards the western side of this settlement.

#### **Corrawaleen**

Corrawaleen is located approximately 5km North West of Carrigallen along the R. 204. It consists of a church, a small local authority housing scheme, a cluster of dwellings in the vicinity and a shop, which is also a post office.

#### **Drumlea/Drumreilly**

Drumlea is located 1km North-West of Corrawaleen (6km North West of Carrigallen) along the R.204. It consists of 1 church and graveyard, 1 community centre and 1 school. There are a few scattered dwellings in the vicinity.

#### **Drumeela**

Drumeela is located at the junction of two local roads, approximately 4 Km north of Carrigallen. It consists of a church and a national school and a few dispersed one-off houses.

#### **Gorvagh**

Gorvagh is located along Regional Road R202 approximately 7 Km north of Mohill and 5 Km south of Fenagh. It consists of a church, a community centre with two dwelling houses in the vicinity. Development will be directed towards the area between the church and community centre with access onto the local roads as opposed to the regional road.

### **Carrick on Shannon Electoral Area:**

#### **Effrinagh**

Effrinagh is located at the junction of two local roads. It is located approximately 8Km northeast of Carrick on Shannon. It consists of a shop/bar/dwelling house. There are a



few dispersed dwelling houses in the vicinity. It contains the site of Gralton's Pearse/Connolly memorial Hall.

### **Eslinbridge**

Eslinbridge is a dispersed settlement located approximately 5 Km northwest of Mohill. It consists of a church with 6 No dwelling houses in the vicinity. The national school (1945) has been converted into a community centre and is located approximately 2 Km south of the church and a GAA pitch approximately 2 Km further south. There will be a presumption in favour of development that would consolidate the area in the vicinity of the church and bridge.

### **Aghamore**

Aghamore is located approximately 5 Km south of Drumsna and 5Km north of Dromod. The settlement is divided by the National Primary Route N4 with a shop/post/office and small-scale housing scheme on the western side of the N4 and a church, national school and a number of one-off dwelling houses towards the eastern side.

### **Gortletteragh**

Gortletteragh is located approximately 6km South East of Mohill and 9km North East of Rookey. It consists of 1 school and 1 church and graveyard. There are a few scattered dwellings in the vicinity.

### **Bornacoola**

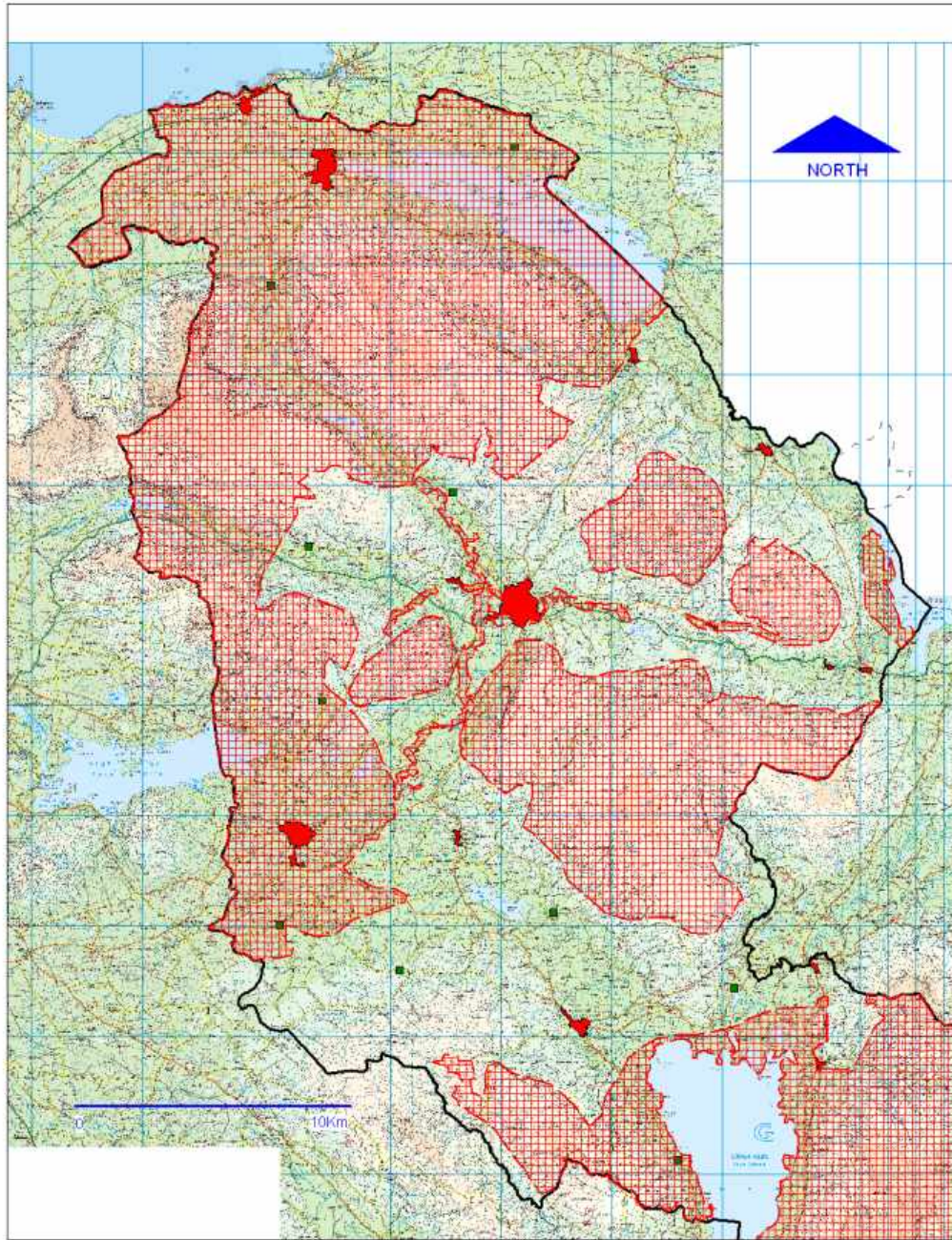
This area is located approximately 3km to the East of Roosky. It consists of 1 church, 1 community centre and a post box. This area is served by a public footpath and lighting. There are a number of dwellings in this area.

**Policy 1.4a** It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of the Graigs identified above.

**Policy 1.4b** It is the policy of the Council to direct development so as to consolidate existing development within the Graigs in the first instance and thereafter to provide for the organic growth of the centre as appropriate.

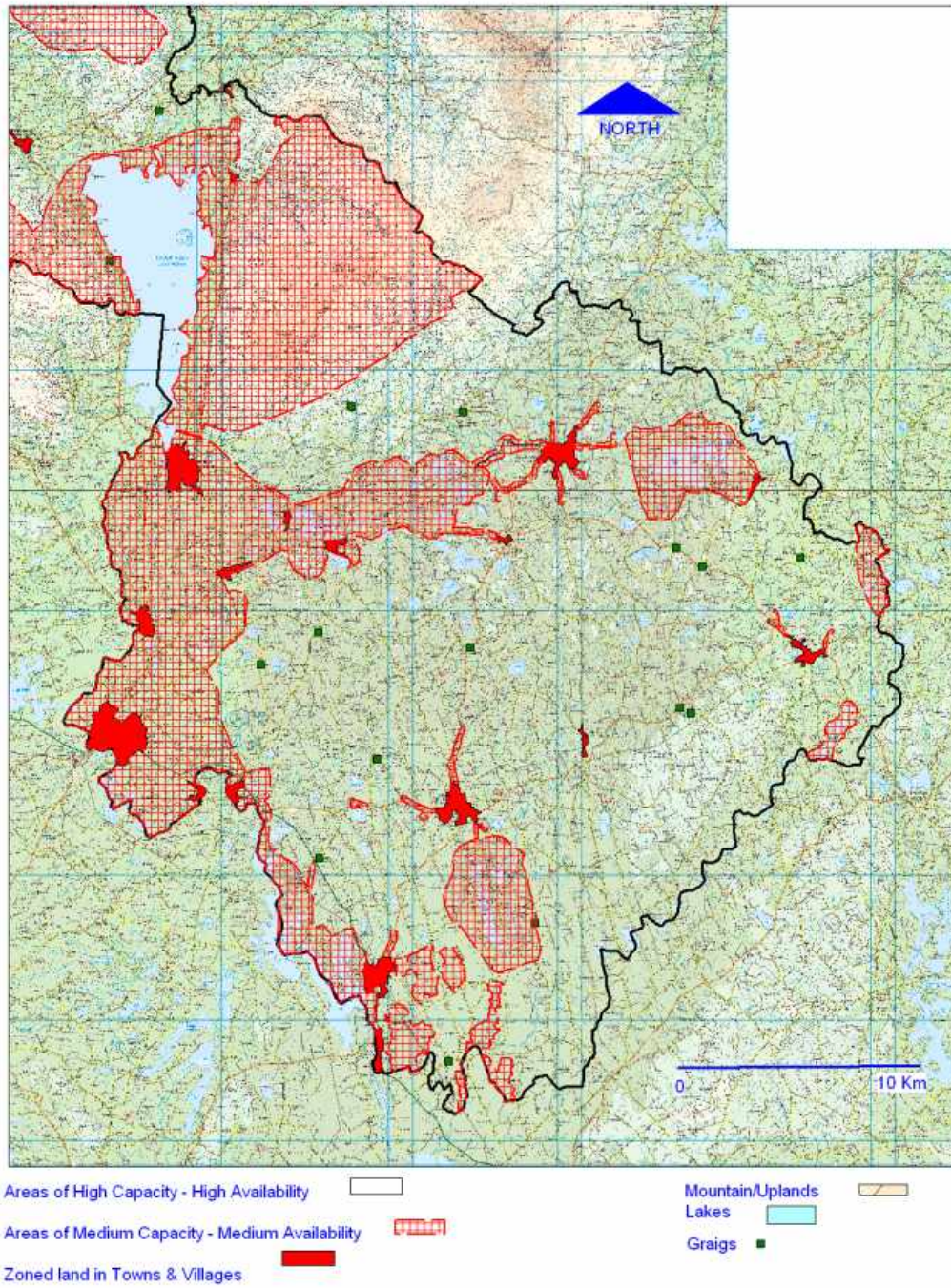
### **2.01.04c Selection of Areas of High Capacity/High Availability and Medium Capacity/Medium Availability.**

The overall consideration of environmental issues, population trends, vacancy rates and local areas under development pressure reveals areas that may be considered high capacity/high availability and medium capacity/medium availability, in terms of accommodating one off housing type development within the countryside. The areas concerned are indicated on Map 2.2 and Map 2.3. (pages 64 and 65).



**Map 2.2: Areas of High Capacity/High Availability and Medium Capacity/Medium Availability – North Leitrim** (See Appendix D for larger scale map).





**Map 2.3: Areas of High Capacity/High Availability and Medium Capacity/Medium Availability – South Leitrim** (See Appendix D for larger scale map).

**Policy 1.4c** It is the policy of the Council to operate a presumption in favour of one-off housing in Areas of *High Capacity/High Availability*, subject to normal planning requirements.

**Policy 1.4d** It is the policy of the Council to consider one-off housing acceptable within areas of *Medium Capacity/Medium Availability* subject to normal planning requirements and where applicants demonstrate compliance with the following requirements:

1. Are currently living and/or working in the area,  
Or
2. Are working within reasonable commuting distance there from and wish to use the proposed development as their permanent place of residence and where there is evidence that there will be a net community gain arising from the proposed development,  
Or
3. Are originally native to the area and wish to return to the area for family or social reasons and wish to live there as their permanent place of residence,  
Or
4. Would propose to live full time in that area of the County and would make an economic and social contribution towards the development of that local area.

Other developments considered acceptable in areas identified as medium capacity include;

(a)The conversion, adaptation, re use and extension of existing rural dwellings and other structures capable of being adapted to residential use,

And

(b)The replacement of existing dwellings on the same site.

Where it is (a) proposed to convert, adapt, re-use and/or extend an existing rural dwelling or other structure capable of being adapted, or (b) where it is proposed to replace an existing dwelling on the same site, in accordance with the above section, the Planning Authority will have regard to the soil conditions on the site and its suitability to accommodate effluent treatment systems to appropriate standards to service the proposed development. Where an effluent treatment system already exist on site, its suitability shall be assessed by an approved assessor (the list of approved assessors can be found on the Councils website at

\*<http://www.leitrimcoco.ie/Departments/Planning/Panel+of+Assessors>, and if found to be unsatisfactory or unsuitable to cater for the proposed development, it shall be de-commissioned and replaced by a modern wastewater treatment system, whose design and construction shall be bespoke, to meet the site suitability requirements.

*Refer to Sections 3.01.05 Rural Areas, 3.02.02 Ribbon Development, 3.02.17 House Extensions, 3.02.04 Individual Houses, 3.01.08 High Capacity/High Availability, 3.01.09 Medium Capacity/Medium Availability, 3.02.06 Waste Water Treatment and 3.04.08 Sight Lines and Development along Controlled Roads for further guidance.*

### **2.01.05 Renewal of Rural Areas**

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) outlines four broad objectives for a sustainable rural policy framework, as follows;

1. To sustain and renew established rural communities and the existing stock of investment in a way that responds to the various spatial, structural and economic changes taking place, while protecting the important assets rural areas possess;
2. To strengthen the established structure of villages and smaller settlements both to assist local economies and to accommodate additional population in a way that supports the viability of public transport and local infrastructure and services such as schools and water services;
3. To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality, the natural and cultural heritage and the quality of the landscape are protected to support quality of life and economic viability;
4. To ensure that rural settlement policies take account of and are appropriate to local circumstances.

These objectives are reflected in the policies and objectives of this plan. In the context of policies appropriate to local circumstances, the Council recognises that Leitrim is predominantly a rural county with a history of declining population. However, this trend has been reversed in both of the last two intercensal periods. In 2006, only 30.4 percent of the population lived within a town or village (i.e. Tier 1, 2 and 3 centres), the remainder living in the countryside. A network, of social and economic services and facilities, has evolved to support the rural population including schools, post offices, parish churches, sports clubs and community organisations. The Council believes that this web of institutions and organisations has been under threat from population decline. It is the primary aim to protect and reinforce the population base that underpins them. The Council is pro-actively involved in regenerating rural areas.

In terms of the different types of rural areas as set out in the NSS, Leitrim can be classified as a 'structurally weak rural area'. In this context the Council will be favourably disposed towards granting planning permission for residential development to those who wish to live in the County, whether they are existing residents of the County seeking to remain here, family members of existing residents, returning emigrants or new migrants coming to the County for the first time, subject to compliance with the policies, objectives and development control standards set out in this plan.

In deciding on planning applications for housing in rural areas, the Council will balance the obligation to protect the heritage and environment and maximise use of infrastructure against the net community benefit accruing to an area by permitting further residential development, particularly in areas of population decline and/or where rural services are under threat.

The smaller the impact on the environment the more favourably disposed towards the development the Council will be.

Development must avoid creating a traffic hazard.

Development must avoid pollution of surface and ground waters.

In assessing development in the countryside, the carrying capacity of the receiving environment will be considered. Thus where one or two houses may be acceptable in a given location, the cumulative impact of a larger number of houses (or other developments) may lead to an excessive concentration of waste water treatment systems

feeding into a watercourse, excessive traffic on an inadequate road infrastructure or an unacceptable visual impact on a sensitive landscape.

*Refer to Sections 3.01.05 Rural Areas, 3.02.06 Waste Water Treatment and 3.04.08 Sight Lines and Development along Controlled Roads for further guidance.*

Housing in rural areas should follow the design principles laid out in the Council's *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside*, as available from the Council.

*Refer also to Sections 3.02.04 Individual Houses, 3.02.05 Site Boundaries and 3.05.06 Light pollution for guidance.*

The refurbishment of derelict or abandoned buildings in the countryside will be particularly favoured.

*Refer to Sections 3.02.03 Restoration and Conversion of Derelict Structure and 3.02.06 Waste Water Treatment for further guidance.*

**Objective 1.5** It is an objective of the Council to take a proactive, integrated approach towards the sustainable development of rural areas and to engage with the public and other interested parties in so doing.

## **2.02 Area Specific Land Use Policies**

### **2.02.01 Land Use Zoning**

The Council does not currently consider it appropriate to zone lands in the countryside for particular uses. Applications for development will be considered on their merits taking into consideration the potential gain (or loss) for the local community, the potential impact on the receiving environment and landscape, health, safety and other technical issues.

### **2.02.02 Landscape Character Areas**

The Council produced a Landscape Character Assessment (L.C.A.) of the whole county, (available from the Council and on the Council website). This L.C.A. has been used as a Guidance Document to inform policy on Afforestation and Wind Farms as referred to in Sections 2.06.03 and 2.10.04.

### **2.02.03 The Coastal Area**

Leitrim has a short but beautiful coastline opening onto Donegal Bay. The Council recognises that pressure for development in this exposed and sensitive location is particularly intense and is anxious that such development is sensitive to its location.

*Refer to Section 3.01.10 Coastal Area for further guidance.*

The Council will liaise with the neighbouring counties of Sligo and Donegal in the drawing up of any coastal zone management plan that may be required to protect the coast around Donegal Bay.

**Policy 2.3a**      **It is the policy of the Council that in the coastal area, with particular reference to the seaward side of the coast road (LP-2059-1, LP-2059-2 and LP-2059-3), primary importance will be given to the conservation or enhancement of the landscape and coast.**

Development may be permitted if:

1. it is located in the village of Tullaghan,
2. it accords with its surrounding in scale, density, height, massing, layout and materials,
3. it would not have a detrimental impact on skylines or important views,
4. it is not in an area at risk from flooding, erosion by the sea or landslips which may require expensive engineering works.

**Policy 2.3b**      **It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to actively promote and protect public access to the coast.**

## 2.03 Community Services

### 2.03.01 Childcare Facilities

The Council welcomes *the Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities* issued by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government in July 2001.

**Policy 3.1** It is the policy of the Council to actively encourage the provision of childcare facilities accessible to parents at their place of residence and/or place of work.

Large residential or commercial developments may be required to provide adequate childcare facilities as part of the development.

The conversion of a house, in whole or in part, to a crèche or play school will be acceptable in principle. However the Council recognises that purpose designed and built facilities better meet the needs of children.

In all cases adequate outdoor play area and good access for parents dropping off and collecting children, without compromising neighbouring residential amenity, will be required.

<b>Objective 3.1</b>	It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the Childcare Strategy for the county, prepared by the County Childcare Committee in accordance with the Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government in July 2001.
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### 2.03.02 Education

The County is served by approx. 43 primary and 9 secondary schools. The Council believes that the retention of these schools is vital, if rural communities are to continue to survive and thrive.

**Policy 3.2a** It is the policy of the Council to support the viability of schools by encouraging families to settle within the catchment area of these schools.

Proposals for the refurbishment and extension of schools will generally be favourably considered.

**Policy 3.2b** It is the policy of the Council to support and facilitate the development of a third level institution, such as an out-reach branch, or distance learning centres, of a university or institute of technology / Third Level Learning, to locate within the county.



<b>Objective 3.2a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to liaise with the Department of Education and Science and School Boards of Management in planning for education and in determining need for facilities.
<b>Objective 3.2b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to reserve individual sites for primary and secondary schools as and when they are required and identified.

### 2.03.03 Cultural Facilities and Libraries

The Council recognises the importance of cultural facilities for the existing population of the county and as an attraction for potential future settlers.

**Policy 3.3a It is the policy of the Council to consider the arts as playing a central role in the promotion of the county as a quality location to live and invest in and the enrichment of the quality of life for the existing population.**

It fully supports the works of such institutions as the Leitrim Sculpture Centre and The Glens Centre in Manorhamilton, and the Dock in Carrick on Shannon.

The Leitrim Arts Strategy 2006-2010 was adopted in November 2006 and the Council is committed to implementing its objectives as funds allow. A central ambition is to ensure balanced provision for the Arts throughout the county under the following seven priorities:

1. To develop awareness of, and public participation in, the artistic life of Leitrim
2. To support professional artists in developing their practice
3. To create opportunities for children and young people to explore their artistic potential and expand their experiences of the arts
4. To support the continuing development of new and identified Leitrim arts organizations
5. To develop the Leitrim County Council arts service
6. That Leitrim County Council support the continuing development of The Dock

**Policy 3.3b It is the Policy of Leitrim County Council to operate the Percent for Art Scheme in supporting the development and provision of public art projects in association with nationally funded capital projects. The scheme will be applied to all capital funded schemes undertaken by this Council**

A new Library Development Plan for the period 2009 - 2013 is being prepared. The main focus will be on the development of improved library facilities in Carrick -on Shannon and Dromahair Libraries. The possibility of improving services in Kinlough will also be looked at. Provision of a mobile library service is also to be examined and possible ways of providing a service to a number of other smaller towns and villages.

An Archivist has been employed on a shared basis with Longford Co Council since the middle of 2007. It is proposed to develop a County Archives and a suitable building for this service will be sought. It is envisaged that this service will operate from Ballinamore due to overlap between the Local Studies function of the Co Library and the Archives.

**Objective 3.3** It is an objective of the Council to provide a County Archive service, with a suitable building facility to house the Archive.

The Council will continue to support the Leitrim Genealogy Centre as a means of providing an enquiry service for people with Leitrim ancestry. The Council also recognises the importance of this service in promoting roots tourism.

### **Gaeilge**

Ghlac an Chomhairle Contae le Scéim faoin Acht Teanga agus beidh na moltaí sa phlean sin á chur i gcrích de réir a cheile faoi mar atá sa scéim. Beidh seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge á chur ar fáil don phobal agus beidh fáilte roimh gnó trí Ghaeilge leis an gComhairle. Tá moltaí sa Scéim maidir le hainmneacha eastáit, comharthaí bóithre, comharthaíocht inmheánach, agus a lán rudaí eile.

### **2.03.04 Health & Community Facilities**

The expansion and upgrading of existing health care facilities, including accident and emergency services, the provision of day care centres and community centres will all be encouraged by the Council, in anticipation of the expected growth in population in the county.

**Policy 3.4a** Whilst recognising that the Health Service Executive [North West] (HSE) is the body that is statutory responsible for the provision of Health Care Services in County Leitrim, it is the policy of the Council to co-operate with the HSE, voluntary and community groups in the provision of adequate health care and community care facilities for the residents of the county.

**Policy 3.4b** The Council will promote co-operation between the Housing Authority and the Health Service Executive [North West] in co-location of social housing and sheltered housing where synergies and economies of scale may be achieved in the provision of community and day care centres which may be mutually beneficial to both providers of these services.

### **2.03.05 Burial Grounds**

The Council will assist and encourage local involvement in upkeep and maintenance of burial grounds, and in the preservation of the heritage value of burial grounds. Advice on the public health and other technical aspects of new burial grounds will continue to be given to local community interests.

**Policy 3.5a** It is the policy of the Council to maintain all burial grounds in their charge in good condition and will extend them as necessary.

**Policy 3.5b** It is the policy of the Council to protect burial grounds within the county and encourage their rehabilitation and maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.

**2.03.06 Fire and Emergency Services**

The Council operates five fire stations in the County with the service headquarters in Carrick-on-Shannon. Leitrim is a participant in C.A.M.P. (Computer Aided Mobilisation Project) West. This service will be kept under constant review. New or improved services to be provided in Manorhamilton, Carrick-on-Shannon and Ballinamore.

**Policy 3.6 It is the policy of the Council to ensure that an adequate water supply is available in all urban areas and in as extensive an area as possible in rural areas for fire fighting purposes.**

The Council will support and facilitate the establishment and training of voluntary inshore search and rescue teams, in partnership with other relevant agencies.

**2.03.07 Social Inclusion**

Social Inclusion may be defined as a series of positive actions to achieve equality of access to goods and services, to assist all individuals to participate in their community and society, to encourage the contribution of all persons to social and cultural life and to be aware of and to challenge all forms of discrimination. The County has experienced significant levels of in-migration since the County Development Plan 2003 – 2009 was adopted; from other parts of the country and beyond and comprising those who have come for housing, economic migrants and refugees. Our communities have become more diverse and for this reason, ensuring social inclusion has become a significant challenge facing the Council. The Council's recognises that it has a role through its planning powers to strive to achieve social inclusion, through ensuring the equal and fair distribution of opportunities and services for all of the people in the County and ensuring equal access to such opportunities. There are several groups within society that are considered to have specific planning and design needs. These include children/young people, people who are ill or with disabilities, travellers, members of social and ethnic minority groups and older people. The Council is committed to achieving the social inclusion of people from all sectors of society.

*Refer to Section 3.05.04 Care for Persons with Disabilities for further guidance.*

**Policy 3.7a It is the policy of the Council to recognise the needs of people with special needs that live or work in the County or who choose to visit, and to support the provision of facilities for people with special needs.**

**Policy 3.7b It is the policy of the Council to consider cultural diversity and ethnic minorities in planning for the needs of communities and to seek to consult with the relevant agencies representing or working within these groups.**

**Policy 3.7c It is the policy of the Council to ensure that community facilities and social services provided are accessible to all individuals, communities and sectors of society, including people with disabilities, and marginalised and disadvantaged groups.**

**Objective 3.7** It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the recommended standards such as set out in Buildings For Everyone (NDA 2002) are applied in internal and external built public environments where feasible.

## 2.04 Housing

### 2.04.01 General

**Policy 4.1** It is the policy of the Council to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment and, as far as possible, at the tenure of its choice.

The Council will pursue this goal;

1. by the direct provision of housing,
2. by facilitating and co-operating with approved voluntary housing associations and other social and affordable housing providers,
3. by facilitating the development of the private rented sector as an attractive tenure and the implementation of the Rental Accommodation Scheme
4. by providing paths to home ownership from social housing and in response to demand for affordable housing,
5. by continuing to operate grant schemes to assist older people and people with a disability in private housing,
6. by being favourably disposed towards the development of new houses in appropriate locations and refurbishment and extension of existing houses in the county.

