

2013

Cavan County Council & Cavan Town Council

Planning Department – Forward Planning Section



***[STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE DRAFT CAVAN TOWN & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014 -2020 ] - AUGUST 2013***

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## **1.0. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Strategic Environmental Assessment is a process which was adopted into Irish Law in 2004 and has been undertaken for the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans. This 'assessment' process is a key mechanism in promoting sustainable development; in raising awareness of significant environmental issues in the area and in ensuring that such issues are properly addressed within the capacity of the planning system. It has the potential to bring considerable added value to the implementation of the new Development Plan over the next six years.

The Environmental Report which follows has guided the preparation of objectives, policies and development scenarios for the Cavan Town and Environs area with an ultimate goal of achieving sustainable development that can be absorbed into the landscape without causing adverse harm to the environment.

### **1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment Methodology**

In October 2012, the Review of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans began. Issues Papers were released to aid public consultation. The documents highlighted the main development issues and environmental issues for the Cavan Town and Environs area. Submissions were received from members of the public, organisations and designated environmental authorities (Environmental Protection Agency, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources). These were taken into consideration during the preparation of the Draft Development Plans and Environmental Report. The Planning Authority established a 'multi-disciplinary' team from various sections within the County Council and Town Council in order to create consistent documents and agreements were reached on how to monitor the Development Plan over its lifetime 2009 – 2015

### **Main Objectives for the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans**

Cavan Town is a market town, a commercial centre and the principal administrative centre for County Cavan, which is located 70 miles from Dublin, at the junction of the N3 and N55 National Primary Routes. It is recognised as a gateway to and from Northern Ireland and as a pivotal point on the east-west route between Dundalk and Sligo.

The population in 2006 was 7,883 (CSO, 2006) which indicated a growth of 29.3% since 2002. To achieve the 2020 target population of 16,000 and beyond as set by the Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2020), the planning strategy must be refined so that future development of the town is balanced and sustainable. The Cavan Town and Environs 2020 Integrated Framework Plan (IFP), Transportation Study and Urban Design Framework were prepared in order to feed into the statutory Review of the Development Plans and these strategic documents remain appropriate in terms of the planning principles underlying the new development plan, for the new plan period.

The main aims of the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans are:

1. To facilitate the sustainable economic and social development of the town, through the promotion of a positive climate for development initiative within the plan area.

2. To consider provision of a transportation and land use structure that will provide the orderly planning and development of the town and accommodate sustainable urban growth.
3. To upgrade and expand the towns physical infrastructure to accommodate existing and projected needs.
4. To integrate housing and retail strategies, residential densities and childcare facilities as required under Part V of 2000 Act into the plan as is appropriate.
5. To conserve the natural and built environment of the town where it is recognised as having special value.
6. To strengthen the urban structure in the County through the planned orderly development of the County Town.
7. To accommodate urban fringe development where it is considered appropriate in the context of the planned orderly development of the established built-up urban area and to avoid extensive haphazard uncoordinated urban sprawl prejudicial to the towns economic and social vitality.
8. To have reference to appropriate Departmental Directives in respect of location of retail development and its impact outside of the central area.
10. To be consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Area (2010 – 2020).
11. To incorporate the principles of Cavan Town & Environs 2020 Integrated Framework Plan, Transportation Study and Urban Design Framework.

### **Relationship of the Plan with other Relevant Plans and Programmes**

The Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans and accompanying Environmental Report are considered in a hierarchy of strategic legislation, plans and policy documents and a number of higher-level strategic actions pre-determine the limits of the Development Plan and this includes the Draft County Development Plan.

### **Summary of Baseline Environment/ Existing Environmental Problems**

The Environmental Report contains a range of baseline information on key environmental headings which are Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Population and Human Health, Landscape and Soil, Water, Air and Climate, Material Assets and Cultural Heritage.

#### **1. Biodiversity:**

Biological diversity or Biodiversity is the term given to the variety of life on the Earth. It includes flora and fauna and the habitats or places where they live. The main threats to biodiversity include greenfield developments where habitats are separated from each other or even destroyed; development in floodplains or wetland areas; erosion of soils and pollution; invasive (non-native) plant and animal species that cause major ecological changes and damage to habitats where they become established; hedgerow removal reduced habitat corridors; and Climate Change which will affect various habitats.

