

Review of the Monaghan County Development Plan (incorporating the Development Plans for the Towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay) 2007-2013



Issues Paper March 2011



Monaghan Town Council

Carrickmacross Town Council

Castleblayney Town Council

Clones Town Council

Ballybay Town Council

All of the planning authorities in County Monaghan are starting the preparation of a new Monaghan County Development Plan. This Plan making process will take two years and will end with the publication of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.



What is the Monaghan County Development Plan?

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013 (incorporating the development plans for the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay) is the main public statement of planning policies for County Monaghan. It sets out the land use, infrastructure, amenity and development objectives and policies of the County's planning authorities for a six year period. The development plan consists of a written statement of policies and objectives, and a series of maps. The Plan underpins the economic and social progress of the County as a whole.

A development plan consists of a set of broad aims, reinforced by various policies and objectives. A policy is what the planning authorities agreed position is on a particular issue for example, to safeguard the protection of the environment, to encourage economic development and the creation of jobs. Objectives are actions or projects which fall under different headings within the development plan that the Council intends to accomplish over the life time of the new Monaghan County Development Plan, for example, to upgrade existing road networks.

How the Plan is prepared?

The Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 places a statutory duty on a planning authority to commence a review of its development plan no later than four years after it was made and to make the new development plan no later than six years after it was made. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013 covers the County including the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay.

The 2000-2010 Planning and Development Acts specify that a development plan must include policies on a number of topics, and must be consistent with Government Guidelines and Regional policies for example the National Spatial Strategy (2002-2022) and the Border Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022).

The Monaghan County Development Plan is made by the elected members of Monaghan Local Authorities in partnership with, and having regard to, the advice of the council executive and taking account of submissions from the public, prescribed bodies (e.g. the National Roads Authority, Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government) and other interested parties.

Strategic Environmental Assessment - What is it?

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a requirement under European Law, transposed into Irish Law, which measures the effects of proposals in the development plan on the environment and, if they are significant, indicates what mitigation measures should be applied to the plan and how environmental issues and challenges can be monitored. An environmental report relating to the SEA will be made publicly available and comments invited on it at the same time as the draft development plan. Accordingly, a Strategic Environmental Issues Paper has been produced in conjunction with this Issues Paper to ascertain views on the key environmental issues affecting the county over the plan period and beyond.



Appropriate Assessment - What is it?

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an assessment based on best scientific knowledge of the potential impacts of the development plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site which are wildlife sites of European importance i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPA's), and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to prevent negative effects on these Natura 2000 sites. Screening exercises during the preparation of the new plan will be carried out to determine the potential for impact upon the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites. AA Screening Reports, and any other subsequent documents relating to the AA will be made publicly available.

Public Consultation

Public displays and wide ranging consultation will take place throughout the two year process and regular updates on what is happening will be available at www.monaghan.ie and on facebook. This Issues Paper is meant to initiate public debate on what broad planning and development matters should be included in the new development plan. The paper sets out what are considered to be the main development issues facing County Monaghan between now and 2019, but the list is not exhaustive.

Discussion on the zoning of particular parcels of land does not form part of the review at this stage.

- **What is your vision for the future of County Monaghan?**
- **What is good about the County and what could be better?**
- **Is the plan framework in the County Development Plan easily understood? How could it be improved?**

- **What are your views on the future development of towns, villages and the countryside?**
- **Where should people live, work, shop?**
- **How can the various housing needs in the county can be accommodated?**

Settlement Strategy

The purpose of a settlement strategy is to guide where new residential development should take place in County Monaghan both in settlements and the open countryside.

The Plan must ensure sufficient provision is made for residential development, and a selection of services and other facilities to support the expanding population of the County. The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is a key informer in shaping settlement policy in the region and the County. The NSS has identified Monaghan Town as a “Hub” town and thus policies in the development plan must reflect its status as the main population centre in the county.

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced the requirement for the production of a Core Strategy to inform projections for the provision of development land for uses such as housing. The Core Strategy must demonstrate that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and the relevant regional planning guidelines in terms of population growth.

A new Housing Strategy for the 2013-2019 period will be prepared in tandem with the review of the Monaghan County Development Plan and integrated into the development plan. The overall aim of the Housing Strategy is to provide for existing and future housing needs of the area covered by the Development Plan and set out how this will be achieved. The Development Plan has a clear role to play in ensuring sufficient land is available to meet the broad spectrum of housing needs of the area covered by the development plan.



- What do you think are the main environmental issues facing County Monaghan?
- How can the value of our natural heritage, built heritage, cultural heritage, and archaeological heritage be best protected and improved?
- How can we facilitate development in the County whilst preserving and protecting our natural heritage?
- What do you consider are the main issues relating to the natural environment?
- How can we help protect the varied range of habitats in the county?
- What do you consider are the main issues relating to the built environment?