Standards for residential developments are detailed in the Development Control section of this plan. All housing developments, including those carried out by or on behalf of the Council itself, will be required to conform with the policies and standards set out in this Development Plan. Proposals for housing developments shall be guided by the design standards and principles set out in the guidance document entitled; *“Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities”*, 2007, produced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

### 2.04.02 Social & Affordable Housing

The Council adopted the County Housing Strategy 2009-2015 in accordance with its obligations under Part V of the 2000 Planning and Development Act as amended. It will be a policy of the Council to review this strategy periodically. All developments which fall under this category are advised to consult the Housing Strategy 2009-2015. This document is available from the Council and on the Council website.

**Policy 4.2a** It is the Council’s policy to provide a coherent and integrated multi-annual housing plan for the delivery of various housing supports to meet identified needs.

**Policy 4.2b** It is the Council’s policy to encourage the distribution of social and affordable dwellings so as to meet the locational preferences of housing applicants, build on and strengthen existing social networks and provide for the growth of towns and villages within the county.

**Policy 4.2c** The Council will continue to work with the Voluntary Housing Sector.

**Policy 4.2d** It is the Council's policy to assist in the provision of houses or sites on lands acquired as part of the overall housing programme or under the provision of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

**Policy 4.2e** It is the Council's policy to establish a programme for the settlement and integration of Traveller families into settled communities, and to provide accommodation under the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

**Policy 4.2f** It is the Council's policy to examine and bring under review the adequacy of lands zoned for residential purposes in the context of meeting the demands for housing generally, including social and affordable housing.

**Policy 4.2g** It is the Council's policy to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds by:

1. Reserving by way of condition in any planning permission granted, 20 per cent of housing for social and affordable housing, in any development of 5 or more houses or on greater than 0.1 hectares within the zoned areas of the following towns and villages;

**Tier 1 Centres: Carrick-on-Shannon**

**Tier 2 Centres: Ballinamore, Drumshanbo and Manorhamilton**

**Tier 3 Centres: Carrigallen, Dromahair, Dromod, Kinlough, Leitrim and Tullaghan.**

Given that the identified demand for social and affordable housing has a 75%/25% split, and recognising that it is not always possible to provide such a split in a practical manner in all circumstances, the required split on any individual site, between social and affordable shall be as required by the Planning and Housing Authority, having regard to the desirability of an appropriate split of 15% social and 5% affordable, where such a split can reasonably be achieved.

2. Acquiring housing in private estates to accommodate persons on the housing waiting list in order to meet demand for social housing and also to counteract and/or avoid the effects of social segregation.
3. Encouraging home ownership amongst local authority tenants.
4. Encouraging development in areas, which at present exhibit an imbalance in either direction.

The Council recognises the need for population growth throughout the County, the need to support persons building family homes in rural areas, and the need also to strengthen the demographic profile of the County. In particular where there are threats to the sustainability of rural communities, the Council will take account of and protect the

agricultural and other socio-economic needs of that community. These objectives form part of the overall Housing Strategy.

As part of its policy of encouraging residential development on serviced land the Council will actively seek to acquire lands in the County's towns and villages with a view to developing for social housing or to making it available as affordable housing sites.

The Council will seek to develop sustainable communities by ensuring that social housing developments are generally small in scale. The size and nature of the receiving community will be a factor in determining the appropriate size of a social housing development.

The Council also provides Local Authority housing in rural areas and will continue to do so as part of its policy of underpinning existing rural communities.

The Council will provide appropriate housing in towns, villages and rural areas for those eligible and in need. Land and property will be acquired, by Compulsory Purchase Order if necessary, to meet social housing demand.

#### **2.04.03 Accommodation of the Traveller Community**

The land use strategy for the towns and villages identifies the zoning provisions, which identifies lands which are 'acceptable in principle' and 'open for consideration' for the development of halting site. See Table 2.3 Land Use Zoning Matrix. Serviced halting sites will be provided and maintained by the Council as the need arises.

**Policy 4.3** *It is the policy of the Council to provide appropriate housing accommodation for the Traveller Community in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005-2008 adopted by the Council and in accordance with the revised programme for 2008-2011, when formally adopted by Council.*

#### **2.04.04 Accommodation of the Homeless**

The Council believes decent accommodation is a basic human right and will implement the Homeless Strategy adopted by the Council. The Council will work with voluntary organisations, and other government agencies, in ensuring accommodation is available to all.

#### **2.04.05 Accommodation of Persons with Sensory/Physical/Intellectual Disabilities**

The Council supports the provisions of Part M of the Building Regulations (Lifelong Housing) and will require all external works associated with the development of houses (footpaths, external ramps and steps etc) to be accessible to persons with disabilities. The Council will, however, encourage all such facilities to be designed and implemented using the principals of universal design standards, in all new developments.

*Refer to Sections 3.01.01 and 3.04.04 Parking for the Disabled for further guidance.*

The Council supports the policies of the Health Service Executive of providing care in the community, wherever possible, and will facilitate the Health Service Executive in the provision of housing for persons with sensory or intellectual disabilities.

#### **2.04.06 Accommodation of the Elderly**

The Council is particularly concerned with the provision of appropriate housing for elderly residents in the County. It is anxious that they can continue to reside in good quality accommodation within their communities for as long as possible.

*Refer to Section 3.02.16 Residential Care Homes for further guidance.*

**Policy 4.6      It is the policy of the Council that a proportion of all new residential schemes will be dedicated to the special needs of the elderly.**

The Council is conscious that Leitrim's population is ageing and that the number of elderly requiring day care or long term care will increase. While the Health Service Executive is responsible for health care the Council will seek to facilitate their needs so as to ensure residents can remain active in their communities for as long as possible.

Purpose built retirement homes are becoming increasingly popular. The Council will be favourably disposed towards their development, particularly in existing population centres where residents are best located to remain active citizens.

<b>Objective 4.6a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to provide Local Authority housing in all areas where the need arises for those persons eligible.
<b>Objective 4.6b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to implement government policy in relation to all aspects of social housing.
<b>Objective 4.6c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to provide advice and assistance to approved voluntary housing organisations operating in the county.
<b>Objective 4.6d</b>	It is an objective of the Council to provide, landscape and maintain serviced halting sites (both permanent and transient) should the need arise and in accordance with the provision of the Traveller Accommodation Programme for the accommodation of the Travelling Community.

## 2.05 Transportation

### 2.05.01 Sustainable Transportation

The council policies and objectives in relation to Sustainable Transportation are guided by National Policy document “Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, (2009)”. This document recognises the vital importance of continued investment in transport to ensure an efficient economy and continued social development, but also promotes more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. The promotion of initiatives that can reduce congestion, improve local environments and encourage healthier and safer lifestyles are key features of sustainable transportation.

The Council seeks to influence people’s travel behaviour towards more sustainable options and seeks to do so by working closely with relevant organisations in improving public transport facilities and promoting opportunities for alternative transportation such as walking and cycling.

The Council recognises the importance of walking to the well being and quality of life of residents. It will support and encourage the continued development of walking as a sustainable form of transportation and will work with organisations and groups in the promotion of safe walking throughout the county, including heritage walks and the protection of public rights of way, which are an important amenity and tourism resource.

**Policy 5.1a It is the policy of the Council to support the National Policy document “Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, (2009)” or any updated version of the document issued within the lifetime of the Plan.**

In accordance with the principles of sustainable development, the basis of the Council’s transportation policies will be to;

1. minimise demand for transport by encouraging major employers to locate in towns and villages where possible,
2. encourage walking and cycling as a recreational activity and a healthy exercise,
3. advocate and facilitate the development of a viable public transport network appropriate to the needs of the communities of Leitrim,
4. minimise the negative impacts of traffic on the environment by developing an efficient and safe road network and
5. support the reduction of the carbon footprint of the County’s transport sector.

**Policy 5.1b It is the policy of the Council to support and facilitate where appropriate developments which will reduce the carbon footprint of the County’s transport sector.**

### 2.05.02 Minimisation of Demand

The most cost effective and environmentally sustainable approach to transport planning is to minimise demand. The land use policies contained in this plan have been derived with this strategy in mind. In general, enterprises with a significant number of employees will be encouraged to locate on serviced lands close to towns and villages. They may be required to produce a mobility management plan as part of the planning process. Similarly new residential development will be encouraged to locate within the catchment area of existing services such as schools and shops.



### 2.05.03 Walking and Cycling

**Policy 5.3a** It is the policy of the Council to encourage safe walking and cycling by providing linear parks, footpaths, cycle paths and public lighting in towns and villages.

**Policy 5.3b** It is the policy of the Council to seek to improve the facilities for pedestrians and access facilities for people with special mobility needs in line with the aims of the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights.

Safe routes to schools from residential areas will be identified in partnership with local communities and will be signed, surfaced and lit appropriately as funds allow.

A number of long distance walking and cycle tourist routes have been laid out and signposted throughout the County. The Council will facilitate the maintenance of existing routes and further expansion of these networks in co-operation with local community groups and the Regional Tourism Authority. These routes will be appropriately signed so as to facilitate tourists and warn motorists. The Council will actively encourage the development of walking routes, cycle tracks and bridle paths along redundant railway lines.

### 2.05.04 Public Transport

Leitrim is poorly served by public transport. The Dublin-Sligo railway line skirts the south western border of the county serving Dromod and Carrick-on-Shannon (with a station in Cortober, County Roscommon).

Otherwise the county is served by the Bus Eireann Dublin-Sligo Expressway and local services and Ulsterbus Derry-Cork service. The Council supports the continuation and expansion of these services and will support the provision of additional public transport by both public and private sector operators.

The Council would encourage and welcome the introduction of a more integrated transport network to ensure that scheduling of bus and train services allow for maximum interconnectivity.

**Policy 5.4a** It is the policy of the Council to seek to ensure that adequate day return services to and from Dublin/Sligo are available from all areas of the County.

**Policy 5.4b** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that towns and villages continue to be served by long distance bus services as bypasses are built.

**Policy 5.4c** It is the policy of the Council to support and facilitate the construction of bus shelters at appropriate locations in the county and,

**Policy 5.4d** It is the policy of the Council as part of the Western Rail Committee, to support proposals for the reinstatement of the Sligo-Limerick western rail corridor.

**Policy 5.4e** It is the Policy of this council to support the provision of high speed inter urban rail links between Sligo and Dublin and Sligo and Limerick/Cork, with appropriate park and ride facilities at each station. The Council supports the provision of adequate parking facilities at Carrick on Shannon Station {Cortober, Co. Roscommon} and Dromod, being the main stations which service the County.

#### **2.05.05 Rural Transport Initiative**

The Council welcomes and supports the Rural Transport Initiative announced by the Department of Public Enterprise. The County Development Board has recently carried out a rural transport audit as the first step towards providing an appropriate rural public transport service for Leitrim.

**Policy 5.5** It is the policy of the Council to support the all Rural Transport Initiative Schemes in the County.

#### **2.05.06 Roads**

A modern, efficient and safe road network is vital for the future development of Leitrim. The county is served by the N.4 (Dublin-Sligo), N.15 (Letterkenny-Sligo) and the N.16 (Enniskillen-Sligo) national primary routes.

*Refer also to Section 3.04 Roads and Parking Development Management Standards for further guidance.*

**Policy 5.6a** It is the policy of the Council to upgrade the National Primary Routes serving the County. This shall be achieved by carrying out and completing the following road schemes within the lifetime of the Plan;

- N4 Carrick on Shannon to Dromod (end of recently completed bypass)
- N16 Manorhamilton to Sligo county Boundary at Glencar
- N16 Manorhamilton Bypass
- N16 Manorhamilton to Cavan county Boundary at Glenfarne

**Policy 5.6b** It is the policy of Council to ensure that proposed developments do not prejudice the implementation of any identified/ proposed road scheme, whether this relates to the construction of new roads, improvements to or widening of / or re-alignments of existing roads, particularly in relation to national and regional roads.

*{Sections 3.01.12 and 3.04.11 refers}*

**Policy 5.6c** It is the policy of this Council to preserve, free from development, proposed road realignments / improvement lines and associated corridors, where such development would prejudice the implementation of the scheme.

#### **N.4 :**

The N.4 was significantly upgraded in the early 1990's and the Dromod / Rooskey Bypass (Class 2 Dual Carriage-way), has just been recently completed. This will greatly improve access to Dublin. The Council supports the proposed construction of the Carrick on

Shannon Bypass, and this project is currently at Phase 4, (*Preliminary Design and Statutory Procedures*).

**N.16 :**

The Council also considers the realignment of the entire N.16 route in county Leitrim as vital to the long-term development of the county and thus the Council supports the upgrading of the N.16. A route selection report has been adopted by Leitrim County Council, for the section of the N.16 from the proposed Manorhamilton bypass to the Cavan Boundary and from Glencar to the Sligo boundary in early 2009. These routes, including the Manorhamilton By bypass, have to be incorporated into the County Development Plan. The Manorhamilton Bypass route has been adopted and incorporated into the County Development Plan.

**N.15 :**

The Council also supports the upgrading of the N.15. The access from the R.280 onto the N.15 at the new Bundoran Bypass has been recently completed. While the N.15 is currently of a high standard, the Council supports any future upgrading of the N.15 both within the County and adjoining Counties.

Since the demise of the Cavan-Leitrim railway, transportation routes have been heavily biased towards access to and from Dublin. Linkages between Leitrim and the Ulster counties have dwindled. The Council supports the proposed East West link (Sligo-Dundalk) which will open opportunities for access to the ports of Dundalk and Drogheda and the east coast generally. Funds for the enhancement of road links to County Fermanagh will also be sought.

The Council is also conscious that southerly links to Roscommon and Galway are poor and supports the upgrading of the N.61 National Secondary Route.

**Objective 5.6a** It is an objective of the Council to complete the design and construct the proposed Carrick-on-Shannon bypass and to upgrade/realign it as necessary from the western end of the Dromod-Rooskey By Pass at Moher/Finnalaghta townlands to link into the Carrick-on-Shannon bypass. See Map No 2.4 "Carrick on Shannon to Dromod Preferred Route".



**Map 2.4 N4 Carrick on Shannon to Dromod Preferred Route**

The Council will work in conjunction with Longford and Westmeath County Council and the National Roads Authority in support of the Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) Road Improvement Scheme. It is an objective of the Council to advocate and facilitate the reopening of the Rynn river. In this regard the Council will work to ensure that any new bridge crossing over the Rynn river will be designed to accommodate the movement of cruisers using the river.

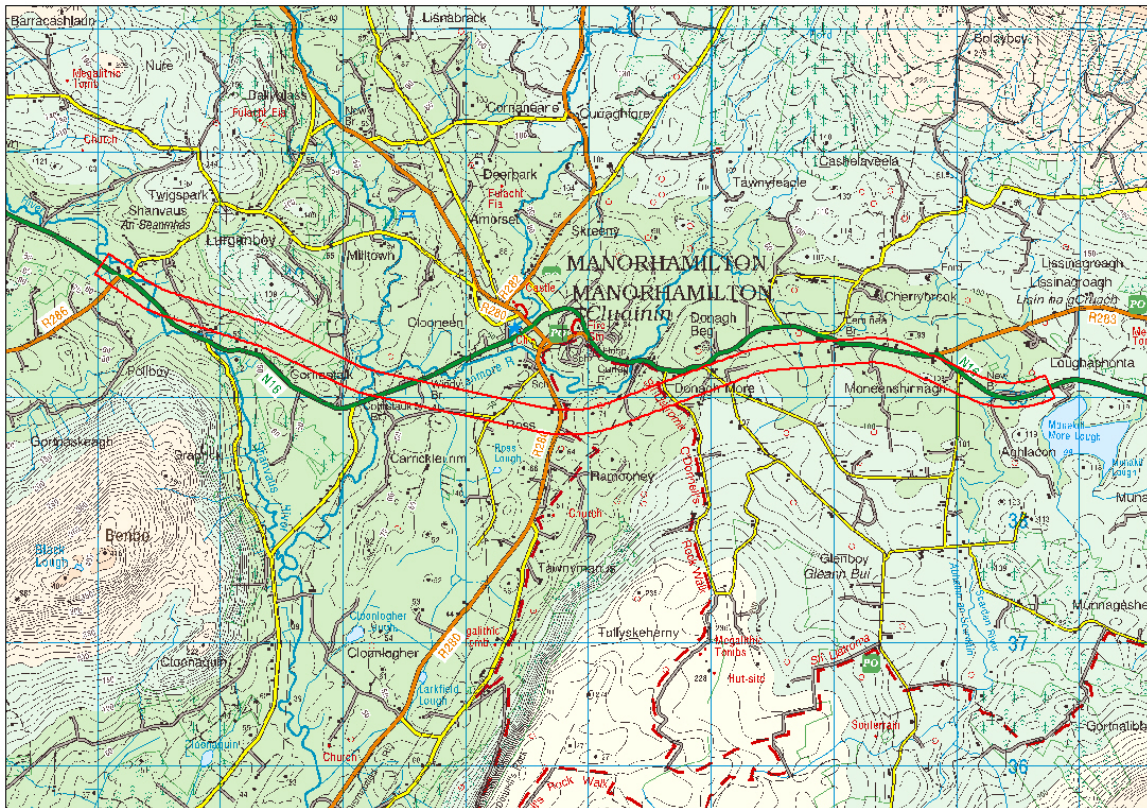
**Objective 5.6b** It is an objective of the Council to complete the design and progress the realignment/construction of the most critical sections of the N.16 route, particularly the Manorhamilton bypass.  
*See Map Nos. 2.5., 2.6 and 2.7*



SECTION 2: POLICIES & OBJECTIVES



Map 2.5: N16 Manorhamilton to Sligo Boundary Preferred Route



Map 2.6: N.16 Manorhamilton By-Pass – Preferred Route





### N 16 Manorhamilton - Glenfarne preferred route

**Map 2.7: N.16 Manorhamilton – Glenfarne Preferred Route**

**Policy 5.6d** It is the policy of the Council to upgrade the Regional Routes serving the county and seek to have them upgraded to National Route status where appropriate.

The R.280 is the backbone of the County, linking the N.4, N.15 and N.16 National Primary Routes. This road connects Carrick-on-Shannon to Manorhamilton and onwards to the N.15 at Bundoran/Ballyshannon Bypass. It is a vital link if the north of the county is to prosper. The Council will prioritise this road for upgrading to National Route standards and will seek its designation as a National Primary Route.

The R.202 (Dromod-Enniskillen) and R.199 (Ballinamore-Cavan) are also important links likely to grow in significance as the northern and southern economies and societies are more closely integrated. The Council supports the upgrading and realignment of both of these routes, and will advocate their designation as National Primary Routes.

Other regional routes include the R.200, R.201, R.203, R.204, R.205, R.206, R.207, R.208, R.281, R.282, R.283, R.286, R.287, R.288, R.289 and R.290 regional roads.

This Council is the administering authority in the proposal to construct a replacement bridge over the River Shannon linking County Leitrim with County Roscommon on Local Road LP03400 at Hartley Bridge.

The Council also supports co-operation with Roscommon County Council on a project to improve the existing bridge over the River Shannon at Roosky. This Bridge is at "Detail Design Stage", and it is proposed to commence construction in 2009.

The Ballinamore Relief Road is at an advanced stage of construction, and it is proposed to have this completed in 2009. This will then become designated as part of the R.202.

More generally the Council will carry out a programme of local and regional road improvements and road maintenance throughout the period of the plan, as funds allow and will at all times seek best value for money in restoring roads. All road improvements and realignments will be carried out in such a manner as to protect and enhance the character of the landscape.

*Refer to Section 3.04 Roads and Parking Development Management Standards for further guidance.*

**Policy 5.6e** It is the policy of the Council that road works, whether by the Council or private developer, are carried out in such a manner as to protect and enhance the general environment and the character of the landscape within which the road is located.

**Objective 5.6c** It is an objective of the Council to identify route corridors and prepare preliminary designs for inner relief roads at Drumshanbo, and Mohill and for an extension to new Ballinamore Relief road.

Developers will be required to contribute to the development of relief roads in the County.

- Objective 5.6d** It is an objective of the Council to pursue the upgrading of the R.280 to National Primary standard and status.
- Objective 5.6e** It is an objective of the Council to widen, realign and improve substantial sections of R.280.
- Objective 5.6f** It is an objective of the Council to carry out significant works to the R.202, R.199 and R.201 including the widening and realignment of substantial sections and have them upgraded to National Primary Route standard.
- Objective 5.6g** It is an objective of the Council to improve all other regional roads to an appropriate standard which will involve widening, re-surfacing etc.
- Objective 5.6h** It is an objective of the Council to design and construct a new bridge over the River Shannon at Hartley on LP03400 to replace the existing deficient bridge.
- Objective 5.6i** It is an objective of the Council to design and construct a new bridge over the River Shannon at Roosky on R.371 to replace the existing deficient bridge.
- Objective 5.6j** It is an objective of the Council to ensure all towns and villages have adequate footpaths and public lighting.
- Objective 5.6k** It is an objective of the Council to complete the inner relief road at Ballinamore
- Objective 5.6l** It is an objective of the council to identify route corridors for inner relief roads at Drumshanbo and Mohill
- Objective 5.6m** It is a short term objective of the Council to improve traffic management at Lennox Bridge
- Objective 5.6n** It is a long term objective to replace Lennox Bridge

#### **2.05.07 Traffic Management and Car Parking in Towns and Villages**

The Council will seek to improve traffic management and car parking in towns and villages. This will reduce congestion and improve the environment and viability of these settlements. New development will normally be required to provide sufficient and adequate off street car parking facilities at a location convenient to the site and to cater for the immediate and anticipated future demands. In addition, adequate loading and unloading facilities will be required. The Council will seek to upgrade public lighting and traffic route lighting. The shared use of car parking spaces between night-time and daytime, weekday and weekend uses will be favoured.

*Refer to Sections 3.04.01 General Roads and Parking Standards, 03.04.02 Sharing of Car Parking Spaces and 3.04.03 Set Down Requirements and Car parking Bay Sizes.*



**Objective 5.7** It is an objective of the Council to seek to upgrade and augment car-parking facilities in towns and villages where the need arises.

**2.05.08 Developments at National Road Interchanges and Major Junctions**

The Planning Authority will have regard to the Policies of the National Roads Authority in relation to development at interchanges / junctions as set out in Section 3.2.3 of the NRA's Policy statement on "Development management and Access to National Roads". In order to ensure the safety and retain the carrying capacity of the National Road Network the Planning Authority will not be favourably disposed to granting permission for developments on or adjacent to such interchanges or junctions.

*Refer to Section 3.04.07 Access to Public Roads for further information.*

**Objective 5.8** It is an objective of the Council, in co-operation with the National Roads Authority and other relevant stakeholders, to prepare and implement, within the time frame of this plan, an interchange/junction strategy, in order to assess the implications of development on the operation and performance of relevant junctions/interchanges.

## **2.06 Employment and Industry**

### **2.06.01 General**

**Policy 6.1** It is the policy of the Council to ensure County Leitrim offers a sufficiently broad and attractive range of employment opportunities so that the County continues to be an attractive location to chose to come to, to live, work and invest. It is the Councils desire that the County continues to grow as a location of continuing and sustainable population growth

The Council believes that while the location of the County in the north west and on the Border had traditionally militated against the economic development of the County, with the work by and support of such bodies as the International Fund for Ireland [IFI] and the E.U. in relation to Peace and Reconciliation and the County's commitment to working with neighbouring counties and regional authorities and assemblies, including cross border bodies, the County has addressed and overcome this perceived disadvantage.

### **2.06.02 Agriculture**

Agriculture remains the principle employment sector in the County, notwithstanding its declining economic importance. The industry is characterised by small land holdings. While farming is unlikely to be the sole income for the bulk of the County's residents in the future, an attachment to the land is a deeply rooted part of the County's culture.

**Policy 6.2a** It is the policy of the Council to support those rural families wishing to remain on the land and accordingly the Council will favourably consider agri-tourism schemes and other enterprises intended to supplement farm income.

New economic and social forces have started to change people's relationship with the land, which necessitates a new approach. The challenge facing the Council is to facilitate the continuation of agriculture, and the broadening of the rural economy, while conserving the landscape, environment and natural diversity of the countryside.

Agriculture is an important part of the economic and social life of the County. In addition, it is recognised that the practice of agriculture is an integral part of the management of large parts of the rural environment and the landscape and provides an amenity for enjoyment by the general population.

Intensive or industrial agriculture proposals warrant special treatment. Where these are located on local roads that are not originally designed to accommodate the heavy commercial vehicles generated by these productive units, the Planning Authority may require the payment of a special contribution where necessary. Intensive agricultural units may also have adverse environmental impacts such as soil and ground water contamination and damage to rural amenities. The Planning Authority may require a full assessment from the developer and will require detailed information in relation to the disposal of wastes and slurries.

The National Spatial Strategy and the White Paper on Rural Development – "Ensuring the future, a Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland", sets out Government policy and guidance with regard to supporting rural communities. Emphasis is placed on the role of farm diversification as a component in the securing and development of the rural economy, and in supporting the maximum number of family farms.

Home based economic activity can be a compatible rural use for existing agriculture, farms and residences. The proposed use, traffic and visual impact, residential amenities and amenities of the rural location will all be considered in the assessment of home based economic activity.

**Policy 2.6b** It is the Policy of the Council to consider, facilitate and encourage the sustainable development of agricultural enterprises, agri-tourism projects and farm diversification and other suitable proposals that support the development of alternative rural enterprises whilst ensuring that development does not have an undue negative impact on the visual amenity of the countryside.

While the Council itself does not have a direct role in the development of the farming industry, it supports the policies of the County Development Board as expressed in the County Development Strategy. This strategy seeks to consolidate existing land holdings and supports the development of organic and environmentally friendly farming practices.

The Council will facilitate agricultural support services and will encourage participation in REPS, especially in environmentally sensitive areas.

The Council is in favour of the introduction of an awards scheme in the County for farming best practice and sustainable diversification.

The Council is conscious that the 'green' image the County currently enjoys is potentially one of its greatest assets and will be conscious of the protection of that image in deciding on planning applications likely to have a negative impact on the environment.

The Council will seek to ensure that agricultural buildings be designed and sited in such a way as to ensure maximum integration into the landscape.

Organic and hydraulic loading of wet soils will be monitored and the Council supports the introduction of Bye-laws, if considered necessary, to protect surface and ground waters from nutrient enrichment.