#### **2. Population and Human Health:**

This section covers the well-being of the population of the County, the settlement strategy and economic development. The main threats include infrastructure constraints based on population growth, air pollution from vehicles, provision of amenity space, road safety, waste generation and development of greenfield sites.

#### **3. Landscape and Soil:**

The main threats to landscape include the visual impact of development, soil erosion and use of non-renewable natural resources.

#### **4. Water:**

Eutrophication which is the over-enrichment of waters with nutrients is one of the biggest problems facing the surface waters in County Cavan. Run-off from agriculture, domestic wastewater treatment systems, municipal wastewater treatment systems are all sources of pollution. Groundwater contamination poses problems as pollution can permeate into water supplies. Forestry and flooding where developments are located in floodplains are also issues.

#### **5. Air and Climate:**

Emissions from vehicles, extractive industries and intensive industries reduce the quality of air. Poor building design can result in energy losses and greenfield development have an impact on habitats and removal of trees (which store carbon) contributes to poorer air quality.

#### **6. Material Assets:**

Roads and infrastructure impact on the natural landscape and also segregates habitats and causes visual disruption. Greenfield developments and extractive industries draw on non-renewable resources. The growth in population in recent years has placed pressure on existing infrastructure networks.

#### **7. Cultural Heritage:**

This includes the built heritage of the County, in terms of structure – buildings and archaeological monuments. The main threat is damage to the structures or the cultural landscape where they are situated.

#### **Environmental Protection Objectives**

Through examination of key environmental issues for the Cavan Town and Environs area and taking strategic plans and policy documents into consideration, a number of Environmental Objectives were established. Once established they have been applied to the Draft Development Plan Objectives and policies in order to identify areas where objectives and policies conflicted. Once identified, objectives and policies were enhanced or methods to reduce the impact on the environment were proposed (see 'mitigation' below).

#### **Assessment of Alternatives and Selection of Preferred Alternatives**

Future scenarios for County Cavan were considered based on growth in the area. They were developed from the Cavan Town and Environs 2020 Integrated Framework Plan (2020) adopted in July, 2007.

#### **Incorporation of Mitigation Measures and Assessment Results into the Plan**



### **1. Biodiversity:**

The Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan contains objectives for protection of biodiversity around our County including policies on the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (when finalised), Heritage Plan 2006-2011, designated sites, Water Framework Directive and landscape management. There are also development management policies on open spaces and masterplans which must consider biological value.

### **2. Population and Human Health:**

The Draft Development Plan contains objectives and policies encourage employment opportunities in areas around the County in order to reduce the need to travel. Sustainable travel methods are supported and zonings have been examined in order to sustain a growing population and to provide opportunities for employment creation. The 'development management' section contains strong public and private open space requirements. The North East Region Waste Management Plan, Waste Water Treatment Bye-laws and the Ground Water Protection Scheme are supported. The Draft Plan contains objectives on the redevelopment of brownfield sites and an adequate roads infrastructure. The Draft Plan contains a Social Strategy and Housing Strategy.

### **3. Landscape and Soil:**

The Draft Plan supports the development of a Landscape Management Plan during its lifetime and special landscape policy areas have been identified for protection in the Plan. The Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan contains an Urban Design Framework which should be considered in relation to the townscape. The Local Biodiversity Action Plan will be taken into consideration when finalised. The sustainable development of the town will take some of the pressure off the need for rural developments.

### **4. Water:**

The Draft Plan contains objectives relating to the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plans. The Planning Authority will co-ordinate its approach to water management with other Councils and agencies as required by the E.U. The capacity of municipal sewage treatment plants will be considered in light of planning applications. The Draft Plan will have regard to the Groundwater Protection Scheme when finalised. 'Amenity' buffer zones are located along the rivers where possible to protect the water resource.

### **5. Air and Climate:**

Sustainable travel methods are promoted in the Draft Plan, and zoning of land takes account of the need to reduce trip generation. The Transport Study for Cavan Town and Environs will be implemented to reduce congestion in the town and development along National Roads will be carefully considered. Renewable energy sources and sustainable building designs are promoted in the Draft Plan. Waste is considered in the context of the North East Region Waste Management Plan will emphasis on reduction of waste, recycling and reusing.

**6. Material Assets:**

The Draft Plan contains objectives and policies on the Water Services Investment Programme 2009-2015, public transport and telecommunications infrastructure.