Environment and Heritage

The protection of the environment is a key priority at international, national and local level. Addressing the challenges of climate change will require continued policy development at national level and local level.

County Monaghan has a variety of landscapes and habitats all of which contribute to the County's high quality environment. The interaction of human activity with biodiversity through an array of sources such as farming or development of land must be carefully managed. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 must try to strike this balance.

Water is a key component of the natural environment. As well as being an essential resource. Protecting and restoring water quality across the County will be important priorities for the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

County Monaghan hosts a wealth of historical and archaeological remains. As archaeological remains are a finite, non-renewable resource which are vulnerable to partial or total destruction, there is an onus on Monaghan County Council to preserve and protect the archaeological heritage of County Monaghan.

Our built and architectural heritage is an important resource that must be passed on to future generations. Protection will be afforded through the Record of Protected Structures and various Architectural Conservation Areas designated and proposed in towns and villages across the County.

Well designed buildings are those which enhance their setting, be it an urban or rural context, and which continue to be enjoyable and efficient to use through the decades. The 2013-2019 County Development Plan should continue to encourage the provision of appropriate built form both in urban and rural locations.

- What more could be done to promote and sustain industry and enterprise in County Monaghan?
- What key drivers, strengths or competitive advantages can be harnessed to increase employment growth in County Monaghan? How can economic and land use planning facilitate this?
- How should retail development progress in the future? Should indigenous town centre retail activities be protected?
- How can small-scale enterprise, including rural and agriculture based enterprise, be encouraged and supported through land use planning?
- How can County Monaghan further develop its tourism base?



Economic Activity

Monaghan has a particularly entrepreneurial spirit with a sizeable percentage of the population being self employed and having one of the highest rates of new business start ups in Ireland. The quality of the workforce and strategic location makes County Monaghan an ideal location for enterprise development and investment. One of the objectives of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 will be to encourage and sustain a diversity of employment opportunities and identify and promote opportunities for both inward investment and indigenous enterprise in towns and villages throughout the County.

It is also important that sufficient land is reserved for commercial and industrial development. Policies and objectives contained within the County Development Plan should facilitate commercial and industrial development, and enable them to adopt to changing practices.

Retail plays a key role in the economy, and a proper balance in retail provision throughout the County is important to serve inhabitants, visitors and businesses of County Monaghan. Retaining the vitality and viability of town centres is of particularly key importance.

Outside of urban areas, agriculture is the predominant land use in the County and it continues to contribute significantly to the economy of the County.

Tourism is an emerging sector in County Monaghan providing both economic and social advantages to the area. County Monaghan has an abundance of tourist attractions that should be seen as fundamental assets and should be utilised fully in its future development. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 should support tourism and predict the nature of future demands in the County in a sustainable manner.



- **What are the main infrastructural constraints to the development of enterprise and employment in Monaghan. How can the County Development Plan help address these?**
- **Can we make better use of transport infrastructure by ensuring appropriate land uses are located nearby? How can the use of public transport, cycling and walking be encouraged?**
- **How can good quality water be protected and secured whilst ensuring the sustainable development of our County?**
- **How can we ensure that sufficient water and drainage facilities are available to accommodate the growth in housing, industry, employment, etc into 2019? How can flooding be prevented and alleviated or improved?**
- **Are there adequate recycling facilities available to serve County Monaghan? Where should new facilities be located?**
- **What more can be done to encourage renewable energy? Where should it be located?**
- **Where should we facilitate mobile communication structures while ensuring a modern mobile telecommunication network throughout the County?**

Infrastructure and Services

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 will seek to develop, improve, protect, and enhance, the range and accessibility of infrastructural services in a manner that promotes sustainable development in the County.

A multi-modal transport network which serves the entire County plays a crucial role in contributing to Monaghan business and industrial competitiveness, and connectivity to other parts of the country and worldwide.

Future development within the County will be contingent on the provision of adequate water supplies and sewage treatment plants. The quantity and quality of water supply and the capacity of treatment plants cannot be considered in isolation to other issues as they have a major influence on settlement patterns, economic development, and environmental standards. Protecting and restoring water quality across the County will be important priorities for the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

Flood risk is a concern which has gained a high profile in recent years. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 will seek to ensure that new development should not individually or cumulatively give rise to new flood risks.

At present Monaghan Local Authorities operates one main central waste management facility at Scotch Corner, and ancillary recycling facilities in the main towns. The reduction, recycling and appropriate disposal of waste will continue to be encouraged.

The supply of energy throughout the County is an important factor in the provision and location of development. Monaghan Local Authorities continue to work alongside key energy providers in the provision of electricity and gas, where feasible. Provision will be made within the development plan for wind energy and other renewable energy sources.