*Refer to Section 3.03.15 Agricultural Development for further guidance.*

**Objective 6.2** It is an objective of the Council to seek the provision of a research facility of national importance, to replace the former Agricultural Institute Research facility at Ballinamore, which has been closed.

### **2.06.03 Forestry**

Nothing alters a landscape more radically than large scale afforestation, yet such planting is largely outside the control of the planning authority. Initial afforestation of lands is classified as exempted development under the 2001 Planning Regulations while an Environmental Impact Assessment is only required for planting of more than 50 hectares. The Council would welcome a revision of the planning regulations that would bring forestry plantations under the control of the planning system.

While the Council has a very limited role in forestry, it generally favours deciduous over coniferous planting on the basis that native species of deciduous trees sit more

comfortably in the Leitrim landscape and also have more benefits for biodiversity. In certain Protected Landscapes tree planting may be restricted or prohibited altogether.

The soils and climate of Leitrim are well suited to commercial forestry development and this industry has developed rapidly over the last twenty years. The development of the industry received a boost in the mid '90s with the opening of the Masonite factory in Drumsna, providing valuable employment in a previously depressed area.

The Council recognises the importance of the industry for the County and acknowledges the potential for further development. However, it also recognises the negative impacts the industry can have and negative perceptions of the industry in the County.

The Council will encourage 'farm scale' forestry, where down stream added value can be achieved. The development of woodchip production from thinnings, for alternative energy provision, will be encouraged as an on-farm scale activity.

The Council recognises and encourages forestry for the production of bio fuels. The Council also recognises and encourages the role of forestry in providing recreational activities.

The Council would support and encourage the carbon neutral harvesting of forestry.

Once planted for forestry, land is unlikely ever to revert to agricultural use, reducing the possibility of expanding or consolidating neighbouring farms. Traditional field patterns and sometimes features of archaeological interest can be obliterated. Extensive and dense tree planting can lead to an oppressive and featureless landscape, increasing the sense of isolation of remaining residents while clear felled forests leave an ugly scar on the landscape.

Poorly designed forests can have a negative impact on water quality and lead to the demise of valuable fish hatcheries. The harvesting of lumber can put great stress on the road network, with minor roads and boreens bearing loads far beyond their design capacity.

The Council recognises the broad brush approach contained in the forestry strategy contained in table 2.4 over. The Council therefore recognises that, notwithstanding the designation of an area as being of high / medium afforestation capacity, lands within these zones may not be suitable for afforestation. Afforestation should be avoided on lands containing deep peat soils and where the land slope is steep, especially where the latter slopes towards a water body

Guidance on the appropriate location of forestry, in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment, is set out at the end of this section (Table 2.4 page 92).

**Policy 6.3a It is the policy of the Council to require adherence to the guidelines published by the Forest Service.**

The Council has no means of requiring strict adherence to these guidelines except in the cases where planning permission is required.

On assessing planning applications for forestry, regard shall be had to the extent of forestry in the immediate area and to the social, environmental and economic impacts arising from such applications.

The Council, in cooperation with the Forest Service and the Dept. of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources shall encourage and promote the adoption of an Indicative Forestry Strategy for the County as an important means of contributing to its objective of protecting and enhancing the County's biodiversity, natural resources and landscape. The Council will work towards the establishment of a County Forestry Advisory Committee to work alongside the Forestry Service and Coillte on major new proposed plantations under the auspices of the Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

The Council encourages the establishment of dialogue between the industry, the Council and the local community on best practice for the forestry resource in Co. Leitrim. To this end the Council will support the Forestry Forum established by Arigna LEADER to develop a strategy for the development of forestry in Leitrim and north Roscommon as proposed in the Landscape Character Assessment. The assessment itself will provide a useful tool in this process.

**Policy 6.3b**     **It is the policy of the Council to require Forestry Management Plans where afforestation is subject to the planning control process. These management plans will, *inter alia*, identify haul routes for the extraction of timber.**

The Council will seek to recover the cost of damage to public roads from the developer, landowner, and/or the transport operator through available legal procedures.

Particular routes best suited to bearing the traffic generated by the industry may be agreed between the Council and the industry.

*Refer to Section 3.03.09 Forestry for further guidance.*

**Strategy**

The afforestation of recent decades has left a considerable legacy of adverse landscape and visual impacts that need to be addressed. However it is recognised that new woodland planting offers valuable landscape opportunities also. The main priorities of the Council, based on field survey and analysis of the effects of forestry in the landscape, are as follows;

On steep slopes above the 300m contour line new afforestation will be strongly discouraged and where possible the existing area under forestry will be reduced, restructured and/or redesigned following clearance. This is considered particularly important around the flanks of Dough, Boleybrack and Sliabh an Iarainn, where forestry is most intrusive.

Elsewhere, particular attention will be paid to retaining (or restoring) views to the water and valley approaches to the hills. This applies particularly to the following areas;

- Around the shores of Lough Melvin, Lough Gill, Lough Allen and the smaller loughs around Ballinamore.
- Within the distinctive river corridor landscapes of the Shannon and the Cullies rivers, where open wetland areas and views to the water are key landscape characteristics.
- In Glenaniff, the Scardan and Owennaayle valleys on the north and east of the Boleybrack uplands, and the Yellow River valleys north and south of Sliabh an Iarainn.

New woodland planting may be encouraged in;

- Areas of marginal agricultural land on the fringes of the uplands below the 300m contour. These areas already have a distinctive wooded character, provided by strong hedgerows and natural woodland regeneration. They provide relatively good growing conditions for broadleaves. Such areas occur in all the northern glens and the lower hill slopes below the 300m contour line.
- The drumlin landscapes of the central and southern lowlands, which have considerable further capacity to accommodate woodland expansion, provided that the underlying topography is not obscured by blanket planting over wide areas.
- Other areas where there is scope to restore or enhance the landscape's distinctive character. These include abandoned farmland, amenity landscapes, the landscape settings to settlements and areas degraded by urban, industrial or infrastructural development.

The assessment of landscape capacity to accommodate forestry was carried out by ERM/Maptec as part of the preparation of the Landscape Character Assessment and evolved through discussion with forestry interests, analysis of the effects of forestry and woodlands on the landscape and opportunities and constraints on further expansion. The context is a national forestry policy that envisages a doubling of Ireland's tree cover in the period to 2030. The County was divided into three broad categories. These capacity classes give a clear indication of the Council's likely response to woodland expansion in different areas.

**Areas of high capacity:** These comprise of;

- marginal farmland around the fringes of the uplands, and
- drumlin landscapes within the central and southern lowlands.

New woodlands in these areas may offer opportunities to enhance degraded landscapes. These landscapes may be able to accommodate larger areas of new woodland, subject to detailed siting and design considerations.

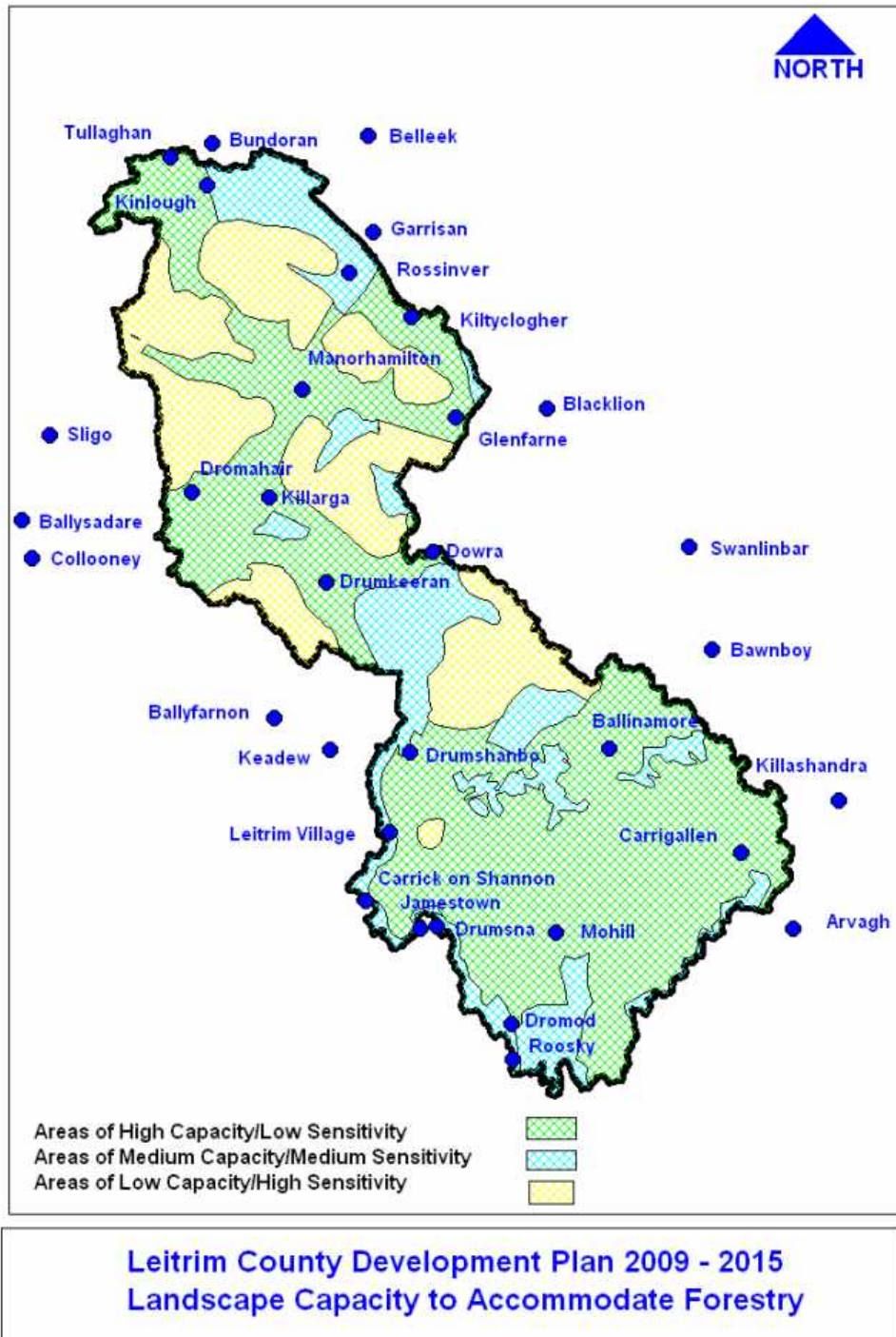
**Areas of medium capacity:** These areas include;

- lough and riverside landscapes where it is important to retain views to the water,
- the main valley approaches to the hills, where forestry might block important sightlines, and important local landscape characteristics.

These landscapes may be able to accommodate new small scale woodlands provided that their scale, siting and species composition are in keeping with landscape character.

**Areas of low capacity:** These include the County's mountain and moorland landscapes and steep slopes above and around 300m AOD. These are characteristically open landscapes. New woodlands are highly visible and seldom in keeping with moorlands character. New afforestation in these areas will be strongly discouraged and where possible the existing area under forestry will be reduced.

**Table 2.4. Landscape Capacity to Accommodate Forestry**



Map 2.8: Landscape Capacity to Accommodate Forestry

#### **2.06.04 Enterprise and Employment**

Until very recently Leitrim had been unsuccessful in developing a strong industrial and commercial base. Poor access, poor infrastructure, lack of a prosperous agricultural industry and a weak urban structure have all militated against the development of industrial and other commercial development.

**Policy 6.4**      **It is the Council's policy to actively promote and develop Enterprise and Employment throughout the County. The Council will support the development of transport, energy, telecommunications, water and drainage infrastructure to facilitate such development.**

Generally new industry and employment generating enterprises will be encouraged to locate in towns and villages where adequate infrastructure and support services exist. However industries related to agriculture and other land uses or tied to a fixed resource and large scale industries requiring extensive sites will be acceptable in rural locations. Small enterprises in rural areas will also be acceptable where there are no adverse impacts on the environment or on neighbouring amenity and subject to proper planning and development considerations. Effects on environment, safe access and residential amenities will be considered in all applications for rural enterprises. Some rural enterprises considered suitable include; agriculturally related industry, businesses directly related to farming e.g. servicing and repair of farm machinery, land reclamation, drainage work, agricultural contracting etc. teleworking and telecottages.

*Refer to Sections 3.03.01 Industrial/Commercial Development, 3.03.02 Commerce, 3.05.05 Noise and 3.03.06 Advertising for further guidance.*



<p><b>Objective 6.4a</b> It is an objective of the Council to actively support all efforts to have further Government Offices decentralised to County Leitrim.</p>
<p><b>Objective 6.4b</b> It is an objective of the Council to actively engage with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and other Government Departments, for the expedient delivery of infrastructural projects.</p>
<p><b>Objective 6.4c</b> It is an objective of the Council to actively support all efforts to develop the Forestry and wood products industries based on the supply of raw material from indigenous resources.</p>
<p><b>Objective 6.4d</b> It is an objective of the Council to encourage the expansion of service sector employment and to recognise the opportunities it presents to the retention of population in both urban and rural areas.</p>
<p><b>Objective 6.4e</b> It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the re-use of disused industrial buildings for appropriate alternative uses.</p>
<p><b>Objective 6.4f</b> It is an objective of the Council to work in partnership with the Industrial Development Authority, Enterprise Ireland, County Enterprise Board, FAS, Educational Bodies, Leitrim County Development Board, Leitrim Integrated Development Company, Government Departments and other organizations to promote and facilitate the location of industry and enterprise (including the technology sector) and to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure supports and linkages are developed having regard to the need to ensure conservation and protection of the natural, recreational and cultural amenities of the County.</p>
<p><b>Objective 6.4g</b> It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate home-based employment of appropriate type, size and scale subject at all times to the consideration of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.</p>

#### **2.06.05 Retailing**

The Council adopted the Retail Strategy 2009-2015 in accordance with its obligations under the Retail Planning Guidelines as issued by the DoEHLG. All developments which fall under this category are advised to consult the Retail Strategy 2009-2015. This document is available from the Council and on the Council website.

*Refer to Section 3.03.03 Retail Services, 3.03.04 Safeguarding Retailing Uses in Rural Villages, 3.03.06 Advertising and 3.03.07 Shop Front Design Standards for further guidance.*

#### **2.06.05a Policy Context**

There is a requirement on all Planning Authorities to prepare a Retail Strategy for their area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines recently published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in January 2005. These latest guidelines update and replace the Retail Planning Guidelines published in 2000. The

Retail Planning Guidelines published in 2000 have been reviewed insofar as they relate to retail warehouses. The maximum cap of 6,000 sq.m. on single warehouse units has been lifted in certain areas of the country, if located within one of the four Dublin Local Authorities or on other National Spatial Strategic Gateways, and then only if located within areas subject to Integrated Area Plans under the Urban Renewal Act, 1998. This lifting of the floorspace cap does not therefore apply to Leitrim

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines the County Development Plan should include information in relation to the following:

1. Confirmation of the retail hierarchy
2. Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres
3. A broad assessment of the requirements for additional retail floorspace
4. Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development
5. Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres
6. Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

#### **2.06.05b Retail Hierarchy**

The retail hierarchy is broadly similar to that presented in the Retail Strategy 2002 with the following exceptions:

1. 3 No. additional villages have been included in Tier 4 Rural Villages/Shops. These are Ballinagleragh, Drumcong and Kilclare. The reason for including these additional areas is that they have been identified as Tier 4 Villages under Variation No.7 of the County Development Plan 2003-2009 - Land Use Strategy for Selected Towns, Villages and other Centres and
2. 3 No. villages have been excluded from Tier 4 Rural Villages/Shops as they have been identified under Variation No.7 of the County Development Plan 2003-2009 - Land Use Strategy for Selected Towns, Villages and other Centres as Graigs. These are Aghamore, Aughavas and Garvagh (listed as Crossroads in the 2002 Retail Strategy)

Graigs have been identified under Section 2.01.04b of the County Development Plan and were selected on the basis that they are existing settlements with an established identity, containing a school, post office, shop or other such facility. The provision of suitable retail development, such as a local shop, within the identified Graigs would be considered appropriate, subject to normal planning considerations.

The retail hierarchy is as follows:



**2.06.05c Definition of Retail Boundaries**

The Retail Planning Guidelines introduced the sequential test approach in relation to assessing retail applications, with the focus on town centres as the preferred location for new retail development. In cases where there are no town centre sites available, the next preferred option is edge of centre sites. It is only in cases where there are no town centre or edge of centre sites available or where satisfactory transport accessibility realistically cannot be ensured within a reasonable period of time that out of centre sites will be considered.

The land-use strategy maps for each of the towns and villages will inform the retail boundaries and in the case of Carrick-on-Shannon the areas to be identified may go beyond/or curtail the areas zoned in which retailing is normally permitted which will be identified during the process of carrying out the Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area Plan 2010-2016.

**2.06.05d Broad Assessment of the Requirements for Additional Retail Floorspace**

There are no current floorspace figures available for the County and the carrying out of a comprehensive retail floorspace survey is an objective of the Council. There has been a significant increase in the number of retail units in the County over the last number of years. In 2002 the number was 429 while the 2007 figure is 604. In percentage terms the total growth in retail outlets has been in the order of 66% since 1988. There has been a 40% increase in retail provision since 2002.

While the exceptional increase in the amount of retail provision in the County is to be welcomed, there are certain towns in the County which have a high vacancy rate. In particular Drumshanbo, Manorhamilton and Mohill have particularly high numbers of vacant units. Each of the Tier 1 and 2 centres have a high level of vacancy all exceeding 15% and each of these centres currently have permitted retail floorspace which has yet to

begin construction. In terms of applications made in the towns identified with high levels of vacancy and where there is a supply of permitted retail space yet to be constructed, a strong justification will be required to be made by the applicant for the need for additional retail space.

A key function of retail planning in Leitrim in the future will be ensuring that new retail development in the County is of an appropriate size and variety to meet consumer needs and increase the competitiveness of centres, while maintaining the historical character of towns and villages.

<b>Objective 6.5a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to carry out a comprehensive survey of the existing retail floorspace in the County.
<b>Objective 6.5b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to keep the Retail Strategy under review and the Council will have regard to any such review in determining applications for retail development.

#### **2.06.05e Guidance on the Location and Scale of Retail Development**

The vast majority of the retail developments granted since the previous County Development Plan has been in Carrick-on-Shannon. This is not surprising considering it is the County Town and the centre with the largest population. It is anticipated that the majority of all future retail applications will continue to be made in Carrick-on-Shannon and to a lesser degree the Tier 2 Centres of Manorhamilton, Ballinamore, Drumshanbo and Mohill. Appropriately located large scale retail developments will be encouraged in Tier 1 and 2 Centres only where a need has been identified.

The prospects of growth and expansion in the more rural parts of the County are expected to be more limited. The policy of the Council is to maintain and enhance the existing retail environment to serve and benefit local communities. The importance of general foodstores, post offices and pharmacies, in addition to pubs, restaurants and cafés to is acknowledged.

The Council will encourage the provision of retail development within the core area of towns and villages. The Council encourages appropriately located shops and services associated with tourism or agri-tourism.

**Policy 6.5a It is the Policy of the Council to confirm and maintain the County’s retail hierarchy as detailed in the Retail Strategy for Leitrim.**

**Policy 6.5b It is the Policy of the Council to assess all large scale retail applications against the criteria set down in the Retail Strategy for Leitrim and the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005.**

**Policy 6.5c It is the Policy of the Council to protect and reinforce the existing retail centres and direct retail development to serviced areas.**

**Policy 6.5d It is the Policy of the Council that the preferred location for large scale retail developments is in town centres, and that alternative locations may only be considered in accordance with the “Sequential Test” as required under the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 as published by the DoEH&LG.**

**2.06.05f Criteria for the Assessment of Retail Developments**

The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate compliance with the County Development Plan and to demonstrate that there will not be a material adverse impact on the vitality of any existing town centre.

The Retail Planning Guidelines detail criteria against which large scale retail developments should be appraised in order to assess their retail impact. It is important to determine whether or not the development would:

1. Support the long term strategy for town centres whilst not materially diminish the prospect of attracting private sector investment to town centres;
2. Cause an adverse impact on town centres, individually or cumulatively, in particular the quality of the centre and its economic and social role within that community;
3. Diminish range of supportable town centre activities and services;
4. Increase the number of vacant properties in the designated primary retail area;
5. Ensure high levels of accessibility by public transport, walking and private car;  
and
6. Achieve commercial synergy with the existing town centre.

<b>Objective 6.5c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate innovation and diversification of the County's retail profile, including tourism and agri-tourism related ventures and farmers/food markets where appropriate.
<b>Objective 6.5d</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate a mix of retail uses in order to achieve a balance in the range of services provided.
<b>Objective 6.5e</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage the retention of retail/service outlets within town and village centres, with the exception of commercial operations that are no longer viable or are more appropriately located elsewhere
<b>Objective 6.5f</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate the reuse and regeneration of derelict land and vacant buildings for retail uses having due regard to the Sequential Approach
<b>Objective 6.5g</b>	It is an objective of the Council to promote the reuse of existing vacant retail outlets in towns and villages.
<b>Objective 6.5h</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage the retention of traditional shop fronts and pub fronts.
<b>Objective 6.5i</b>	It is an objective of the Council to ensure that retail and service outlets will generally be located within the central area of a town or village.
<b>Objective 6.5j</b>	It is an objective of the Council to ensure that all new retail and commercial development proposals respect the character and scale of the existing streetscape within which they are proposed.
<b>Objective 6.5k</b>	It is an objective of the Council to discourage inappropriate out-of-town shopping facilities that detract from the vitality, viability and/or character of existing town and village centres.
<b>Objective 6.5l</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage the regeneration of over the shop premises into residential premises where appropriate.
<b>Objective 6.5m</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate where possible the enhancement of towns and villages in order to make them more attractive as centres for retailing.
<b>Objective 6.5n</b>	It is an objective of the Council to identify vacant and derelict retail buildings in the County and prioritise buildings identified for refurbishment.

## **2.06.06 Sustainable Tourism**

### **2.06.06a Introduction**

Leitrim has tremendous potential to develop a significant tourism industry. Despite some of the most spectacular scenery, excellent angling and boating opportunities the County has lagged behind other parts of the country in developing tourism. This is due partly to poor access, proximity to the Border and lack of an accommodation base.

In recent years great progress has been made, especially in the promotion of the Shannon and the development of the Shannon-erne Waterway. The impact of the development of these watercourses on towns such as Carrick-on-Shannon and Ballinamore and villages like Leitrim and Keshcarrigan has been tremendous. Similarly the development of various cycling and walking routes such as the Kingfisher Cycle Route, the North West trail (cycling and walking), the Leitrim Way and Miners Way have helped open up the County's rich and diverse landscape and promote environmentally sustainable tourism. The recent development of the Carrick-on-Shannon Riverside Amenity has opened up the river Shannon and is an attractive feature in the town.

Leitrim as a County is experiencing a change in external perceptions, due to the unprecedented development of the County over the last number of years. It is important therefore to ensure that the product development and marketing of the County reflects this opportunity and that the growing potential of the County, as a tourist destination, is exploited, in a sustainable manner, to the maximum.

### **2.06.06b Context**

In an audit of product rating (i.e. counties with low, medium, high tourism product inventory) across all counties, Leitrim was in the bottom 7. (Failte Ireland, Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007-2013, pgs 31 & 34). Tourism in the County is, as this finding suggests, a relatively undeveloped resource and this is both a challenge and an opportunity for innovation.

Failte Ireland's tourism figures for 2006 indicate that overseas tourists rose by 10% on 2005 to 7.4m people. Of those 7.4m people, 460,000 visited the North West, 31,000 of which visited Leitrim generating a revenue of 12million euro for the County. Of the five counties in the North West Region, Leitrim has, for the last number of years, the smallest number of overseas visitors. The number of domestic tourists (including Northern Ireland) for the North West region was 898,000 which generated a revenue of over 158million euro.

The Council will work closely with the Regional Tourism Office, Failte Ireland North West office, the County Tourism Office, Leitrim Tourism, Waterways Ireland and the Regional Fisheries Board, in developing Leitrim as a tourist destination for both the overseas and domestic tourist market. The Council is fully supportive of all future developments that will contribute positively to the tourism potential of the County, while protecting the heritage and environment of the County, so as to achieve maximum economic and social gain

The Council supports the strategic objectives, as identified in the Failte Ireland North West, Regional Tourism Development Plan 2008-2010, which are as follows:

1. Strategic Objective 1: Develop Reasons to Visit while Maintaining the environment of the region
2. Strategic Objective 2: Develop Access
3. Strategic Objective 3: Strengthen Soft Adventure Products in an Environmentally Friendly Way
4. Strategic Objective 4: Utilise and Grow the Cultural and Heritage Resources of the Area.

The Council supports the various water corridor studies, prepared by the Heritage Council which have been carried out, in particular The Waterways Corridor Study 2005.

**Policy 6.6a** It is the policy of the Council to promote the development of an environmentally friendly tourism industry, that minimises negative impacts on the environment and maximises the social and economic benefits to the County.

**Policy 6.6b** It is the policy of the Council to support and develop a range of quality environmentally friendly tourism products/initiatives.

**Policy 6.6c** It is the policy of the Council to support the various policies and objectives as set out in The Waterways Corridor Study 2005, as it applies to County Leitrim.

**Policy 6.6d** It is the policy of the Council to support agri-tourism in the form of visitor accommodation and other agri-tourism related activities such as Open Farms, Health Farms etc.

The Council also supports the sustainable tourism principles for sustainable tourism development and the sustainable tourism policies which underly these principles relating to economic, environmental and social sustainability as outlined in the Failte Ireland North West, Regional Tourism Development Plan 2008-2010.

The Council believes the development of Bed & Breakfast and farmhouse based accommodation can contribute directly to the local economy with little or no negative impact on the environment. The Council recognises that recreational activities such as angling, hill walking, pony trekking and cycling can have a very minimal detrimental impact on the environment if well managed, while contributing significantly to the economy of remote areas with few other sources of income. The Council also encourages 'Theme Holiday' activities such as festivals, music events, town twinning activities, food festivals, activities associated with the Organic Centre in Rossinver or activities related to sculpture learning in Manorhamilton, outdoor pursuits etc.