**7. Cultural Heritage:**

The Draft Plan contains detailed information on the protection of structure and legal requirements. One Architectural Conservation Areas has been proposed as part of the Draft Development Plans to protect the townscape. Buffer zones for archaeological monuments are indicated on maps and Protected Structures are listed.

**Monitoring Proposals**

This contains the expected proposals for monitoring the significant effects of the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan on the environment. A number of indicators of change and targets are identified and existing monitoring arrangements are utilised.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Aim & Purpose of the Environmental Report and Legislative Context

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2004, two sets of regulations transposed the SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC on Assessment of the Effects of certain Plans/Programmes on the Environment) into Irish Law. The SEA Directive applies to the preparation or review of plans and programmes, the first formal preparatory act of which took place on or after 21 July 2004. Article 1 states: 'The objective of this directive is to provide for a high level of protection to the environment and to continue to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development....'

SEA is also necessary where plans/programmes are likely to have a significant effect on a site governed by the Habitat's Directive.

The two sets of Regulations are:

- (i) The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 S.I. No. 435 of 2004;
- (ii) Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, S.I. No. 436 of 2004.

Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities and any development agency responsible for preparing plans/programmes in implementing the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment.

SEA is mandatory in the case of the preparation or review of the following land use plans:

- Regional Planning Guidelines
- City & County Development Plans
- Town Council Development Plans where the population is 10,000 or more
- Local Area Plans for areas with a population of 10,000 or more
- Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) Planning Schemes

Discretionary screening for SEA is required for plans below these thresholds and variations for Development Plans.

### 2.2. Layout of the Environmental Report

The layout of the Report is consistent with Schedule 2B of the SEA Directive and is as follows:

#### ▪ **Non-Technical Summary**

This is a brief summary of the Environmental Report, it's main points and conclusions.

#### ▪ **Introduction**

This is a brief description of the type of plan involved and purpose of the report, SEA requirements, its benefits and how the Draft Development Plan and Environmental Reports have progressed.

#### ▪ **SEA Methodology**

This includes the steps taken in the SEA process, authors, methods used, technical difficulties encountered and a list of environmental authorities consulted, etc.)

- **Summary of Key Objectives Of The Plan**

The key objectives of the new Draft Plan are included in this section. There is also a brief description of Cavan Town and Environs area.

- **Relationship Of The Plan With Other Relevant Plans And Programmes**

Relevant plans and programmes are described in this section. These documents must be considered in the preparation of the new Draft Development Plans

- **Summary Of Baseline Environment/ Existing Environmental Problems**

This is a summary of the baseline information gathered together at the Scoping Stage. The main environmental problems are outlined here.

- **Environmental Protection Objectives**

Environmental Objectives are gathered together from international and national level and are applied to Development Objectives and polices of the new Draft Development Plans.

- **Assessment Of Alternatives And Selection Of Preferred Alternatives**

An assessment of proposed development scenario for the Cavan Town and Environs area are considered at this stage. Scenarios are tested and the most appropriate one is chosen.