There are varying levels of broadband services available throughout the County with multiple service providers competing for the larger populated urban areas. It is anticipated that the National Broadband Scheme will bring broadband to all parts of the County during the period of the plan.



- **What community facilities should be provided with new developments at local and neighbourhood level?**
- **Are there any facilities, amenities or type of development that the County is missing and which you believe are important?**
- **Are there enough parks and amenity areas? Where should new ones be located?**
- **How can existing educational, sport and recreational facilities be protected and improved?**
- **What can the new County Development Plan do to promote social inclusion?**

Community Infrastructure

Social, Community and Cultural development plays a vital role in contributing to the quality of life for all. Monaghan Local Authorities aim where possible, to respond to individual communities and their needs. Such facilities include schools, crèches, other child/youth and educational and recreational facilities, local and community services or other facilities. The County Development Plan also plays a key role in ensuring there are positive policies and objectives relating to play, recreation and sport to complement the assistance and funding provided in the development of playgrounds and other facilities.

While Monaghan Local Authorities have no direct role to play in the provision of educational facilities, they work closely with the Department of Education, Monaghan Vocational Education Committee and other educational agencies. The 2013-2019 County Development Plan's main role in relation to education will be to provide the appropriate framework i.e. appropriate policies for Civic/Community/Educational use and zoning sufficient lands for these purposes in the County.

Social exclusion occurs when people are marginalised from society due to issues such as unemployment, poverty and discrimination. Social inclusion therefore consists of seeking a fairer and inclusive society. In terms of planning, this can be achieved through the construction of social and affordable housing, the creation of employment, educational and recreational opportunities, health services as well as public transport facilities. Monaghan Local Authorities aspire to providing social housing that will provide high quality accessibility and independent living standards for occupants, thereby providing for a high quality of life whilst also building social integration for future residents. Monaghan Local Authorities also continue to assist Members of the Traveller Community in terms of integration through the provision of housing and serviced halting sites.

Stages of Development Plan Review

Stage 1 — Publication of Issues Paper (8 weeks consultation period)	Mar-Apr 2011
Stage 2 — Preparation of Manager's Report on Issues Paper Submissions received	May-Jun 2011
Stage 3 — Consideration by Elected Members of Manager's Report and Submissions	Jul-Sep 2011
Stage 4 — Preparation of Draft Plan	Oct 2011- Feb 2012
Stage 5 — Publication of Draft Plan (10 weeks consultation period)	Mar-May 2012
Stage 6 — Preparation of Manager's Report on Submissions received in respect of Draft Plan	May-Jul 2012
Stage 7 — Consideration by Elected Members of Draft Plan, Manager's Report and Submissions	Aug-Sep 2012
Stage 8 — Making of Development Plan by Elected Members (if no Material Alterations made) — Publication of Material Alterations (if made) by Elected Members to Draft Plan (4 weeks consultation period)	Oct-Nov 2012
Stage 9 — Preparation of Manager's Report on Submissions received in respect of Material Alterations	Dec 2012
Stage 10 — Consideration by Elected Members of Manager's Report and Submissions	Jan 2013
Stage 11 — Making of Development Plan by Elected Members with or without Material Alterations	Feb 2013

Public Consultation Meetings

Members of the Planning Section will be available to discuss the matters outlined in this Issues Paper at the following times and places:-

*Monaghan Town — Market House, Market Street
Tuesday 15th March 2011 @ 7.30pm*

*Carrickmacross— Workhouse, Shercock Road
Tuesday 22nd March 2011 @ 7.30pm*

*Castleblayney — Iontas Centre, Connabury
Thursday 24th March 2011 @ 7.30pm*

*Clones — Ulster Canal Stores, Cara Street
Tuesday 29th March 2011 @ 7.30pm*

*Ballybay — Birch Court, Main Street
Thursday 31st March 2011 @ 7.30pm*

How can I make my comments?

By written submission to the relevant council below:

*Monaghan County Council, The Glen, Monaghan
Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, 1 Dublin St, Monaghan
Carrickmacross Town Council, Shercock Rd, Carrickmacross
Castleblayney Town Council, Main St, Castleblayney
Clones Town Council, Pringle Building, Monaghan St, Clones*

By E mail to the relevant council below:

devplan@monaghancoco.ie

clerk@monaghantc.ie

clerk@carrickmacrosstc.ie

clerk@castleblayneytc.ie

clerk@clonestc.ie

The closing date for submissions in respect of this Strategic Environmental Issues Paper is 5pm on Friday 6th May 2011

You can also arrange to discuss any issues by telephone or by appointment by contacting the Planning Section directly on 047 30595 prior to submitting your comments.

NOTES