*Refer to Section 3.02.18 Multiple Holiday Home Development, 3.03.12 Marinas and 3.03.13 Other Tourism Facilities for further guidance.*

The promotion of tourism products and development of market sectors is primarily the responsibility of the Regional Tourism Authority, Leitrim Tourism, the County Enterprise Board Breifne and the County Development Board. The Council will facilitate the policies and plans drawn up by these organisations.



- Objective 6.6a** It is an objective of the Council to co-operate with the relevant bodies referred to in Paragraph 3, Section 2.06.06b and other relevant stakeholders with regard to the protection of and development of an integrated walking/trail system within the county and linking into adjoining systems in neighbouring counties.
- Objective 6.6b** It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria, the protection of environmental sensitive areas and other planning considerations.
- Objective 6.6.c** It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of high quality tourist accommodation in appropriate locations.
- Objective 6.6d** It is an objective of the Council to create lay-bys, picnic areas and public toilets as needed and as resources allow.
- Objective 6.6e** It is an objective of the Council to continue to implement the Breifne Initiative and to support the continued development of the Greenbox scheme.
- Objective 6.6f** It is an objective of the Council to develop a Signage Guidance document to provide guidance on the appearance and location of tourist related signage.
- Objective 6.6g** It is an objective of the Council to support the development of Lough Rynn Demense as a quality tourism and leisure facility.
- Objective 6.6h** It is an objective of the Council to advocate and facilitate the reopening of the former Cavan Leitrim Railway, from Dromod to Mohill, as a tourism attraction,
- Objective 6.6i** It is an objective of the Council to facilitate and support the development of the GeoPark through its extension into Leitrim,
- Objective 6.6j** It is an objective of the Council to advocate and facilitate the re-opening of the River Rynn to navigation,
- Objective 6.6k** It is an objective of the Council to advocate the reopening of navigation at Drumsna, from Drumsna Bridge upstream to Jamestown Bridge
- Objective 6.6l** It is an objective of the Council to support the Management Plan for the Lough Allen Catchment.

**Objective 6.6m** It is an objective of the Council to support the work of Waterways Ireland in extending and promoting the extension of the Shannon towards Dowra.

**Objective 6.6n** It is an objective of the Council to cooperate with the Northern Regional Fisheries Board and the local community in projects to improve fishing and access to Lough Macnean and negotiate with Coillte to have the access road at Glenfarne Demesne improved and adopted by the Council

**Objective 6.6o** It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of a flagship project in the North Leitrim area, where appropriate.

**Objective 6.6p** It is an objective of the Council to ensure high standards of architectural and urban design in all new tourist accommodation and facilities.

**Objective 6.6q** It is an objective of the Council to promote the County as a tourist destination and work with the tourism sector to ensure that facilities and attractions are adequately signposted.

**Objective 6.6r** It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of interpretative signs and information boards at important sites of archaeological and natural interest.

#### **2.06.06c County Leitrim Tourism Strategy 2007- 2013**

The strategy document “Developing Leitrim’s Tourism Potential 2007-2013” identifies areas and potential actions, that when carried out directly by the Council or in partnership with other stakeholders and agencies, should contribute towards the potential of the County as a tourist destination. The marketing of Leitrim as a tourist destination is also acknowledged as being equally important in ensuring that the County benefits from tourism.

Some of the proposals of the plan include:

1. To develop new golf classics either in the County or on a cross border basis,
2. To further develop both walk and cycle ways
3. To maximise the potential of organics as an important niche market opportunity for Leitrim
4. To develop Linked and Looped packages that connect cluster attractions – those which are both in the County and in adjoining Counties
5. To further develop facilities for inland cruising visitors
6. To explore potential for development of wildlife, flora and fauna packages.
7. To develop new and existing historical trails of the County

**Policy 6.6e: It is the Policy of the Council to support the development of tourism in the County in accordance with the strategy document “Developing Leitrim’s Tourism Potential 2007- 2013”**

**2.06.06d Management and Control of the County’s Resources and Tourism Development**

The Council will be favourably disposed toward the development of appropriately located hotels, hostels, holiday homes, marinas, campsites and other tourism related developments. In assessing such proposals the Council will seek to minimise negative impacts on the heritage and the environment and maximise economic and social gain for the local community. Thus such facilities will be encouraged to locate in existing towns and villages where a critical mass of tourism accommodation, pubs and restaurants may develop and away from environmentally sensitive areas. However, the Council acknowledges that this may not always be achievable and that instances may arise where development peripheral to villages and towns and in sensitive areas may be appropriate due to the locationally unique nature of the resource involved. In such instances the highest standards of design, construction and on-going management will be required and all ancillary landscaping should seek to blend in, and any signage should be appropriately designed.

*Refer to Section 3.02.18 Multiple Holiday Home Development, 3.03.12 Marinas, 3.03.13 Other Tourism Facilities and 3.03.06 Advertising for further guidance.*

The further consolidation and expansion of existing facilities will also be favourably considered, subject to compliance with the policies and standards of this plan.

The Council is conscious that the County’s key tourism resource is its natural environment. In a very real way the quality of the County’s landscapes, watercourses and cultural heritage are economic resources to be enhanced.

**Policy 6.6f: It is the Policy of the Council to facilitate and protect public access to the countryside, to watercourses and the County’s built and natural heritage.**

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| <p><b>Objective 6.6s</b> It is an objective of the Council to facilitate infrastructure for water related activities such as boating, angling and canal cruising in appropriate locations.</p> <p><b>Objective 6.6t</b> It is a objective of the Council to support and promote, with the co-operation of private landowners, public access to heritage sites and features of archaeological interest, coastal areas, mountains, rivers, lakes and other natural amenities.</p> <p><b>Objective 6.6u</b> It is an objective of the Council to encourage and support the development of Food/Gastronomy Tourism in the County.</p> |
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**2.06.06e Lough Allen Catchment Plan**

The Council recognises the potential that Lough Allen has to offer as a key driver of economic development, in particular tourism, within its region. The objective of the Lough Allen Study was to identify, assess and recommend a range of actions that will safeguard the integrity of the natural resource, meet the needs of the wider community, secure economic and social benefits and establish Lough Allen as a visitor destination in its own

right. The Catchment Plan has as much to do with the management of the environment as it has to do with the regeneration of the rural economy and the promotion of the destination.

The Catchment Plan identifies a clear need to nurture an integrated approach across a range of issues – rural development, resource management, promotion - and to set them within the context of a common policy framework, a coherent spatial strategy and a shared agenda for action.

In summary the key objectives of the Catchment Plan are to;

1. Facilitate an integrated approach to the strategic planning of the region that takes as its starting point the particular and special needs of the area
2. Evolve a bespoke response to the development and management of the resource that is spatially, culturally and politically relevant and secure its statutory status as a key component of the new County Development Plan (2009 – 2015).
3. Promote a view that the Catchment Plan has as much to do with the regeneration of the management of the environment as it has to do with the regeneration of the rural economy and the promotion of the destination.
4. Address the particular problems of the region which result from its perceived peripheral location straddling the space between two highly centralised jurisdictions (*as part of the Border Region*) and confront the legacy of population decline, high levels of dependence on social support and higher than average levels of overall and long term unemployment.
5. Harness the considerable potential of the waterway to fulfil its strategic gateway status in driving forward a central corridor strategy on Ireland's inland waterways.
6. Recapture a regional influence for the settlements surrounding the Lough, restore their natural hinterland and equip them to power a regional catchment that is competitive as opposed to reliant.
7. Enable the settlements to assert their authority as interesting, attractive and progressive centres of a coherent and thriving region rather than be relegated to the status of remote and peripheral locations.
8. Empower the settlements through their combined strengths and collaborative working to provide a portal to an inland waterway destination of exceptional quality and appeal.
9. Equip the region to respond in a timely, competent and enthusiastic manner to high profile, strategically significant initiatives in cross border collaboration, resource management, micro business development and sustainable energy – all of which have a particular relevance for this region.
10. Promote a pattern of development that is self sustaining, that enhances the integrity of the special nature of the place, that is in keeping with its scale and character, that is more energy efficient, that appeals to the business community and visitors, that is attractive to people seeking opportunities to stay in the region and exploits the dividends that will accrue from a new quality of life/ quality of place/socially inclusive agenda.
11. Address the economic drivers needed to underpin a successful regional development strategy - access, energy, communications, waste, water and waste water capacity, labour force, innovation and entrepreneurship.
12. Provide a stimulus for future economic investment primarily private but also public and community that in the long term will secure sustainable economic growth for the people living and working in the catchment.

The development and management of the catchment - whether for tourism or any other aspect of rural development - should take its cue from a range of 'scenarios'. These

scenarios are based on the distinctiveness of the particular landscape, its sensitivity to change, capacity for continuity and its propensity to facilitate integration.

#### **Landscape scenarios**

**Scenario one:** comprises those areas which are sensitive to change where intervention either in the form of development or visitor pressure would risk undermining the resource. These areas will usually be designated or scheduled in some way and the precautionary principle will apply when considering any intervention. Where access to such areas is being proposed it will be accompanied by intense management and monitoring.

**Scenario two:** includes those areas which are more robust and less sensitive to change. They will be of interest in themselves and will usually already contain some basic infrastructure that can tolerate an intensification of use without the need for an intensive management regime. Examples include the existing nodes of activity where access is already encouraged and which would benefit from further enhancement. Also included here are those sites where new provision would be desirable.

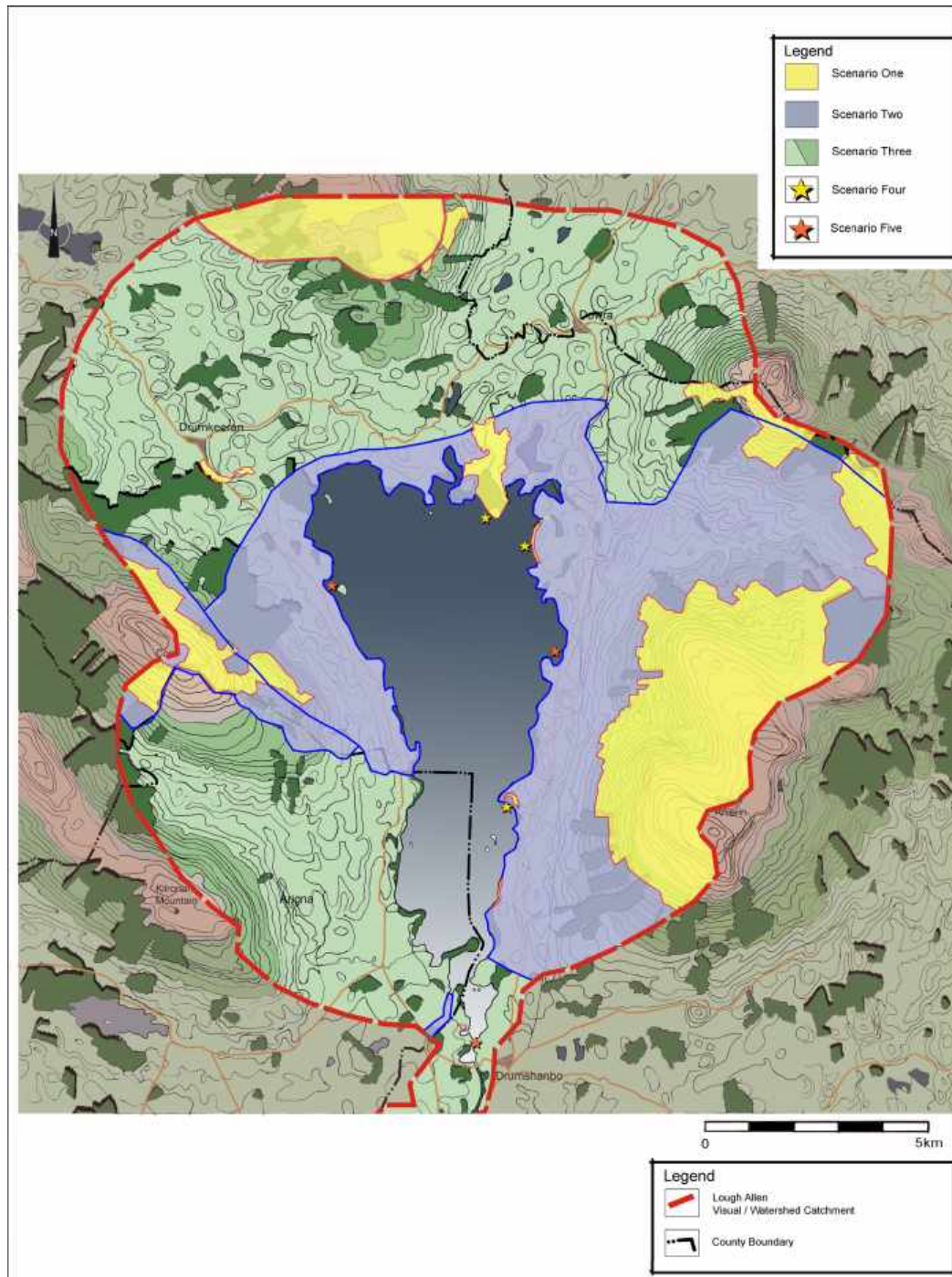
**Scenario three:** includes those areas which are very robust, are not designated or have designations that can tolerate an intensification of use. Examples include the settlements around the Lough where attention should be focused on comprehensive renewal according to clear development objectives, the provision of support services for the visitor economy and opportunities to improve connectivity with the waterway.

#### **Waterway scenarios**

**Scenario four:** will include sensitive areas where water based, pedestrian and vehicular access will be provided on the basis of the precautionary principle so as to protect fragile habitats or other sensitive features.

**Scenario five:** includes wide areas of Lough Allen where access is permitted but codes of conduct for different types of boat users would be developed and their enforcement secured.

Each of these scenarios is illustrated in Map below.



Map 2.9: Map of Lough Allen Area

**Policy 6.6g** It is the policy of the Council to work in conjunction with Roscommon County Council, Cavan County Council, Leitrim Integrated Development Company, Leitrim County Enterprise Board, Leitrim Tourism, Failte Ireland Northwest, Breifne, Waterways Ireland, Shannon Regional Fisheries Board, Local Communities and others to promote and facilitate, where appropriate, the sustainable economic, social and cultural development of the Lough Allen Area as outlined in the Lough Allen Plan (June 2008).

### **2.06.07 Quarries, Extractive Industries, Mining, Oil and Gas**

The Council recognises that the aggregates (stone, sand and gravel) and concrete products industry contribute significantly to the economic development of the County and that these products are essential building materials for future development.

*Refer also to Section 3.03.08 Quarries, Extractive Industries, Mining, Oil and Gas for further guidance.*

**Policy 6.7a** It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the further development of the industry by permitting the continuation and extension of existing quarries and the development of new quarries, where such development does not adversely impact on the environment, existing infrastructure and the amenity value of neighbouring lands.

**Policy 6.7b** It is the policy of the Council to promote the mineral, gas and oil extractive industries where such development does not adversely impact on the environment, existing infrastructure and the amenity value of neighbouring lands.

**Policy 6.7c** It is the policy of the Council that transportation of extracted material from the source be carried out without causing nuisance to other road users.

The Council further recognises that the aggregates and concrete products industries have a particularly sensitive role in relation to the environment and as such any development of aggregate extraction, processing, delivery and associated concrete production must be carried out in a manner which minimises adverse effects on the environment and the local community. Applicants will be required to demonstrate their commitment to good environmental management through the implementation of a recognised environmental code of practice.

Developers must ensure that on completion of operations the site is left in a satisfactory state and be of beneficial use.

## **2.07 Protection of the Natural Environment / Natural Heritage**

### **2.07.01 General**

The Council, in its capacity as planning authority, is one of the key agencies responsible for the protection of the natural environment. At a time of rapid and radical social, economic and cultural change the management of changing land uses is critically important. The Council recognises that attempting to simply resist change is futile. It aims to manage that change with the following goals in mind;

1. The protection of fragile ecosystems and species and habitats so as to ensure that biodiversity is maintained and vulnerable habitats protected,
2. The protection and conservation of non-renewable resources and their settings, where settings are important,
3. The protection and, where necessary and possible, the enhancement of the distinctive character of the natural heritage of Co. Leitrim,
4. The enhancement of opportunities for the enjoyment of the natural heritage.

The priorities of the Council will be to;

1. Avoid unnecessary harm to the natural heritage where possible,
2. Reduce the effects of harm where it cannot be avoided
3. To conserve and protect the natural heritage resource for the benefit of future generations and
4. Identify enhancement to the natural heritage where possible.

In assessing all decisions on development the Council will balance possible impacts on the environment and possible social, economic, community and cultural impacts.

### **2.07.01a Climate Change**

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 builds on measures established under the first National Climate Change Strategy (2000), and provides a framework for achieving emissions reductions. Its purpose is:

- to show clearly the measures by which Ireland will meet its 2008 - 2012 Kyoto Protocol commitment;
- to show how these measures position us after 2012, and to identify the areas in which further measures are being researched and developed;
- to take a long term view, having regard to likely future commitments and the economic imperative for action; and,
- the promotion of sustainable development including the integration of climate change considerations into all policy areas.

**Policy 7.1a: It is the policy of the Council to support the Implementation of National Climate Strategy 2007-2012 (or any similar updated version issued within the lifetime of the Plan).**

### **2.07.02 European and National Sites**

The principal legal framework for the conservation of wildlife is contained within the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the Wildlife Act 1976, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and Part XIII of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The objectives of this European and National



legislation are to provide for the protection and conservation of the flora and fauna in the habitats in which they occur.

*Refer to Section 3.05.01 Environmental Impact Statements for further guidance.*

#### **2.07.02a Natura Sites**

Natura sites refer to Special Areas of Conservation, and Special Protection Areas. The Council shall take appropriate steps to avoid, in these areas, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats Directive, 92/43/EEC Directive.

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to “appropriate assessment” of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4 of the Habitats Directive the Council shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the Council shall take appropriate action so that all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. The Council shall take appropriate action to inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the European Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

**Policy 7.2a It is the policy of the Council to protect and conserve Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas including; “Candidate” and “Proposed” areas**

**Policy: 7.2b It is the Policy of the Council to ensure that all Plans and Projects that have the potential to negatively impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, will be subject to a Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA), in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and in accordance with best practice and guidance.**

#### **2.07.02b Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), required each EU Member State to designate cSAC’s. The Habitats Directive was transposed into Irish domestic law on 26 February 1997 with the enactment of the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (Statutory Instrument No. 94 of 1997) (the 1997 Regulations).

In accordance with the above Regulations habitats of European ecological importance have been designated candidate Special Areas of Conservation by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. Under these regulations Member States are required to maintain the quality of the habitats and species for which they have been designated. Special Areas of Conservation are prime wildlife conservation areas in the county which are considered to be important on a European level as well as Irish level. While “cSAC’s” are fully protected under the EU Habitats Directive, the term “candidate” refers to the fact that the sites are currently under consideration by the European Commission.

Map 2.10, page 113, identifies the cSAC's in the County.

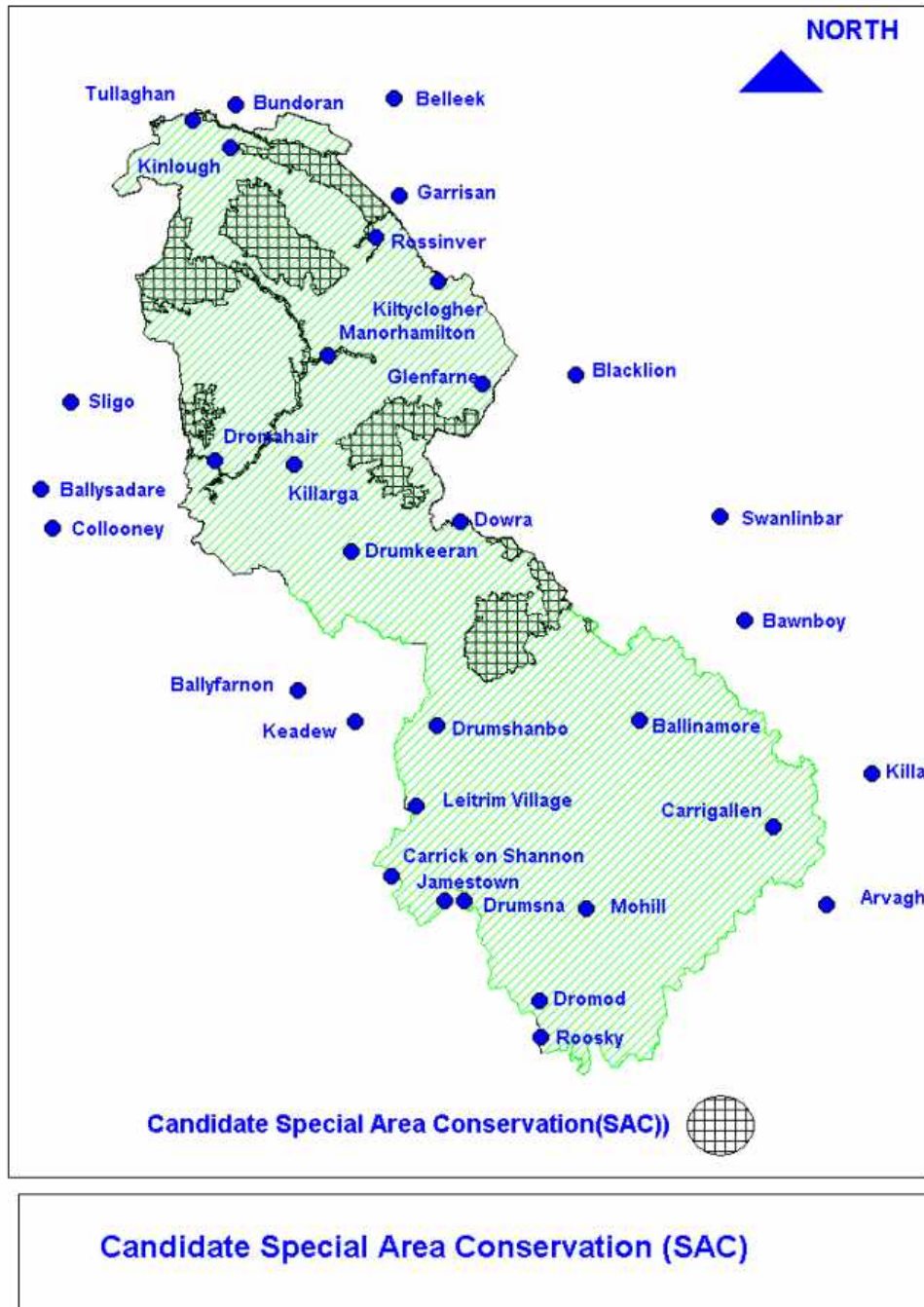
**Objective 7.2a** It is an objective of the Council to protect those sites identified as candidate Special Areas of Conservation as well as any other sites that may be so identified during the lifetime of this plan.

Ref No.	Name of Area
000623	Benbulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex
000625	Bunduff Lough and Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore
001919	Glenade Lough
001403	Aroo Mountain
000428	Lough Melvin
001976	Lough Gill
000584	Cuilcagh- Anierin Uplands
002032	Boleybrack Mountain

**Table 2.5. Candidate Special Areas of Conservation**

**Objective 7.2b** It is an objective to protect the character, appearance and quality of the habitats and semi-natural features in County Leitrim such as woodlands, hedgerows, peatlands, wetlands and artificial waterways of historic or ecological importance.

**Objective 7.2c** It is an objective of the Council in partnership with the relevant agencies to promote the development and implementation of codes of best practices through initiatives such as The Golden Mile Competition, Environmental Partnership and the Green Schools projects.



Map 2.10: Candidate Special Area of Conservation

**2.07.02c Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

Special Protection Areas are designated by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. The EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) requires the designation of SPA's for wild birds. These sites are areas of importance for wild birds and relate to their breeding, feeding, roosting and wintering areas. To date there is one proposed SPA in the County

Map No. 2.11, page 115, identifies the proposed SPA's.

**Objective 7.2d** It is an objective of the Council to protect the following proposed Special Protection Areas and all others as they become proposed and designated during the lifetime of this plan;

Ref. No.	Name of Special Protection Area	Species	NHA 1/2 " Map No.
004187	Sligo/Leitrim Uplands	Peregrinne ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) and Chough ( <i>Phyrrhacorax pyrhhacorax</i> )	2, 3, 4, 6 and 7

**Table 2.6: Proposed Special Protection Areas**



Map 2.11: Proposed Special Protection Areas

**2.07.02d Natural Heritage Areas**

Other areas in the county are either designated as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) or are proposed NHA's. NHAs are designated by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, under the provisions of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, as important habitats for the conservation of wildlife of national significance. Many of the NHA's have overlapping designations as SAC's.

It is the policy of the Council to protect these sites. The Council acknowledges that not all sites of ecological importance have been identified and will protect any such site of significance, proposed as an NHA. Map 2.12, page 119, identifies NHA's and pNHA's in the County.

**Policy 7.2c**      **It is the policy of the Council to protect and conserve Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas**

**Objective 7.2e** It is an objective of the Council to protect all Natural Heritage Areas and those proposed for designation either before or during the lifetime of this plan so as to recognise that the process of designation of such sites is ongoing, with new sites being added and boundaries of existing sites being adjusted, as better information becomes available.