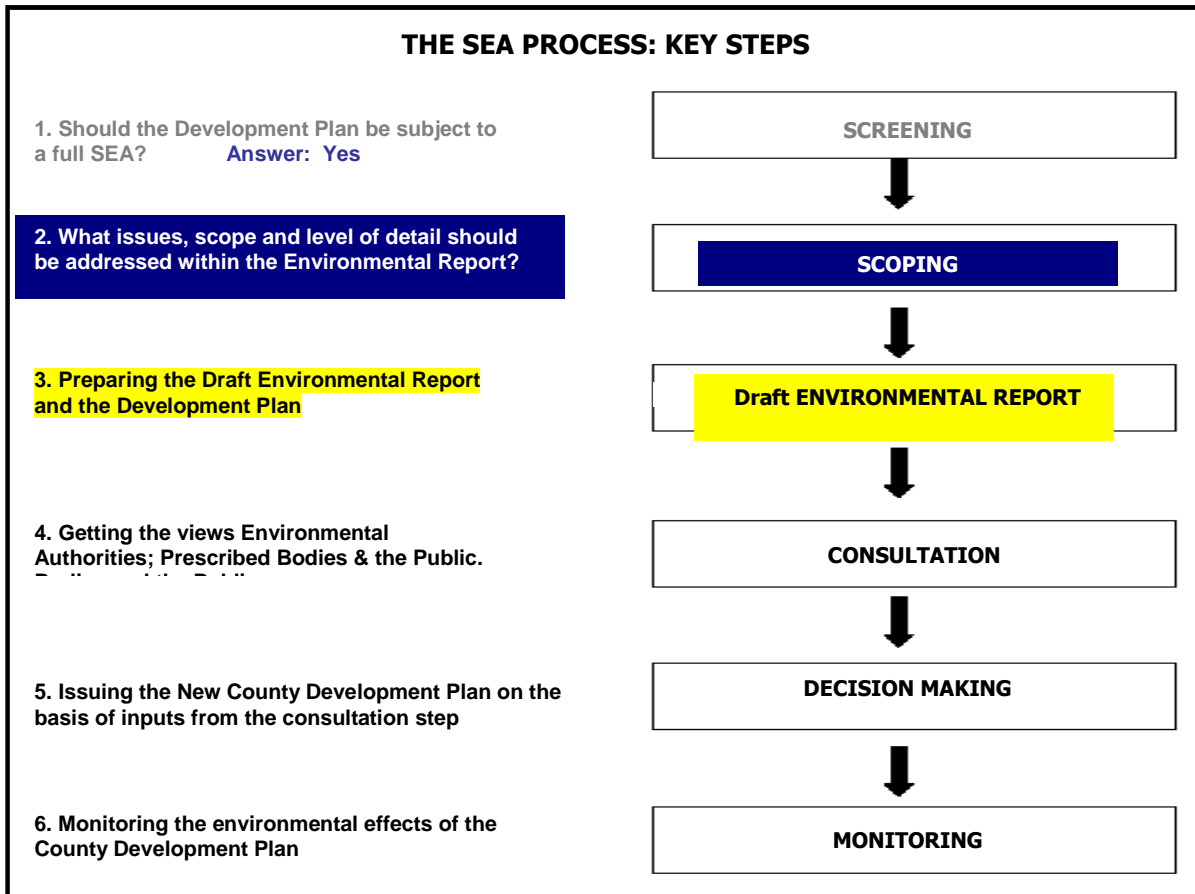
- **Incorporation Of Mitigation Measures And Assessment Results Into The Plan**

Objectives and policies which are chosen are examined in terms of their effects on the environment, should these be significant, measures to prevent, reduce or offset these effects are proposed and integrated into the Draft Development Plans.

### 2.3. Consultation for the Review of the Development Plan, the SEA & the Appropriate Assessment Processes:

The following diagram gives an indication of the key steps in the SEA process – we are at **step 3** in the process: Figure 1 Flow-chart of the SEA process:

**Figure 1: SEA Process**



The Planning Authority, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2012, gave notice in terms of Sections 9 10 & 11 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), of the commencement of the review of the current Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan (2008-2014) and the Cavan County Development Plan (2008-2014) and the preparation of new plans for the period (2014 -2020).

The first phase of the public consultation took place from Wednesday, the 10<sup>th</sup> October to the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2012; (8 weeks). In accordance with the provisions of Section 11 of the Planning and Development Act (2000) as amended, and the SEA Directive, a copy of the SEA Scoping Issues Paper and Strategic Issues Papers (attached as Appendix 1), were circulated to the Cavan County and Town Councillors, the Environmental Authorities, Prescribed Bodies. The SEA Scoping Issues Paper and Strategic Issues Papers were also made available on the County and Town websites and all public libraries and Area offices throughout the County. The Paper invited comments from the public on issues relating to the plans and the Environmental Report. A number of public consultation workshops were also held at Cavan Town; Ballyconnell, Bailieborough and Ballyjamesduff, the content of the Scoping Issues Papers were presented and comments were invited from all participants and

The **Environmental Authorities** have been designated (in terms of Section....of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) for consultation in SEA process are:

- ✚ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- ✚ The Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government
- ✚ Minister for Agriculture, Marine and Food, and the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, where it appears to the planning Authority that the plan or programme, or modification of the plan or programme, might have significant effects on fisheries or the marine environment.
- ✚ Where it appears to the competent authority that the plan or programme, or amendment to a plan or programme, might have significant effects in relation to the architectural heritage or to nature conservation, the Minister for Arts, Heritage and *Gaeltacht* Affairs, and
- ✚ Any adjoining planning authority whose area is continuous to the area of a planning authority which prepared a draft plan, proposed variation or a local area plan.