**Objective 7.2f** It is an objective of the Council to protect the following proposed Natural Heritage Areas and all others as they become proposed during the lifetime of this plan;

Ref. No.	Name of Proposed National Heritage Area
001401	Aghavoghill Stream
001402	Annaghhealy Lough
001403	Arroo Mountains
002032	Barleat and Lackagh Bogs
000623	Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade complex
001404	Bonet River
000625	Bunduff Lough and Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore
001920	Carrickaport Lough
000424	Clooncoe Wood and Lough
001407	Corduff Wood and Lough
001409	Cromlin Bridge Woods
000584	Cuilcagh Anierin Uplands
001412	Drumierny Wood
001413	Garadice Lough Wood
000983	Glasshouse Lake
001919	Glenade Lough
000426	Kilgarriff Marsh
001415	Kinlough Wood
000427	Lough Allen south end and parts
001642	Lough Boderg and Lough Bofin
001643	Lough Drumharlow
001807	Lough Errew
001976	Lough Gill
000428	Lough Melvin
001417	Lough Rinn
001808	Lough Sallagh
001418	O'Donnel's Rock Wood
001419	Owengar Wood
002032	Boleybrack Mountain
001421	Sheemore Wood

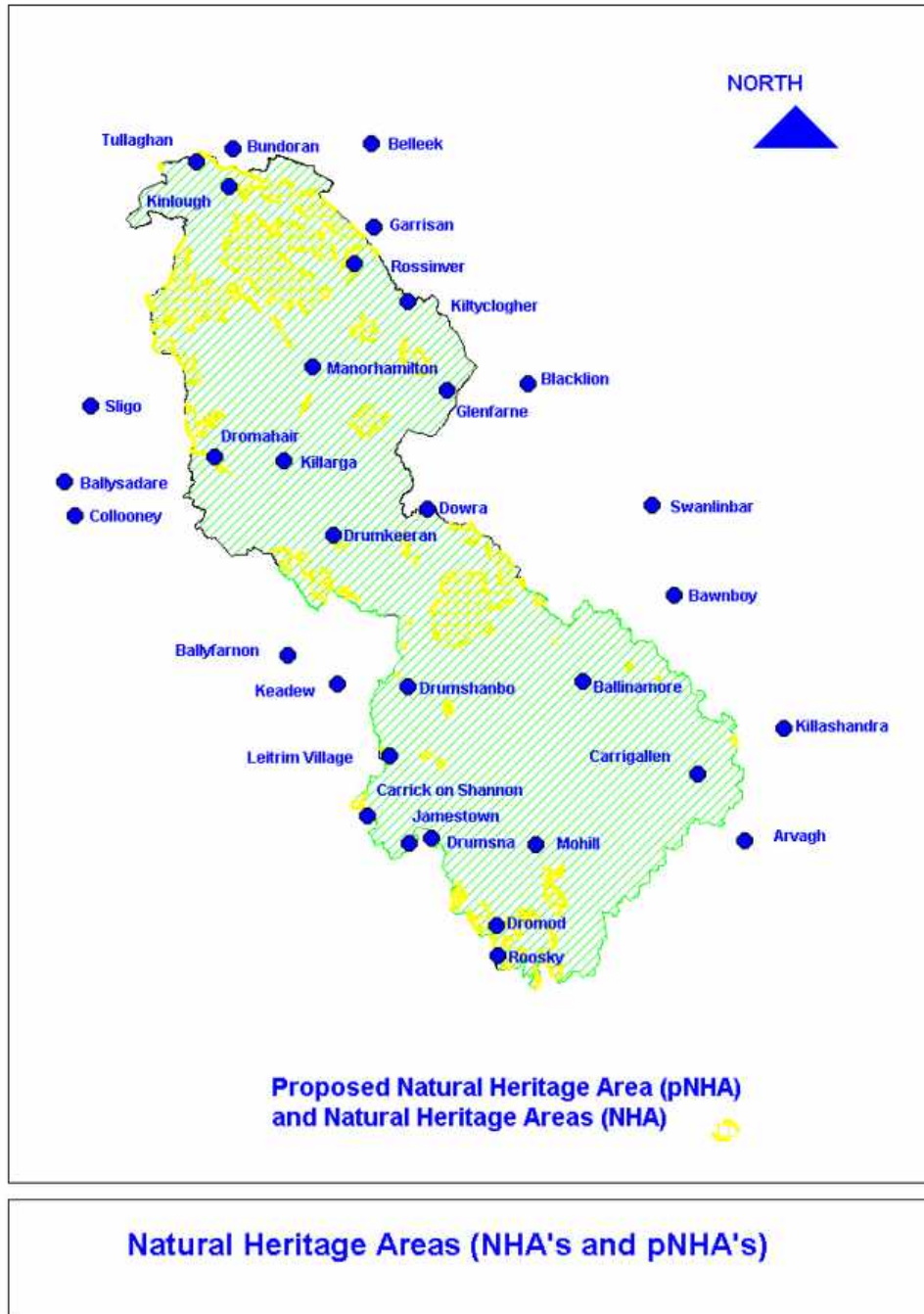
**Table 2.7: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas**

**Objective 7.2g** It is an objective of the Council to protect the following Natural Heritage Areas and all others as they become designated during the lifetime of this plan.

Ref. No.	Name of National Heritage Area	Type
002430	Aghavogil Bog	Blanket Bog
00422	Aghnamona Bog	Raised Bog
001405	Cashel Bog (Leitrim)	Raised Bog
001423	Cloonageeher Bog	Raised Bog
001420	Corracramph Bog	Raised Bog
002321	Corry Mountain Bog	Blanket Bog
002435	Crockauns/Keelogyboy Bogs	Blanket Bog
002384	Dough /Thur Mountains	Blanket Bog
000691	Rinn River	Raised Bog

**Table 2.8: Natural Heritage Areas**





Map 2.12: Natural Heritage Areas (NHA'S & pNHA's)

**2.07.03 Development in or Near a cSAC, a NHA/pNHA or a SPA**

Planning applications in such designated areas will need to satisfy to the Planning Authority that the development proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the area. This applies to all development proposals likely to have a significant impact on the designated area, irrespective of whether they are actually located within the area or not.

The Council is required to ensure that an appropriate assessment of the implications of development proposals is undertaken when planning permission is required in any of the designated or proposed designated areas. The assessment should include;

1. Opportunities for alternative siting or potential mitigating measures
2. Opportunities to enhance nature conservation
3. The potential damage to habitats and/or species
4. The possibilities for replacement sites

Where development may have a significant adverse effect, either directly or indirectly on the site, it will only be permitted where the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself. Where uncertainty exists regarding the potential impact of a proposed development, the precautionary principle will apply, and the proposed development will not be favourably considered unless or until its effects are clearly understood.

*Refer to point b) of Section 3.01.02 Development Management Requirements for further guidance.*

Planning applications located within these protected sites will be referred to the Heritage Council, An Taisce and the Development applications unit of the DoEHLG - National Parks and Wildlife Services Section. The Council will generally be guided by their comments in reaching a decision.

#### **2.07.04 Nature Conservation Outside Designated Sites**

The full extent of Leitrim's natural heritage of wild species, geological features and landforms, and natural and semi-natural habitats, extend to more than just those sites which benefit from statutory protection. Under Article 10 of the EU Habitats Directive it states that Member States shall endeavour, where they consider it necessary, in their land use planning and development policies to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. Such features are those, which by virtue of their linear and continuous structures such as rivers, or their functions as stepping stones such as ponds and small woods, are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. The features will vary from area to area and include hedgerows, canals, ponds, lakes, ditches and banks, linear tree belts/shelter belts, larger semi-natural or ancient woodlands, river corridors and other locally important habitats.

Important ecological corridors within the County include the following water bodies (including their tributaries and lakes where relevant) - the list is not exhaustive and their inclusion is not an indication that they fall within the remit of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive:

- River Shannon System
- Shannon-Erne Waterway (Ballyconnell-Ballinamore Canal)
- Bonet River System
- Duff River
- The Drumcliff River (including Diffreen River)
- Drowes River/Lough Melvin System
- Bradoge River
- River Erne

**Policy: 7.4a** It is the policy of the Council to protect ecological networks linking protected and designated important sites within the County, in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

**Objective 7.4** It is an objective of the Council to encourage appropriate management of landscape features, particularly through the development control process and by the use of planning agreements with landowners and developers, where appropriate.

#### 2.07.05 Local Biodiversity Plan

The National Biodiversity Plan (2002) recognises that many activities and management operations undertaken by Planning Authorities are relevant to biological diversity. This document requires Planning Authorities to prepare and implement Local Biodiversity Action Plans. This is identified as a long term action in the County Leitrim Heritage Plan 2003 – 2008. The Council will review the County Heritage Plan 2003-2008 and undertake a new plan for the period 2009-2015, to incorporate a Local Biodiversity Plan, in compliance with the National Biodiversity Plan (2002) subject to resources becoming available.

**Objective 7.5** It is an objective of the Council to prepare a Local Biodiversity Plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders within the lifetime of this County Development Plan, subject to specific funding being made available by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

#### 2.07.06 Areas of Geological Interest

Geology is now recognised as a fundamental component of natural heritage and as such the conservation of geological heritage features is considered an important aspect of conserving the natural heritage. In 1998, the Geological Survey of Ireland established the Irish Geological Heritage (IGH) Programme which is a partnership between The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Under the IGH Programme important sites that are capable of being conserved as Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) are being identified. Those not selected for NHA designation are being promoted as County Geological Sites (CGS). The IGH Programme has identified 13 County Geological Sites of interest in Leitrim, details of which are listed in Appendix C of this Plan.

**Policy 7.6** It is the Policy of the Council to recognise the need to identify sites of geological interest in the County and to protect these sites in the interest of protecting our geological heritage.

**Objective 7.6a** It is an objective of the Council to protect from inappropriate development the list of County Geological Sites as outlined in Appendix C of this Plan.

**Objective 7.6b** It is an objective of the Council to protect geological NHAs as they become designated during the lifetime of this Plan.

**2.07.07 Peatlands**

The Council is aware of the importance of a number of peatlands, or bogs as they are more commonly known, in the County and recognise that they are an irreplaceable resource with an ecological value. Peatlands are protected under the EU Habitats Directive and as Table 2.8 indicates, 9 bogs have been designated as Natural Heritage Areas in the County.

<b>Objective 7.7a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to conserve peatlands and protect peatland landscapes within the County.
<b>Objective 7.7b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to seek hydrological reports for significant developments within and close to peatlands in order to assess potential impacts on the integrity of the peatland ecosystems.

**2.07.08 Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows**

Trees, woodlands and hedgerows make a significant contribution to the County both in terms of their impact on the landscape and in terms of their visual attractiveness and in terms of their ecological value as wildlife habitats.

**Policy 7.8a It is the Council's policy to ensure the preservation of sound deciduous trees, woodlands and native hedgerows, without excessively inhibiting development.**

The Council considers the wooded nature of much of the County to be one of its most attractive features and is anxious to protect existing mature deciduous trees and woodlands which contribute to the high visual amenity of the County. The Council will continue to consider the adoption of Tree Preservation Orders for individual trees/groups of trees and woodlands as and when necessary.

The Council also recognises the recreational potential of woodlands in the County.

The Council will landscape new roadworks, housing schemes and other works for which the Council is directly responsible with deciduous trees and other native species, of local provenance where possible. Other agencies and private sector developers will be encouraged to do likewise.

New development will be required to integrate existing mature trees of amenity value into the new schemes, where this is appropriate and practical in the opinion of the planning authority.

Hedgerows constitute an important natural and historic resource given both their role as wildlife corridors between habitats, their value in terms of visual amenity and their historic significance as townland and field boundaries.

The Council will seek to ensure that hedgerows and verges are maintained and trimmed in the interests of ensuring road safety. The Council will avoid the cutting of hedgerows during the bird nesting season, as defined in the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, from March 1st to August 31st.

The Council will also seek to enhance the county hedgerows by increasing coverage using locally native species, taking opportunities provided by the consideration of new development proposals.

The Council will protect and preserve existing hedgerows where possible and seek their replacement with new hedgerows, consisting of appropriate native species, where their removal is necessary during the course of road works or other works. The Council have in association with the Heritage Council carried out a Hedgerow Survey. The Council will be informed by the results of the survey in terms of their role in the protection and preservation of hedgerows.

**Policy 7.8b It is the policy of the Council to support the Native Woodland and Neighbourhood Wood schemes and other initiatives that aim to establish and enhance woodlands for recreational and wildlife benefits, in partnership with local communities.**

<b>Objective 7.8a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to discourage the felling of healthy mature trees to facilitate development and to encourage the retention of healthy mature trees within developments.
<b>Objective 7.8b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to use Tree Preservation Orders to protect important trees, groups of trees or woodlands as appropriate during the lifetime of this plan.
<b>Objective 7.8c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to protect and preserve existing hedgerows and minimise their removal. Where their removal is necessary to seek their replacement with new hedgerow material native to the area.
<b>Objective 7.8d</b>	It is an objective of the Council to require a bond in all relevant permissions relating to the retention, relocation or re-establishment of hedgerows which will be returned on the successful retention, relocation or re-establishment of the hedgerow concerned within a given period.

## 2.07.09 Protection of Water Courses

### 2.07.09a The Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) sets out a framework for comprehensive management of water resources in the European Community. It addresses inland surface waters, estuarine and coastal waters and groundwater. The fundamental objective of the WFD aims at maintaining "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 by 2015. Member States will have to ensure that a co-ordinated approach is adopted for the achievement of the objectives of the WFD and for the implementation of programmes of measures for this purpose. Irrespective of political boundaries, the river basin is the natural unit for water management; Ireland is divided into 8 River Basin Districts, 3 of which effect County Leitrim. River Basin Management Plans have been adopted for each of the Districts.

### **2.07.09b River Basin Management Plans**

These Plans set out a program of measures aimed at protection and improvement of the aquatic environment (both groundwater and surface waters). The principal objectives of these plans include:

- To prevent further deterioration in water quality;
- To protect/enhance all waters including surface, ground and coastal waters;
- To manage water bodies based on river basins or catchments;

County Leitrim falls into 3 of these River Basin Districts as follows:

- The Shannon RBD covering all of the River Shannon and its tributaries;
- The North Western International RBD covering the River Erne(part of the Shannon/Erne Waterway, Cullies River, Lough McNea) and its tributaries and Lough Melvin catchment area;
- The Western RBD covering the Bonet River and Lough Gill catchment.

The county's watercourses are one of its most important assets and will be protected by the Council. The Certified Drainage Schemes (the Kilcoo, Duff and Bonet) and the Drainage Districts, (the Ballyconnell, Drumcliff, Eslin, Headford, Lough Oughter Gowna and River Erne and the Rinn and Black Drainage District) shall also be protected.

Given that there is a very strong link between land use and water quality, this Council recognises that it is necessary for there to be appropriate alignment between the County Development Plan and the Water Management Plans, prepared under the Water Framework Directive.

**Policy 7.9a** It is the policy of the Council not to permit development on a flood plain other than in exceptional circumstances (where the development is of significant importance for the local community).

**Policy 7.9b** It is the policy of the Council to control development in accordance with the aims of the Water Framework Directive generally and more particularly with the goals and policies of the three River Basin Districts which cover all water bodies in Leitrim.

**Policy 7.9c** It is the policy of this Council to commit itself to continue to make appropriate and considered input into the preparation and implementation of the River Management Plans and to ensure that there is adequate alignment between the Development Plan and the future Water Management Plans.

**Policy 7.9d** It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to implement the recommendations of; the Shannon, North Western International and Western River Basin District Plans, as appropriate in co-operation with the other relevant local authorities and statutory bodies, subject to funding being available.

**Policy 7.9e** It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to promote the improvement of water quality in the rivers, lakes and ground water bodies in line with the objectives of the three River Basin Management Plans.

**Policy 7.9f** It is the policy of Leitrim County Council, in co-operation with the appropriate statutory bodies, to facilitate the free flow of rivers and streams in or partially in the county subject to environmental considerations.

**Policy 7.9g** It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to identify and, if resources or circumstances permit,- secure suitable lands and install Integrated Constructed Wetlands (ICW) as part of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for all the towns and villages for which land use strategies are prepared.

As already indicated in the plan, protecting and enhancing water quality is an important environmental planning aim. In this regard it is appropriate for the Council to consider adopting Bye-laws to deal with standards, monitoring, enforcement etc in relation to individual treatment systems. The Council's development management standards to be achieved in relation to waste water treatment are set out in Section 3.02.06. To ensure the proper operation and maintenance of waste water treatment systems serving individual dwelling in the countryside, it is considered appropriate for the Plan to set out clearly an approach to monitoring the operation of septic tanks and other individual treatment systems. To this end the Council is supportive of the introduction of appropriate bylaws, to facilitate the monitoring of effluent discharges. In this way the Council will ensure that water quality will be improved.

**Policy 7.9h** It is the Policy of the Council to consider the introduction of appropriate sanitary services by-laws in relation to the maintenance and operation of septic tanks and individual waste water treatment systems serving dwellings in un-serviced rural areas. The consideration to take place not more than 2 years following the adoption of the plan and if considered appropriate, to be in place and operational within a year there after.

**Policy 7.9i** It is policy of Leitrim County Council to promote the use of sustainable drainage systems, which balance the impact of urban drainage through the achievement of control of runoff quantity and quality and enhancing amenity and habitat.

**Policy 7.9j** It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to minimise the number and frequency of storm overflows of sewage to watercourses in the county and to establish a consistent approach to the design, improvement and management of these intermittent discharges to ensure that the needs of the County's receiving waters are met in a cost effective manner.

The Council understands the importance of active flood plains in the retention of seasonal flooding and the prevention of siltation of river channels. Flood plains have been identified by the OPW and can be viewed on the following website: [www.floodmaps.ie](http://www.floodmaps.ie) Development should not itself be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor should it cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations. Further guidance can be found in Appendix E "Guidelines on Flood Risk & Development".

The Council is pro-active in protecting water courses by licensing and monitoring discharges to sewers and water courses under the Water Pollution Acts. Unlicensed discharges are liable to prosecution.

The Water Framework Directive will gradually come into force over the coming years and will give more scope for the protection of Leitrim's water courses.

#### **2.07.10 Natural Amenities and Recreation**

**Policy 7.10** In order to maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of our waters, it is the policy of Leitrim County Council to promote the implementation of the Three River Basin Water Quality Management Plans for ground, surface and coastal waters in the County as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.

#### **2.07.11 Landscape Character Assessment**

The Council commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of the whole County. The LCA has been used as a guidance document to inform policy on afforestation and wind-farms as referred to in Sections 2.06.03 and 2.10.04.

#### **2.07.12 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and High Visual Amenity (HVA)**

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and High Visual Amenity are identified on Map 2.13, page 131. The Council will preserve and enhance these areas, as far as is practicable, by careful management and by the operation of special controls over development in these areas.

*Refer to point c) of Section 3.01.02 Development Management Requirements, 3.01.06 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and 3.01.07 Areas of High Visual Amenity for further guidance.*

The Council recognises that the landscape character of these areas, as we experience it today, has evolved over centuries through traditional farming practices. The Council considers the local farming communities to be the custodians of this landscape and will work to ensure their continual survival.

The capacity to absorb development varies greatly from AONB/HVA to AONB/HVA and even within AONB/HVAs. The most beautiful landscape is not always the most vulnerable to change.

While the Council is committed to the protection of the character of these areas it recognises that this character has evolved over centuries through traditional farming practices and that continuing human involvement is necessary to maintain that character. The Council is anxious to support the evolution of existing communities in these areas while at the same time protecting the landscape from the pressures of speculative development.

Capacity of the landscape to absorb development will depend, amongst other things, on the local topography, vegetation and nature and extent of existing development.

**Policy 7.12a** It is the policy of the Council to permit development in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where the applicant can satisfy the planning authority that it is not practicable to develop in a less sensitive location and where it is demonstrated that the development will not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity or uniformity of the landscape.



**Policy 7.12b** It is the policy of the Council to permit development in an area of High Visual Amenity only where the applicant has demonstrated a very high standard of site selection, site layout and design and where the planning authority is satisfied that the development could not be accommodated in a less sensitive location.

*In terms of the accommodation of one-off housing in areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of High Visual amenity refer to Section 2.01.04c.*

The Council will consider the development of appropriately located hotels, hostels, marinas, campsites and other tourism related developments in areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas of High Visual Amenity. In assessing such proposals the Council will seek to minimise negative impacts on the heritage and the environment and maximise economic and social gain for the local community.

Thus such facilities will be encouraged to locate in existing towns and villages where a critical mass of tourism accommodation, pubs and restaurants may develop and away from environmentally sensitive areas. However the Council acknowledges that this may not always be achievable and that instances may arise where development peripheral to villages and towns and in sensitive areas may be appropriate. In such instances the highest standards of design, construction and on-going management will be required.

Such housing must be carefully integrated in to the landscape in accordance with guidance set out in the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside*.

The Council will be favourably disposed towards the development of appropriately located water based Tourism enterprises proposed to be located in sensitive areas, where there is a maximum gain to the local economy and only where the highest standards of design and management applies.

Requirements will also extend to the non-exempted activities of statutory undertakers. High-tension electrical power line or telephonic communication installation proposals in such areas will be approved by the Council only where the highest standards of safety and visual mitigation have been satisfied following establishment of necessity.

Afforestation proposals will be expected to conform to those requirements of the Council deemed by them to be essential to amenity preservation.

The Council will adopt a positive approach to development proposals outside these designated areas which support the 'living countryside' philosophy of the Council. However, even here the highest standards of design will be sought and care must be taken to minimise negative visual impacts.

The Council will seek the removal and/or refurbishment of derelict structures and eyesores and will carry out amenity schemes in these areas as necessary and as funds allow.

The Council will ensure provision of access to features of particular interest or quality is adequate by the creation of rights of way, lay-bys, viewing areas and signage as appropriate and as funds allow.

**Objective 7.12a** It is an objective of the Council to protect the following Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;

Map Ref.	Area
A1	The Coast
A2	Lough Melvin North
A3	Aroo, Glenade, Truskmore, Glencar and environs
A4	The Doons, Lough Gill and environs
A5	Benbo
A6	O'Donnell's Rock and Boleybrack
A7	Sheemore

**Table 2.09: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**

**Objective 7.12b** it is an objective of the Council to protect the following Areas of High Visual Amenity;

Map Ref.	Area
B1	The Coastal Plain
B2	Lough Melvin, Glenaniff River and Environs
B3	Dough Mountain
B4	Thur Mountain
B5	Lough McNear Upper and environs
B6	Cloonclare
B7	Corry Mountain
B8	Lough Allen, Sliabh an Iarainn, Bencroy and environs
B9	Lough Scur, St. John's Lough and environs
B10	Lough Garadice and environs
B11	River Shannon, Derrycarne and environs
B12	Lough Rynn, Lough Sallagh, Lough Errew and environs
B13	Gulladoo Lake and environs
B14	Laheen Lake, Glasshouse Lake and environs

**Table 2.10: Areas of High Visual Amenity.**

**2.07.13 Landscapes Conservation Areas**

The Council may consider the creation of Landscape Conservation Areas in appropriate locations in accordance with Section 204 of the 2000 Planning and Development Act, as amended.

**2.07.14 Protected Views and Prospects**

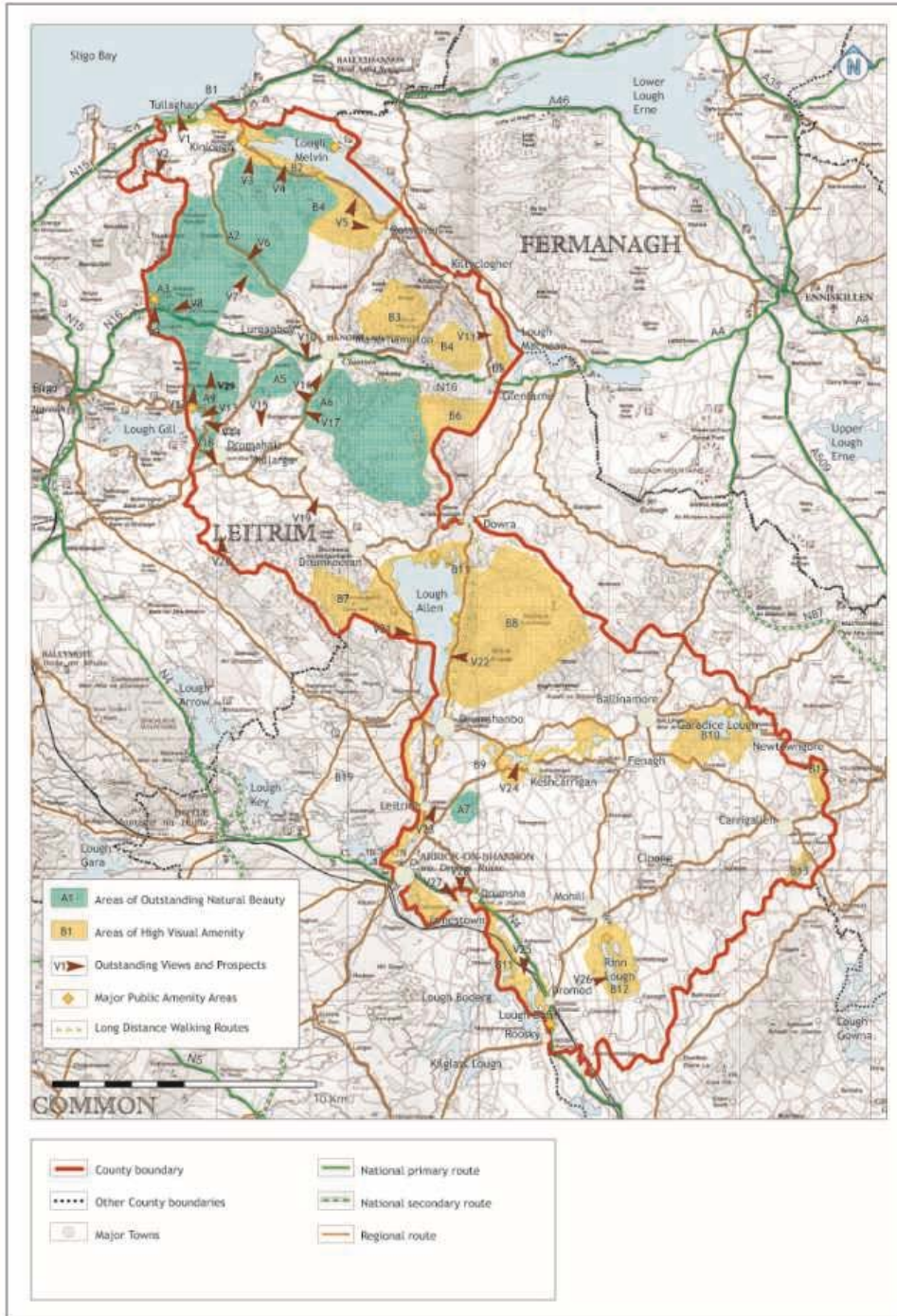
A number of outstanding view and prospects are identified on Map 2.13, page 131. These views are primarily of the County's lakes and upland areas from public roads and are an important resource for the development of tourism in the county.

**Policy 7.14** It is the Council's policy to protect these views from intrusive development and enhance them by the removal of dereliction and eyesores. Lay-bys and viewing areas will be developed as appropriate and as funds allow.

**Objective 7.14** It is an objective of the Council to protect the following Views and Prospects;

Map Ref.	View
V1	View towards Donegal Bay from N15 and Local Roads LP02059-1, LP02059-2, LP02059-3, LS06058-0, LS06059-0, LS06001-0 and LS06071-0
V2	View from Local Road LS060491-0 toward Truskmore and Kings Mountain
V3	View towards Lough Melvin and Donegal Bay from Local Road LS06094-1 and LS06094-2
V4	View of Lough Melvin from Aghavoghill
V5	View of Loughs Melvin and McNeen from Loughross Bar (Local Road LS06197)
V6	View towards Glenade Lake and valley from R280
V7	View towards Glenade Lake from Local Roads LT21251-1, LT21512-2, LP02125-1 and LP02125-2
V8	View towards Glencar Lake from Local Road LP04145
V9	View towards Glencar Lake from N16
V10	View towards Benbo Mountain from Local Road LP02136
V11	View towards Lough McNeen from Local Roads LT61842-1, LT61842-2, LT61843 and LT61961.
V12	View of Fivemilebourne and Carrickanurroo
V13	View of Lough Gill from Carrickanurroo
V14	View of Lough Gill from R286
V15	View towards Carrigeencor Lake from Local Roads LS08162 and LS08164
V16	View of Benbo, Thur and Dough Mountains from R280
V17	View from O'Donnell's Rock
V18	View of Creevelea Abbey from the R288
V19	View towards Bellhavel Lake from Local Road LT42461
V20	View from Gleaghnafernagh from Local Road LT42533
V21	View towards Lough Allen from the R280
V22	View towards Lough Allen from the R200
V23	View of Slieve an Iarainn from the R280
V24	View of Slieve an Iarainn and Lough Scur from the R209
V25	View of River Shannon from the N4 Faulties to Aughamore
V26	View of Lough Rynn from Local Roads LP01053 and LS05515
V27	View of River Shannon from Local Road LS07426
V28	View of River Shannon from the N4 in the townlands of Munkil and Tully
V29	View towards the Leean Mountain Range from the R.278 in the area of Doon Lough

**Table 2.11: Protected Views and Prospects.**



**Map 2.13: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, High Visual Amenity & Protected Views & Prospects**

**(Note: Refer to Appendix D –separate book of maps - for large scale map showing Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and High Visual Amenity)**

## 2.08 Protection of the Built Environment

### 2.08.01 General

The built environment refers to all features built by man in the environment including buildings and other structures such as bridges, archaeological sites and field boundaries. These structures have been influenced by the particular physical, climactic, technological, cultural and socio-economic circumstances of their creators and are a record of man's continuous interaction with his environment. While not every structure is of sufficient importance to warrant protection, the conservation of special examples of the built heritage is vital if a sense of continuity with the past is to be maintained.

Leitrim has a rich and diverse heritage and brings benefits to all that live in the County and those who visit. Along with forming our identity, heritage teaches us lessons from the past and also brings economic benefits to the County by providing scenic landscapes, vernacular architecture and historic monuments for the tourist. Retaining a wide diversity and quality of heritage resource may also be seen as a measure of success and competitiveness. The Shannon-Erne Waterway, Parke's Castle, Sweathouses, Creevelea Ironworks, Black Pig's Dyke, Lough Rynn Estate, Sliabh an Iarainn, Glenade Lough, Kingfisher Trail, pattern days and mumming festivals. Landscapes, architecture, archaeology, nature, wildlife and cultural festivals all combine to make up a unique sense of Leitrim.

Caring for our heritage helps fulfil the need for sustainable development by maintaining the quality of our landscapes, historic and cultural resources and the heritage of the man-made environment. There are many people who are interested in and have responsibility for our heritage.

The Council will seek to promote environmental awareness and good practices, together with high standards of design in all development proposals. The Council considers the appointment of a Heritage Officer/Conservation Officer is necessary in order to encourage good practice in building and conservation. The appointment of such however, is subject to availability of resources.

The Council would be favourably disposed generally towards developments/projects, in appropriate locations, which would enhance our understanding of our heritage – artistic, cultural and literary

### 2.08.02 Planning Legislation

Under Section 10 (2)(f) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, it is a requirement of all County Development Plans to include objectives for:

“ the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest”

Under Section 10 (2)(g) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, it is a requirement of all County Development Plans to include objectives for:

“ the preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas”

Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, states:

“For the purpose of protecting structures, or parts of structures, which form part of the architectural heritage and which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, every development plan shall include a record of protected structures, which is, in the opinion of the planning authority, of such interest within its functional area”

### **2.08.03 County Leitrim Heritage Plan 2003-2008**

The adoption of the Leitrim Heritage Plan 2003-2008 arose from the requirements of the National Heritage Plan 2002 and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development. It is a strategic framework within which to direct the management of one of Leitrim's most valuable resources. Protection and enhancement of heritage is also an aim of A Shared Vision, the Social, Economic and Cultural Strategy for Co. Leitrim 2002-2012.

The aim of the Leitrim Heritage Plan is to: “ *implement a cross-agency approach to promote awareness, education, best management practise and access to heritage in recognition of the benefits that heritage delivers; identifying a sense of place for Leitrim, learning lessons from the past and added value for development and the environs of the county*”.

Some of the objectives of the plan include:

1. To continue to promote and raise the profile of heritage in Co. Leitrim in recognition of its cultural and economic benefits for the people of Leitrim.
2. To raise awareness on and promote the needs of the archives and museum sector of heritage in Leitrim
3. To promote sustainable planning for Leitrim's waterways.
4. To maintain and create access to Leitrim's natural, built and cultural heritage.
5. To maintain and enhance the network of Leitrim's walkways.
6. To increase our knowledge of and promote the appropriate care and conservation of our historic sites and monuments.
7. To raise awareness on Leitrim's cultural heritage.

**Objective 8.3** It is an objective of the Council to carryout a review of the County Heritage Plan during the lifetime of this plan subject to specific funding being made available by the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

### **2.08.04 Architectural Heritage**

The term “architectural heritage” is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) & Historic Monuments Act 1999 as “all (a) structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings, (b) groups of such structures, and (c) sites” which are of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

#### **2.08.04a Protected Structures**

**Policy 8.4a It is the policy of the Council to protect all structures in the Record of Protected Structures (Appendix A of this plan).**

A protected structure is a structure that Leitrim County Council considers to be worthy of protections from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. The built heritage is an important element in the

character of County Leitrim and every planning authority is required to have a Record of Protected Structures in its functional area.

The Inventory of Appropriate Buildings/Structures for Inclusion in the New Record of Protected Structures prepared by CAAS in November 2000 and the National Inventory for Architectural Heritage in County Leitrim (Dúchas, the Heritage Service), the Carrick-on-Shannon Architectural Heritage Study (Dúchas, the Heritage Service) and the Urban Framework Plans for Drumkeeran, Drumshanbo, Ballinamore, Mohill, Manorhamilton and Dromahaire shall be used as the basis for the preparation of any new Record of Protected Structures. All structures of local, regional and national importance will be considered for protection.

Sixty buildings were brought forward from the 1997-2002 Record of Protected Structures list into the 2003-2009 Record of Protected Structures. One of those on the list "Annagh – Sweat House" did not originally form part of the Record of Protected Structures in the 1997-2002 County Development Plan but was instead listed under Monuments of Archaeological Interest. It is intended therefore to correct this and omit this structure from the Record of Protected Structures.

In 2005 Leitrim County Council added an additional 211 structures to the Record of Protected Structures and a further 2 No. buildings in 2006. One of the building added in 2005 (ref. no. 30900705) was incorrectly referenced as an Old Schoolhouse and it is intended to correct this to read Hunting Lodge. A total of 272 Structures will therefore form the Record of Protected Structures – identified in Appendix A of this plan.

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the entire building is listed for protection. The protection afforded to a Protected Structure automatically includes all parts of the structure within the curtilage of the property and any other structures within its attendant grounds (including the interior and exterior of all structures, walls, gates and boundaries etc.). Where a structure is a Protected Structure all works (including those normally exempt) that effect the character of the structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest require planning permission. The owner or occupier is entitled to a declaration from the Council, under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, which will identify the features of the structure of particular interest and worthy of conservation.

It is proposed to further review buildings/structures contained within the National Inventory for Architectural Heritage with a view to their inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures during the lifetime of this Plan.

Particular attention will be paid to the alteration/ addition of buildings or structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures and these should reflect the setting, form, scale, mass, material and colouring of the original building.

Development or redevelopment in close proximity to any building or structure listed in the Record of Protected Structures, must respect the setting and character of the Protected Structure.

In this regard, the Council will offer such expert advice on conservation as is available to it.



**Policy 8.4b** It is the policy of the Council to actively pursue funding for building conservation under the Conservation Grants scheme run by the Department of Environment and Local Government.

<p><b>Objective 8.4a</b> It is an objective of the Council to seek the protection of all structures within the County that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.</p>
<p><b>Objective 8.4b</b> It is an objective of the Council to review the record of Protected Structures during the lifetime of this plan.</p>
<p><b>Objective 8.4c</b> It is an objective of the Council to seek funding for the conservation and restoration of Protected Structures.</p>
<p><b>Objective 8.4d</b> It is an objective of the Council to seek the appointment of a Conservation Officer/Heritage Officer to improve the level of expertise available to the Council.</p>

#### **2.08.04 b Streetscapes and Areas of Good Urban Design**

In addition to protecting individual buildings and structures, the Council is aware that many other buildings, while not of sufficient merit to warrant individual listing, are nevertheless important in the context of their contribution to the streetscape and the character of the towns and villages within which they are located.

The demolition of any building in a defined streetscape area will not be allowed unless in exceptional circumstances.

1. the building or structure is beyond reasonable repair;
2. demolition would be a positive benefit to the areas enhancement;
3. permission has been granted and an agreement entered into for the erection of an appropriate replacement building reflecting the design and character of the area.

Generally in town and village centres new development will be expected to respect established building lines, eaves and ridge heights, roof pitches and fenestration patterns. New development can be more successfully absorbed into established streetscapes when attention is paid to details such as chimneys, eaves overhangs and shop fronts.

However the Council welcomes high quality modern architectural designs which demonstrates an affinity with these settings. Ideally new buildings should both reflect both the era in which they are built and respect the context in which they are located.

#### **2.08.04c Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's)**

An architectural conservation area is "a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that is of architectural, historical, artistic, archaeological, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a Protected Structure, and whose character it is an objective of a development plan to preserve. A planning authority recognizes, by making provision in the Development Plan for the protection of these areas, that in many cases the protection of the architectural heritage is best achieved by controlling and guiding change on a wider scale than the individual structure, in order to retain the overall architectural or historic

character of an area” (“Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DoEHLG, 2004)

The purpose of defining an ACA is to give the necessary protection to buildings and the urban environment.

Within these areas the priority will be to preserve and/or enhance those buildings, structures, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views and other elements, which contribute to the unique character of the area

Where appropriate the Council will encourage the retention and restoration of the external fabric of these buildings. Particular attention will be paid to the retention (and repair if necessary) of original natural slate roofs, chimneys, cast iron rainwater goods and railings, external renders original timber sash windows and shop fronts (including the use of appropriate colours). The Council will pursue such grant aid and tax incentives as may be made available in support of this policy.

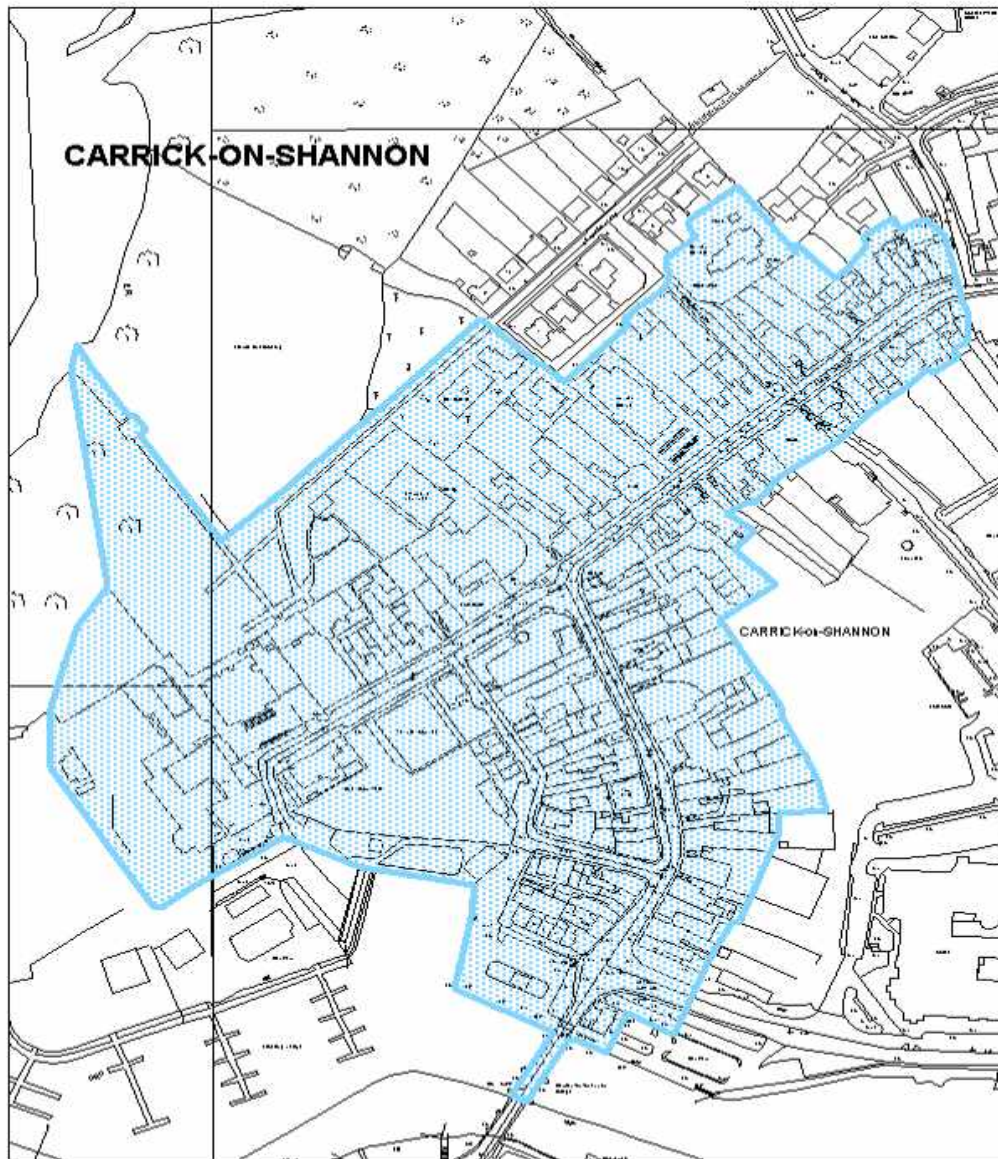
The purpose of an ACA is to ensure the following:

1. High standard of civic amenity and civic design
2. Preservation and protection of the environment, including architectural, archaeological and natural heritage
3. Streetscape improvement
4. Control of layout of areas, density, building lines and treatment of spaces
5. Control of design, colours and materials
6. Promotion of maintenance, repair or cleaning of structures
7. Promotion of mixed uses
8. Control of changes in use
9. Promotion of the development or redevelopment of derelict or vacant sites
10. Control of advertisements

In recognition of the importance of such areas and having due regard to the recommendations made in the various Urban Framework Plans carried out, the Council is designating a portion of some of the towns and villages in the county as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA). The Architectural Conservation Areas are indicated on Maps 2.14 – 2.21.

**Carrick-on-Shannon**

St. George's Terrace, Main Street and Bridge Street.



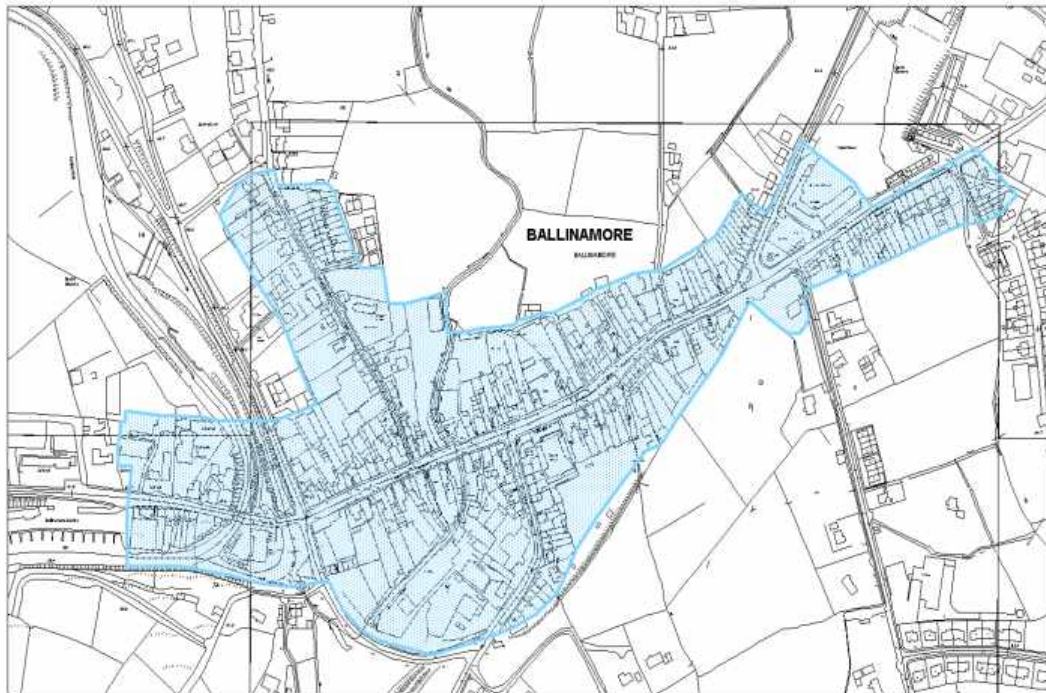
Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) for Carrick on Shannon

— = ACA



**Map 2.14: Carrick on Shannon ACA**

**Ballinamore:**  
The town centre



Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) for Ballinamore

 = ACA

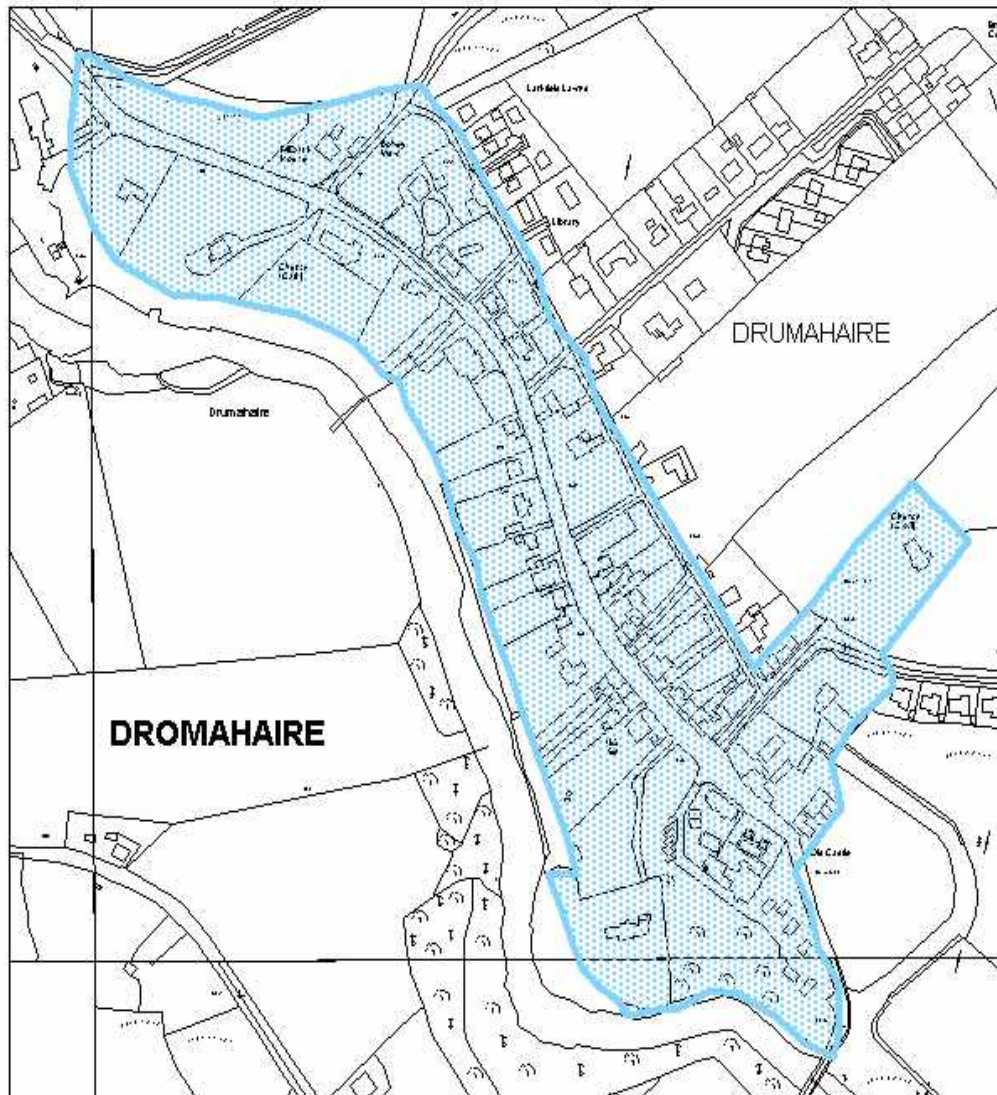


**Map 2.15: Ballinamore ACA**



**Dromahair**

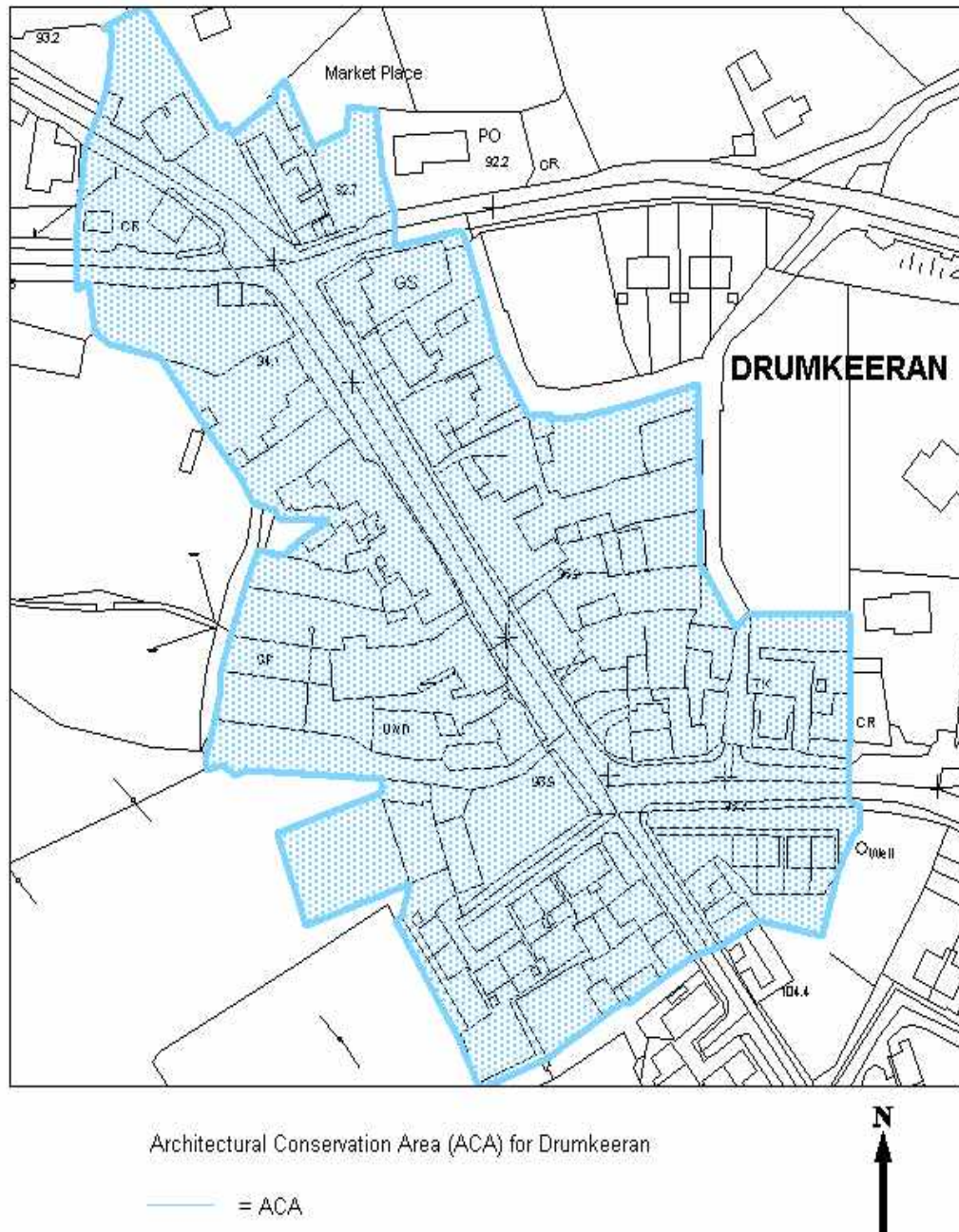
The village centre



**Map 2.16: Dromahair ACA**

### Drumkeeran

The main Street.

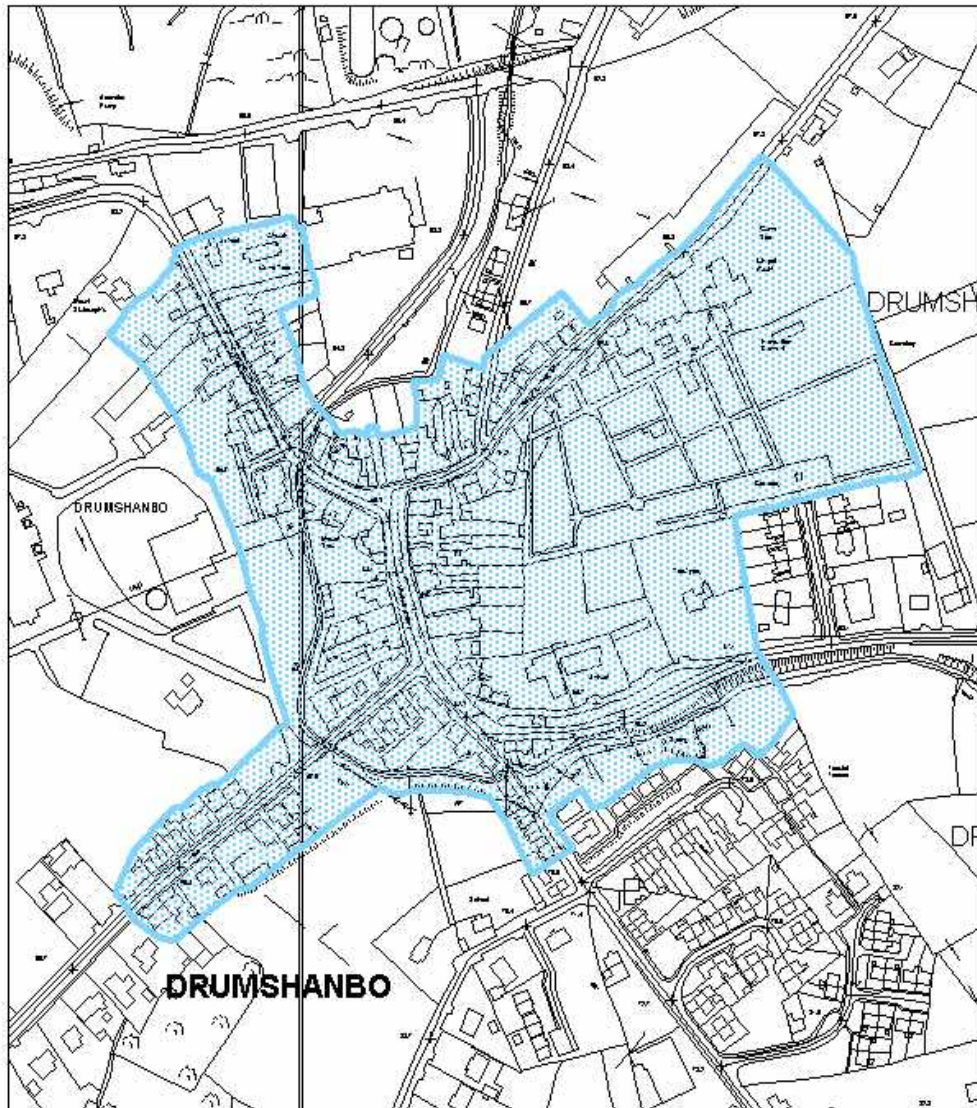


**Map 2.17: Drumkeeran ACA**



**Drumshanbo:**

The historic core of the Town



Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) for Drumshanbo

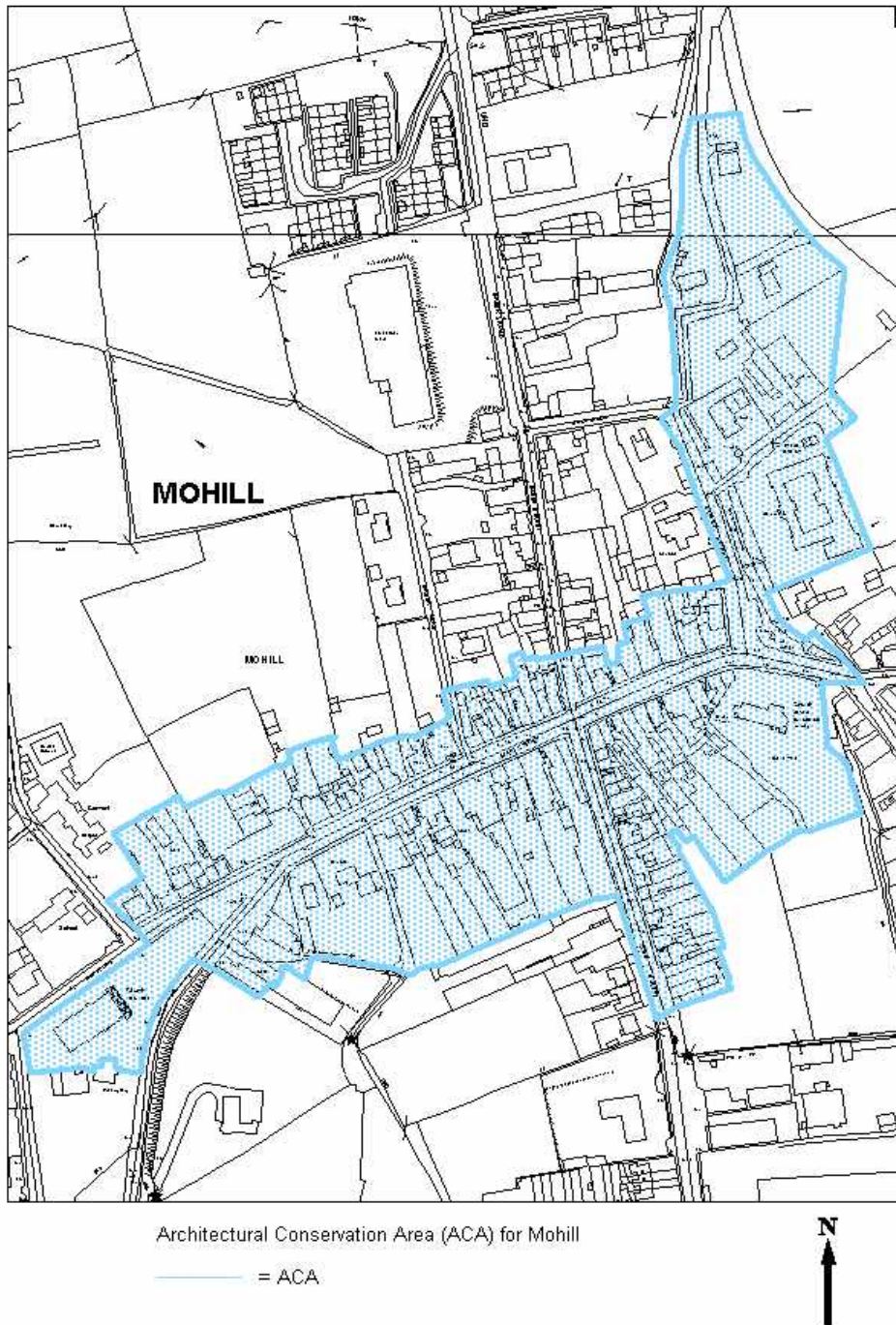
— = ACA



**Map 2.18: Drumshanbo ACA**

**Mohill:**

Main Street including Áras O'Carolan and the Castle area.

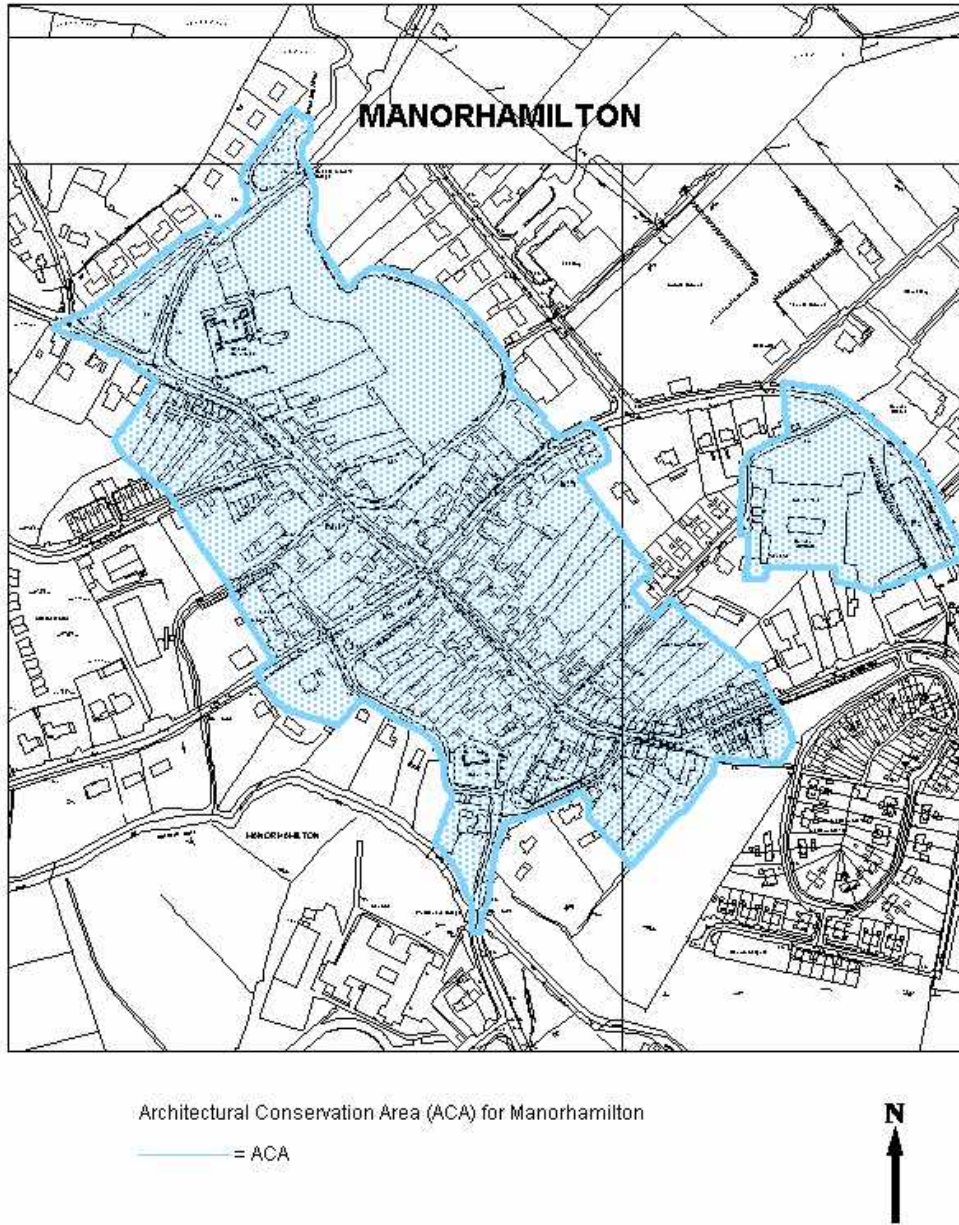


**Map 2.19: Mohill ACA**



**Manorhamilton**

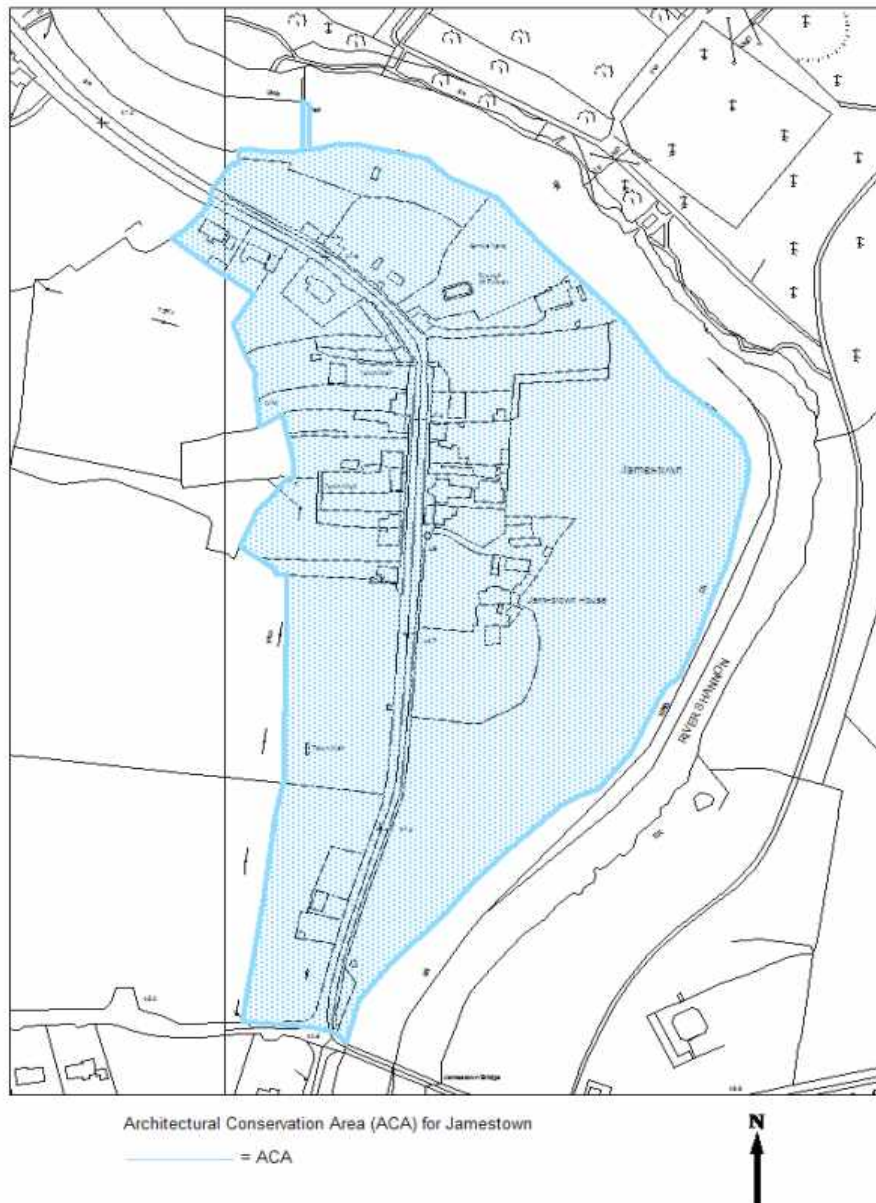
The historic core/village centre



**Map 2.20: Manorhamilton ACA**

**Jamestown**

The village centre



**Map 2.21: Jamestown ACA**

<p><b>Objective 8.4e</b></p> <p><b>Objective 8.4f</b></p> <p><b>Objective 8.4g</b></p> <p><b>Objective 8.4h</b></p>	<p>It is an objective of the Council to identify where necessary additional Architectural Conservation Areas</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to exercise specific design control for ACA's and, to facilitate applicants, it is the Council's intention to develop guidelines for ACA's.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to protect and enhance the areas identified as Architectural Conservation Areas.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to prepare additional Urban Framework Plans and Village Design Statements during the life of this plan in order to facilitate and guide development within towns and villages</p>
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#### 2.08.05 Archaeological Heritage

**Policy 8.5a It is the policy of the Council to promote public awareness of the rich archaeological heritage that exists in County Leitrim**

“Archaeology is the scientific study of past societies, their cultures and their relationship with the environment through an examination of the material remains of our predecessors. ....All remains and objects and any other traces of humankind from past times are considered elements of the archaeological heritage. The archaeological heritage is a resource, which can be used to gain knowledge and understanding of the past. The archaeological heritage is therefore of great cultural and scientific importance.” (DoEHLG website)

Sites and monuments of archaeological significance are recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is compiled by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland and is a statutory inventory of sites and areas with accompanying maps on which sites and monuments are marked and numbered. The Record includes all identified monuments such as megalithic tombs, ring forts and castles in County Leitrim dating to before 1700 AD and some sites post dating 1700 AD. There are approximately 1400 sites and monuments identified in the RMP for County Leitrim. Each monument is encircled by a zone of archaeological potential. The duties of the owner of a recorded monument are detailed in the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. The RMP is available for viewing in the Planning Authority office and in the County Library. It should be noted that any direct impacts on national monuments in State or Local Authority care or subject to a preservation order will require the consent of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004.

The archaeological heritage of Co. Leitrim includes, according to the European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, 1992 (Valetta Convention) structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, all recorded monuments as well as their contexts, and moveable objects; situated both on land and under water. This means that the archaeological heritage is not confined to the archaeological sites within the Record of Monuments and Places, but also includes any archaeological site that may not have been recorded yet, as well as archaeology beneath the ground surface, as well as the context of any site. Leitrim has one underwater heritage order in the Country – UHO 1/90 – which refers to Lough Donogher, located to the north east of Clone.

**Objective 8.5a** It is an objective of the Council to promote the county's archaeological heritage as a tourism resource, in partnership with the Regional Tourism Authority.

National Monuments in County Leitrim				
RMP No.	Townland	Description	Status	Nat. Monument No.
LE002-019	Aghaderrard West	Druid's Alter Passage Grave	Ownership	477
LE008-013	Corrocaloona	Megalithic Tomb	Guardianship	405
LE014-004	Creevelea	Franciscian Friary	Ownership	69
LE025-09601	Fenagh (Commons)	Fenagh Abbey	Ownership	68
LE005-014	Lattone/Gortnaderrary	Worm Ditch or Black Pigs Race	Ownership	653
LE010-043	Kilmore (Drum. By) Sramore E.D.	Park's Castle	Ownership	390
LE008-032	Laghty Barr	Teach Mhic Dhiarmada	Ownership	508

**Table 2.12: List of National Monuments in County Leitrim**

Preservation Orders on Monuments in County Leitrim			
RMP No.	Townland	Description	No. of P.O.
LE025-096001, LE025-096003 LE025-096004, LE025-096005	Commons	Monastic Enclosure	3/94
LE027-054001, LE027-054002 LE027-054003	Sheemore	Sheemore Passage Grave Cemetery	10/78

**Table 2.13: List of Preservation Orders on Monuments in the County**

Underwater Heritage Orders in County Leitrim			
Location	Townland	Date of Order	UHO No.
Lough Donogher – LE 29		14/09/1990	1/90

**Table 2.14: List of Underwater Heritage Orders in the County**

### 2.08.05a Archaeological Assessment

**Policy 8.5b** It is the policy of the Council to secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in-situ or in particular circumstances where the Council is satisfied that this is not possible, preservation by record as a minimum) of all archaeological remains and sites of importance such as National Monuments, Recorded Monuments, their setting and context.

The Council will protect all such sites and monuments and their settings from inappropriate development. All planning applications likely to interfere with such a

recorded site, monument or zone of archaeological interest will be referred to the Development Applications Unit of the Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, An Taisce and the Heritage Council. Regard will be given to the advice and recommendations of in respect of whether or not planning permission should be granted and the nature of conditions to be attached to any grant of planning permission.

Proposed development on, or in close proximity to, a site and monument of archaeological significance will only be allowed where development does not adversely affect their character and setting. Where allowed, the Council will use planning conditions and agreements to enable an archaeological assessment, on site monitoring, testing and/or excavation by a licensed archaeologist.

In assessing development proposals that affect sites and monuments, the Council will have regard to the recommendations of both the Development Applications Unit of the Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, An Taisce and the Heritage Council. The Council will also have regard to the guidance document 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' as published by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, 1999.

**Objective 8.5b** It is an objective of the Council to ensure that any development (above or below ground), within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting.

**Objective 8.5c** It is an objective of the Council to require, where appropriate, that an archaeological assessment be carried out by a suitably qualified person prior to the commencement of any activity that may impact upon the archaeological heritage.

**Objective 8.5d** It is an objective of the Council to protect the zones of archaeological potential as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places.

**Objective 8.5e** It is an objective of the Council to protect archaeological sites discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

**2.08.06 Industrial Archaeology and Canals**

The Council is aware of the cultural importance of the County's industrial heritage and in particular of the canal and waterway systems that traverse the County. Canals, lough gates and associated structures are fine examples of 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial engineering which have mellowed over time to form an intrinsic part of the County's landscape. The importance of protecting these structures is all the greater given the increased importance of the canal and navigation network as a tourism and recreational resource.

**Policy 8.6**      **It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance public accessibility to the county's industrial heritage.**

## **2.09 Recreation, Sports and Amenity**

### **2.09.01 Introduction**

The provision of recreation and amenity facilities is an important aspect of delivering sustainable communities. It is crucial that the facilities provided cater for all age groups and are accessible by all. The role that good quality recreation and amenity facilities can play in ensuring a healthy and active community is recognised by the Council.

*Refer to Section 3.03.14 Formal and Informal Recreational Facilities for further guidance.*

The Council believes that the County possesses some of the finest countryside in which to pursue outdoor recreational pursuits. Recreational opportunities are some of the County's greatest assets and are seen by the Council not just as an enrichment of the lives of the County's existing residents but also as a potential draw for new residents, investors and tourists. The Council will therefore welcome any proposed development of recreational activity in the County, subject to the protection of the environment, health, safety and traffic issues.

The Council will require direct provision of public open space and/or recreational facilities in all residential developments.

*Refer to Section 3.02.12 Open Space Provision in Housing Schemes.*

The rights of landowners shall be respected by those using the countryside for recreational purposes.

### **2.09.02 Provision for Recreation and Amenity**

The Council is aware that the tourism potential of its amenities has not yet been fully developed and will facilitate, and where necessary become directly involved in, the promotion and development of amenities such as;

1. The re-opening of the River Rynn to navigation,
2. The development of the GeoPark through its extension into Leitrim
3. The Management Plan for Lough Allen,
4. The work of Waterways Ireland in extending and promoting the Shannon Navigation, and the Shannon-Erne waterway.
5. The development of marinas where considered appropriate,
6. The development of the Cavan-Leitrim Railway, from Dromod to Mohill,

The Council will also be favourably disposed towards community initiatives aimed at developing recreational resources in the County. In addition, community run gardens and allotments will also be looked upon favourably, in appropriate locations

### **2.09.03 Water Based Sports and Recreation**

The Council recognises that the County's watercourses are assets whose recreational potential has yet to be fully realised.

The Council will promote and facilitate the creation of waterside linear parks, fishing stands and public moorings so local communities can make better use of these assets.

Towns and village communities will be encouraged to make more active use of watercourses running through their settlements, with new development in urban/built up

areas generally encouraged to front onto rivers/canals and the possibility of new public waterside walkways explored.

Activities likely to impact negatively on the enjoyment of these resources by others, such as jet-skiing and water skiing will not be favourably considered. By-laws may be introduced restricting or prohibiting these pursuits if necessary.

The Council is aware of the importance of coarse and game angling as a recreational and tourism resource. The Council will work with the fisheries boards in protecting fish stocks and spawning grounds and promoting the County as an angler's paradise.

The Council will support the acquisition of fishing rights by approved local fishing clubs or organisations and to assist in the maintenance of good fishing stocks by controls over unsuitable development. The opinion of the relevant fisheries board will be sought and considered for any development proposal likely to impact on a fishery.

**Policy 9.3a It is the policy of the Council to ensure that access to good fishing waters is available to locals and visitors and that the resource is appropriately managed**

<b>Objective 9.3a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to improve and develop safe public access to the rivers and lakeshores.
<b>Objective 9.3b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to protect the rivers, lakes and canals from ecological damage
<b>Objective 9.3c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to encourage new developments in urban/built up areas, to front onto rivers/canals and where possible develop new public walkways along rivers and canals.

#### **2.09.04 Waterways and Recreation**

*"The Shannon navigation and our waterways are a national asset which needs to be protected and nurtured for future generations also need to be maintained as a real living, working environment."* (Waterways Corridor Study 2005, page 8)

**Policy 9.4 It is the policy of the Council to promote and protect public accessibility to the County's rivers and lakes.**

The Council acknowledges the importance of the inland waterways to the County of Leitrim and the need to both protect and properly manage this valuable resource. The Council recognises that the importance of such a resource extends beyond purely water based activities such as angling, cruising, sailing, canoeing and other such water sports and that other activities such as walking, horse riding, cycling, bird watching also benefit from and use the waterways.

#### **2.09.05 Sport and Recreation**

The Council is actively supporting sporting facilities throughout the county. The development of the Aura Leisure Centre in Carrick-on-Shannon has been very successful and it is an objective of the Council to continue the development of the lands at the Aura Leisure Centre for the expansion of sporting facilities.



The new seated stand, with a capacity of 3,000, at Pairc Sean McDiarmuda, also in Carrick-on-Shannon, has been recently completed. Both the park and the new stand are a valuable resources for the County.

This Council recognises that Gaelic Games are by far the biggest outdoor pursuit in the County and have the best network for delivering sports participation in the County at present. The Council is committed to the further development of GAA facilities in line with its commitment to the development of all sporting and outdoor recreational pursuits within the County, as exemplified in the recent arrangement between the FAI and the Council in relation to the future development of that sporting code.

While the Council recognises the strong network of GAA and the sporting facilities provided by the GAA, the Council is aware that the County is poorly provided for in terms of the range of sports facilities outside of GAA related sports.

The Council also actively supports the continued development of outdoor pursuit centres, golf courses and equestrian centres in the County and will work towards increasing opportunities to participate in sport at local level to enhance access to sports and recreation for all.

The Council have been active in the provision of public amenities throughout the County and in this regard will continue to seek opportunities to improve and add to the provision of these amenities. The Council will ensure through its role in development management that all new developments will be served with high quality amenity facilities.

Levies may be imposed on new development to fund recreational facilities in the County, in accordance with a schedule of development levies to be adopted by the Council under Section 48 & 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

**Policy 9.5a** It is the Policy of the Council to ensure appropriate high quality recreational and amenity facilities are available in urban and rural areas.

**Policy 9.5b** It is the Policy of the Council to work in conjunction with the Leitrim Sports Partnership in the development of sporting facilities in the County.

<b>Objective 9.5a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to implement the Council's Development Contribution Scheme to secure new recreational and amenity facilities and the improvement of existing recreation and amenity facilities.
<b>Objective 9.5b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to seek a greater variety of provision of recreation and amenity facilities to reflect the demand of a growing and diverse population.
<b>Objective 9.5c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to actively encourage and support the provision by private developers of additional recreational and amenity facilities across the county, including swimming pools, gyms, play-areas, playing pitches, horse riding arenas, playgrounds or other such amenities, in appropriate locations.
<b>Objective 9.5d</b>	It is an objective of the Council to continue the development of the lands at the Aura Leisure Centre, Carrick-on-Shannon, for the expansion of sporting facilities.
<b>Objective 9.6e</b>	It is an objective of the Council to support and encourage the development of sporting leisure facilities, by the public, community and private sectors.

**2.09.06 Play and Recreation**

The Council recognises the importance of play in the development of children. The Council will support initiatives, which encourage play and raise awareness of the importance of play for the health, wellbeing and development of children.

**Policy 9.6a To increase the range of public play opportunities available to children.**

**Policy 9.6b To improve the quality and safety of playgrounds and play areas.**

**Objective 9.6:** To ensure that surfaces and play equipment provided in public playgrounds or publicly funded playgrounds, conform to the Irish standards for play equipment and surfacing.

**2.09.07 Walking/Access to the Countryside**

Leitrim County Council recognizes the importance of hill walking to the County from a social as well as economic point of view. There are a number of walking routes such as Sli Liatroma (Leitrim's Way), The North West Trail, the Beara-Breifni Way and the Miner's Way which facilitate access to the countryside for everyone. Such routes open up the amenity asset that is the Leitrim Countryside, as well as providing opportunities for enhancement of quality of life and health.

**Policy 9.7a It is the policy of the Council to co-operate with representative bodies, such as Comhairle na Tuaithe, the Mountaineering Council of Ireland, Irish Farmers Association, Irish Cattle Farmers Association, Keep Ireland Open, local groups and others, to support the improvement and development of walking routes throughout the County in an environmentally sustainable manner.**

**Policy 9.7b It is the policy of the Council to preserve public rights of way and to create new rights of way where appropriate.**

**Objective 9.7a** It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the further development of way marked walking routes by maintaining and creating rights of way,

**Objective 9.7b** It is an objective of the Council to maintain and signpost walking routes

**Objective 9.7c** It is an objective of the Council to protect existing public rights of way from development and to enforce, by legal action if deemed necessary, any unauthorized attempt to inhibit access.

**Objective 9.7d** It is an objective of the Council, by way of a formal variation to the Plan, to compile a list of existing rights of way, for formal protection, within the lifetime of the Plan. The list will be accompanied by detailed maps showing the actual routes.

**2.09.08 Cycling Routes**

Leitrim County Council recognises the importance of cycling routes to the County from a social as well as economic point of view. There are a number of cycling routes such as the Kingfisher Cycling Trail, the Tour De Humbert Trail and the recently launched North

West Trail which facilitate access to the countryside for everyone. Such routes open up the amenity asset that is the Leitrim Countryside as well as providing opportunities for enhancement of quality of life and health.

**Policy 9.8** It is the policy of the Council to co-operate with representative bodies to support the improvement and development of cycling routes throughout the County in an environmentally sustainable manner.

**Objective 9.8a** It is an objective of the Council to maintain and signpost cycle routes.

**Objective 9.8b** It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of cycle lanes along public roads in urban/built up areas and in tourist areas, where appropriate and as funds allow.

## 2.10 Utility Services

### 2.10.01 Water Supply

The bulk of the County will be served by the North and South Leitrim Regional Water Supply Schemes. Kinlough/Tullaghan Water Improvement Scheme has been approved funding from the Department and has gone to tender.

**Policy 10.1** It is the policy of the Council to seek to provide or assist in the provision of an adequate water supply, conforming to EU directives, for all commercial enterprises and private houses in towns and villages in the County and in rural areas as resources allow.

The Council will implement its Rural Water Strategic Plan for the County. Where connection to the regional supply schemes is not practical, the Council assists in the provision of group schemes. The Council also assists in the provision of Group Schemes off the public schemes. Water sources will be protected from development that may cause their pollution.

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Objective 10.1a</b> | It is an objective of the Council to extend the now completed North Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme to cater for the demands of Manorhamilton, Drumahaire, Drumkeerin and all existing and proposed group water schemes capable of being supplied by the scheme. |
| <b>Objective 10.1b</b> | It is an objective of the Council to implement in full the objectives of the Rural Water Strategic Plan for County Leitrim.   |
| <b>Objective 10.1c</b> | It is an objective of the Council to implement the proposals outlined in the Design Review report on the extension and upgrading of the South Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme  |
| <b>Objective 10.1d</b> | It is an objective of the Council to implement in full the Kinlough/Tullaghan Water Supply Improvement Scheme   |
| <b>Objective 10.1e</b> | It is an objective of the Council to implement the Water Services Pricing Policy.   |
| <b>Objective 10.1f</b> | It is an objective of the Council to implement the terms of the Water Services Pricing Policy in relation to water supply.  |

**2.10.02 Waste Water Treatment**

**Policy 10.2a** It is the policy of the Council to provide waste water treatment schemes of adequate capacity and treatment standards in most of the County's towns and villages under the Rural Town and Village Initiative during the period of this plan in accordance with the Water Framework Directive 2000 and EU Urban Wastewater Directive.

The Council is conscious that poorly functioning septic tanks/effluent treatment plants can cause groundwater pollution that may lead to the contamination of wells, group water schemes and watercourses. EPA guidelines on septic tanks and proprietary treatment systems will therefore be rigidly adhered to where applications for development on unserviced lands are being considered. The installation standards of the wastewater treatment systems will be strictly controlled through certification by the panel of approved Site Assessors, established by the Council.

*Refer to Section 3.02.06 Waste Water Treatment for further guidance.*

<b>Objective 10.2a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to implement in full the Carrick-on-Shannon Sewerage Improvement Scheme with a proposed treatment plant capacity of 10,000 p.e.
<b>Objective 10.2b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to implement in full the Leitrim Town and Village Sewerage Schemes which will provide waste water treatment facilities for the towns and villages of Drumahaire, Kinlough, Kiltyclogher Drumkeeran, Rooskey, Jamestown, Cloone, Drumcong, Killargue, Ballinagleragh.
<b>Objective 10.2c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to extend the existing waste water treatment plant at Keshcarrigan.
<b>Objective 10.2d</b>	It is an objective of the Council to prepare "Council's Recommendations on Effluent Treatment Systems for Single House Development in Unsewered Areas"
<b>Objective 10.2e</b>	It is an objective of the Council to implement the terms of the Water Services Pricing Policy in relation to waste water.
<b>Objective 10.2f:</b>	It is an objective of the Council to prioritise, and aim to comply with, the recommendations set in the EPA Report 2009, The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland – A Report for the Years 2007 and 2008 (or any similar updated version issued by the EPA) (or any similar updated version issued by the EPA)

**2.10.02a Private Communal Sewerage Schemes**

The Planning Authority will support and facilitate where appropriate proposals for private communal sewerage schemes in the following cases;

- (a) In areas where the Council do not propose to carry out a public scheme.
- (b) In areas which can be served by extensions of existing Council sewers.
- (c) In areas where the Council intend at a later stage to provide a public sewerage scheme.

In such cases, schemes should be so designed as to be capable of being connected to the public scheme in due course. Such schemes shall be purpose designed, appropriate in scale, specification and capacity designed to the needs of users and shall be subject to legally-binding maintenance and bonding arrangements agreed with the County Council.

#### **2.10.02b Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007**

Circular PD/709 issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to local authorities and dated 16th July 2009 sets out certain obligations on planning authorities under the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 (SI 684 of 2007) as well as the interrelationship between these requirements and investment plans under the Department's Water Services Investment Programme.

In accordance with the aforementioned Regulations, Planning authorities must assure themselves that in approving development that it would not compromise the operation of municipal wastewater treatment plants, and furthermore that they operate in accordance with the requirements of the EPA licence governing the plant.

**Policy: 10.2b: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that in approving development that would give rise to additional discharges to a waste water works or from storm water overflows governed by EPA licences, such discharges, taken in conjunction with discharges from other existing and/or already approved development, are capable of being treated in a manner that is compliant with the stricter of the requirements of:**

- 1. The Urban Waste Water Regulations;**
- 2. The requirements of an EPA licence**

**Objective 10.2g:** It is an objective of the Council to prioritise, and aim to comply with, the recommendations set out in the EPA Report 2009, Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland for Population Equivalents Greater than 500 Persons – A Report for the Years 2006 and 2007 (or any similar updated version issued by the EPA)

#### **2.10.03 Solid Waste Recovery and Disposal**

The Council proposes to develop and implement a waste management strategy, which will contain the following features:

- a) Conform to the EU and National Waste Strategies in all matters relating to the production, handling, treatment and disposal of waste generated within the County
- b) Co-operate with, and participate in, the preparation of Regional plans for the collection, treatment, handling and disposal of wastes
- c) Promote the prevention and reduction of waste and the increased re-use and recycling of materials from all waste

**Policy 10.3a The Council's policy on solid waste disposal is based on the principles of waste prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling, energy recovery and the environmentally responsible disposal of residual waste, in that order.**

Details of the Council's policy are contained in the Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan 2006-2011. The plan provides for the continued development of

waste infrastructure in County Leitrim, promotion of best waste management practice and compliance with national waste legislation.

The Council continues to pursue and promote the recycling and reuse as the preferred method of disposal of waste.

The Council's Litter Management Plan seeks to reduce litter and to raise public awareness of the issue, and will continue to promote litter prevention and enforcement by implementation of the Plan, and other initiatives. The Council commits to the enforcement of Leitrim County Council Litter Bye Laws which seek to prevent the creation and control litter by addressing litter caused by food related and festival activities.

The Council promotes segregated household waste recycling through the adoption and enforcement of Waste Presentation Bye-Laws relating to both individual householders and apartment developments.

In the event of the Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan not being implemented the Council will make alternative arrangement for the disposal of residual solid waste within the County as appropriate.

There are four main sources for non hazardous sludge; agriculture, industry, water treatment and wastewater treatment. These sludges will be disposed of in accordance with the Sludge Management Plan for County Leitrim, a constituent part of the Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan.

**Policy 10.3b It is the policy of the Council that the provisions of the Litter Act will be rigorously implemented.**

**Policy 10.3c It is the policy of the Council that construction and demolition waste disposal and recycling will be controlled by permits through the Planning and Waste Management Regulations.**

**Policy 10.3d It is the policy of the Council that waste segregation facilities shall be provided for in all apartment developments.**

**Policy 10.3e It is the policy of the Council that operating landfill sites, when full, will be fully remediated, monitored and, where appropriate, landscaped and returned to beneficial use, including use for agriculture and amenity purposes.**

Proposed industrial and commercial developments must identify the separate waste streams and forward a plan for the management of the waste arising in accordance with the polices contained in the Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan.

<b>Objective 10.3a</b>	It is an objective of the Council to implement the Connaught Regional Waste Management Strategy.
<b>Objective 10.3b</b>	It is an objective of the Council to continue to establish civic amenity sites in the County in accordance with the Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan.
<b>Objective 10.3c</b>	It is an objective of the Council to establish bring centres in accordance with the Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan.

#### 2.10.04 Electricity Generation and Transmission

The Council recognises that an adequate and reliable electricity supply/infrastructure is essential if the County is to develop and compete nationally for investment and is committed to advocating and facilitating the extension of three phase electricity supply to all towns and villages in the County. The Council will be guided by the Landscape Character Assessment in determining the acceptability of a proposed transmission lines in sensitive landscapes. However the Council's preferred option is for the undergrounding of high voltage (220kV and above) transmission lines in these areas. Applications for the erection of high tension lines will have give consideration to impacts on residential amenities.

The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is recognised as a key factor in supporting economic development and attracting investment to the area.

The Council supports the provision for new electricity transmission infrastructure, including high voltage transformer stations and new transmission power lines. This infrastructure will be required for the reinforcement of the transmission network, related to growing electricity demand arising from existing and new customers

The Council recognises the potential of the County for generating electricity by means of windfarms and is favourably disposed towards their development subject to the protection of the environment and visual amenity. The Landscape Character Assessment gives guidance on the integration of wind farms into the landscape. Preferred areas, areas open for consideration and highly sensitive areas have been identified.

*Refer to Section 3.03.10 Wind Farms for further guidance.*

Where applications are made to replace existing turbines with more efficient and effective turbines, the Council would generally be favourable, subject to all standard issues such as visual amenity, environmental considerations etc. being satisfied.

In deciding on applications for windfarm development the Council will be guided by the Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006, Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.

<b>Objective 10.4</b>	It is an objective of the Council to support infrastructural renewal and development of electricity transmission networks in the County.
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**2.10.04a Windfarm Capacity Areas**

As part of the Landscape Character Assessment the county's landscape was assessed for its ability to absorb windfarm developments. This assessment was based purely on an assessment of the landscape, the wind resource and environmental designations. It did not consider the electricity network, other infrastructure or the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage.

*Refer to Table 2.15 below and Map 2.22.*

**Examples of High Capacity Areas**

Area	Wind Resource	Landscape and Issues	Notes
Corry Mountain	> 7-8m/s	Broad open ridge well away from roads and settlements. Widespread forestry and two existing wind farms. 'Category 2 and 3' landscape <sup>1</sup> <b>Suitability score: 6/6</b>	Existing road access. No obvious archaeological constraints.
Corriga Mountains	> 7-8 m/s	Rounded undulating hill farmland with small, hedged fields. Isolated but not wild character. 'Category 2' landscape (as defined in the LCA) <b>Suitability score: 5/6</b>	Existing road access. No obvious nature conservation or archaeological constraints
Land south of Tullaghan	> 6-7 m/s	Flat, open landscape near coast. Low farming potential. Isolated but not wild. 'Category 3' landscape (as defined in the LCA). <b>Suitability score: 6/6</b>	Existing road access. No obvious archaeological constraints

**High Capacity Areas** These are areas of lower sensitivity in terms of ecology and landscape. Generally there will be a presumption in favour of windfarms in these areas subject to normal planning requirements. All applications will be dealt with on their own merits.

**Examples of Low Capacity Areas**

Area	Landscape and Issues	Notes
Benbo	The top of Benbo itself is unsuitable for windfarm development in landscape and visual terms. However, the lower ridge to the south west may have some capacity to accommodate a windfarm, subject to road access and other considerations.	
Larkfield/ Boleybrack;	The southern flank of Larkfield would be the best site in landscape and visual terms to accommodate a windfarm. This area also appears to have reasonable road access.	Larkfield is widely used for recreation and Boleybrack is an NHA. Both are very visible from the N16 to the north.
The drumlin landscapes of the south of the county.	The drumlin landscapes of the south of the county may have some capacity to accommodate small windfarms, but not medium or large windfarms. The landscape is generally small scale and intricate. A large windfarm, intermittently viewed from drumlins, could be a highly distracting and discordant feature in the landscape	

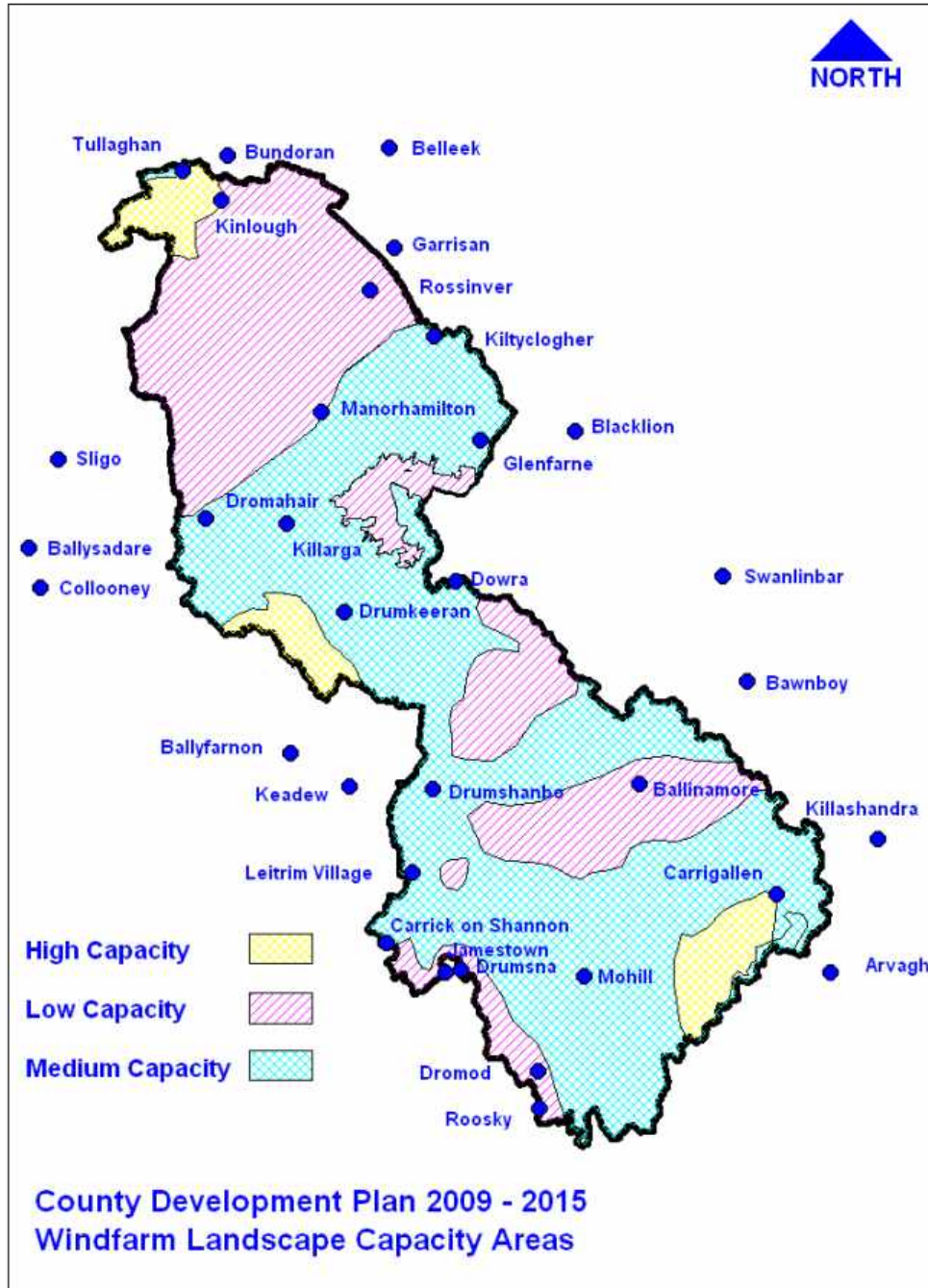
**Low Capacity Areas** These are areas of high sensitivity in terms of ecology and landscapes. They are considered to be of a cultural and tourism resource of national and regional importance. The protection of their scenic value is of importance to the Council. The Council will, however, consider proposals for wind-farm development in low capacity areas subject to applications satisfying the requirements of Section 2.07.03, in addition to standard planning considerations.

**Examples of Medium Capacity Areas**

Area	Landscape and Issues	Notes
Dough Mountain	Very broad, domed summit, well away from major roads and settlement. Widespread forestry. 'Category 2' landscape (as defined in the LCA) Wind Resource >8m/s	Road access appears favourable. No obvious archaeological constraints.
Thur Mountain	Thur Mountain is extremely visible from the R281 to the north-east, Lough Macnean Upper to the east and the N16 to the south. The northern slopes of the mountain are the only area that might accommodate a windfarm without a significant adverse landscape and visual impact.	This area also appears to be more easily accessible by road than other parts of the mountain.

**Medium Capacity Areas** These comprise of the remaining landscapes of the county, where windfarm applications will be treated on their merits. Depending on precise siting and design it is considered that these locations could accommodate some wind farm development in the landscape. It is considered that the areas where windfarm applications are most likely to arise are areas with the best wind resource.

**Table 2.15: Windfarm Capacity Areas**



Map 2.22: Windfarm Landscape Capacity Areas

#### **2.10.05 Gas**

Leitrim is not currently connected to the national grid and the Council is aware of this deficiency in its infrastructure. The Council will advocate and support any proposal to extend the grid to County Leitrim and will facilitate any proposal to do so.

The Council is aware of oil and gas prospecting currently taking place on the Leitrim/Cavan border and will support the commercial development of oil or gas fields, subject to adequate safeguards for the protection of the environment.

#### **2.10.06 Telecommunications**

The Council is aware that the County lacks adequate broadband connectivity and that this is an increasingly important piece of infrastructure. The Council have initiated the extension of the broadband network to Carrick-on-Shannon and Manorhamilton and will advocate and support the extension of broadband telecommunications to other towns and villages in County Leitrim as a matter of urgency and will support any proposal to extend broadband within the County. The Council aims to ensure a minimum of 3 Megabytes throughout the County.

*Refer to Section 3.03.11 Telecommunications for further guidance.*

**Policy 10.06a It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all areas of the County have adequate mobile communication coverage and in particular service providers will be encouraged to provide services in areas identified as having low/no coverage.**

Facilitation of the development of a broadband network will extend to making public roads and other rights of way and way leaves in the control of the Council available for the laying of cable insofar as it is within the power of the Council to do so.

The Council considers the provision of a state of the art telecommunications network to be critical in addressing the County's peripherality and will seek to ensure the County is served by the most up to date technology available.

It is the aim of Leitrim County Council to provide for the orderly development of telecommunications infrastructure throughout the County, recognising the necessity of providing modern infrastructure, while having due regard to the diverse views and concerns, of the various interested parties and acknowledging concerns of the people with regard to public health.

**Policy 10.06b It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to support the provision of a modern telecommunications infrastructure throughout the County, while seeking to ensure that such equipment is so sited, that it will not adversely impact on the visual or residential amenities of any areas within the County, or on the natural beauty or archaeological heritage of the County, or give rise to genuine public concern on health grounds, having regard to standards of the International Radiation Protection Association and the World Health Organisation.**

Whereas reason must apply in all cases, only as a last resort should free standing masts be located within, or in the immediate surrounds of smaller towns or villages, within a residential area, near schools or within 500 metres of private rural dwellings. Any proposal under this clause must demonstrate clearly that to do otherwise, would not be

reasonable in terms of meeting technical requirements. The applicant shall provide satisfactory evidence that this is the only location possible to meet specific requirements, and that all other alternatives have been examined but are not capable of being exploited for stated specific reasons. Commercial competition in this instance will not be acceptable as a reason for locating in these areas. This should not be interpreted so as to preclude development where the applicant has full knowledge of the location of an existing mast.

In rural areas masts should be placed in forestry plantations provided that the antennae are clear of obstruction. The developer will be required to retain a cordon of trees around the site, which will not be felled during the lifetime of the mast with the written agreement of the owner. In un-forested areas, softening of the visual impact should be achieved through judicious design, and through the planting of shrubs, trees, etc., as a screen and backdrop.

Where there is an existing mast in a rural area every effort should be made to share it. All applicants will be encouraged to share and will be obliged to satisfy the Planning Authority that they have made every effort to do so.

Where it is not possible to share a support structure, the developer should share the site or an adjacent site, so as masts and antennae may be clustered.

Proximity to archaeological sites and other monuments should be avoided.

In the vicinity of larger towns, developers should endeavor to locate in industrial estates.

Masts are not generally to be located in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty where they can be clearly visible from vantage points accessible to the general public.

As a means of ensuring compliance within the spirit of the above, the Manager shall furnish a report at the end of each calendar year or other such frequency as may be requested by the elected members, setting out the level of compliance with the above provisions.

#### **2.10.07 Renewable Energy**

The Council supports the National Climate Change Strategy 2000 by facilitating measures to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases over the committed period 2007-2012. The Council supports the implementation of the Government's White Paper Document "Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland, Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020.

The Council will seek to improve the energy efficiency of its existing building stock and to promote energy efficiency and conservation in the design and development of all new buildings in the County and in residential schemes in particular. The Council encourages low energy and passive house design and construction within the County.

The Council will promote and implement the energy conservation and energy certification requirements of the EU Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings (2002/91/EC of 16 December 2002), now transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Energy Performance of Buildings) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No. 666 of 2006).

**Policy 10.07:** It is the policy of the Council to support national policy on reducing carbon emissions and increasing energy generation from renewable sources.

**Objective 10.7** It is an objective of the Council to prepare a Renewable Energy Plan for the County over the lifetime of the County Development Plan and the Council will have regard to such Plan in determining applications for developments relating to renewable energy projects.

#### **2.10.08 Noise**

The Council recognises that noise is becoming a significantly increasing issue in relation to quality of life and future development.

*Refer to Section 3.05.05 Noise for further guidance.*

**Policy 10.08:** It is the policy of this Council to seek to achieve a healthy and comfortable environment that minimises unwanted Noise. To achieve this, the Council will implement the EU Directive on assessment and management of Environmental noise.

## **2.11 The Control of Establishments likely to fall under the Major Accidents Directive**

### **2.11.01 General**

The Council is aware of its responsibilities regarding the Major Accidents Directive (M.A.D.) and will work closely with the Health and Safety Authority in the event of an establishment handling dangerous substances that fall within the meaning of such substances as defined by the EU (Control of Major Accidents Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2006 (S. I. No. 74 of 2006) being established within the county or likely to impact on the county.

The Health and Safety Authority acting as the Central Competent Authority issue technical advice to Planning Authorities in respect to establishments designated as containing hazardous substances. In addition to normal planning requirements the Planning Authority will seek to ensure that development complies with this advice.

The Council is not aware such establishments exist at present and will take a precautionary approach should one be proposed.

The Council reminds potential operators of their obligation to inform the Planning Authority and the Health and Safety Authority if their development is likely to be classified under the M.A.D. and their obligation to obtain planning permission if an existing operation is expanded, changed or intensified in such a way as to be classified under the directive in the future.

If such establishments are located within the County, or bordering the County, planning applications for other developments in the vicinity of the establishment will be referred to the Health and Safety Authority and the Council will generally follow the recommendations of the authority in determining that application.