#### 2.4 Response from the Environment Authorities:

- (i) **EPA:** The EPA's initial submission to assist the planning authority in undertaking an environmental assessment as per the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004). This submission consists of an SEA Pack, SEA Scoping Guidance and a checklist to allow you to ensure integration of environmental considerations into the Plans is carried out taking account the Agency's submission.

#### Specific Comments to be considered in the Plans

The following in particular, should be reflected in the Draft Plan(s) and associated SEA's, as relevant and appropriate to the individual plans:

- including a clear commitment for the improvement of water quality (rivers and lakes in particular ranges between 'Moderate' to 'Bad' status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) classification.
- Protection of areas listed on the WFD Register of Protected Areas (including River Cavan (Nutrient Sensitive River) Lough Oughter (Nutrient Sensitive Lake).
- *Protection of designated (National and EU) and undesignated areas of conservation (Natura 2000 and NHA's and areas of local undesignated importance), including the Lough Oughter & Associated loughs including the Lough Oughter & associated loughs (SAC/NHA), Lough Sheelin (SPA/NHA) and Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands (NHA/SCA).*
- *The provision of adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure (drinking water and wastewater) and inclusion of commitments to remediate and prioritise the addressing of particular issues for particular service infrastructure deficiencies. In 2010, your attention is brought to the fact that a number of wastewater treatment plants, including Cavan, Ballyconnell and Kingscourt, failed to meet the overall requirements of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations (2001), and a number of drinking water supplies. (Ballyconnell, Belturbet & Kingscourt) are listed on the Agency's remedial action list due to the supplies being 'identified by the HSE where further investigation/improvement may be required'.*



- Areas at risk of flooding, where proposed for development/zoning in the new plans should be appropriate to the risk of flooding identified and avoid vulnerable land uses in areas at significant risk of flooding. A clear commitment to fully integrate, as relevant the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DECLG/OPW, 2009).

Further comment will be provided by the agency upon receipt of the Draft Environmental Reports and Plans and associated documents during the next statutory phase of the SEA process.

**(ii) Border Regional Authority:**

**Key Points**

Key issues to note with regard to the development of the new draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan include:

- Settlement Strategy should provide a sustainable planning framework for Cavan Town and Environs over the new plan period and beyond. The draft plan should be consistent with all aspects of the County Settlement Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region – all population targets, housing and housing land requirements of the RPGs should be incorporated into the new draft plan.
- A full review of the development plan does require an entire review of the plan and this includes a review of all zoning objectives, urban areas and rural settlement types.
- Any land placed in Strategic Residential Reserve in the new plan should be currently serviced or likely to be serviced in the next plan period and have an identified need or else should be considered for alternative objective(new zoning objective) or discontinuing the objective (deletion of zoning objective).
- Excess of land should utilise all options of phasing, alternative objectives and discontinuing of objectives.
- Cavan Town needs to consider consolidation and application of the sequential approach to land use zoning and encouraging the development of the town centre outwards
- Projected growth of Cavan Town needs to be guided by infrastructure capacity of the town in terms of water services.
- All zoning objectives need to be reviewed to ensure there is appropriate amount of land zoned and serviced available to accommodate the sustainable and organic growth of the town in line with the population target.
- Need to have regard to all Section 28 Guidance and Census 2011
- The fall in population in the urban area needs to be addressed by development of pockets of available lands close to town centre.
- All necessary infrastructure including water services, such as water supply and waste water treatment capacity should be put in place in Cavan Town to accommodate the sustainable and organic growth of the town.
- Environment issues emerging through the Environmental Report and Habitats Assessment Report should be incorporated into the new draft plan.
- The issues which rise in relation to land use and transportation need to be addressed at a County and Town and Environs level.

- (iii) Leitrim County Council:** This Authority welcome the opportunity to make a submission and look forward to continued co-operation with and between both Authorities in the development of the Region; with particular reference to social, cultural and economic development and the protection of the environment. It is considered important that there should be a good level of consistence between County Plans in adjoining counties. In this regard it is considered important that cognisance should be taken of the policies and objective of the Leitrim CDP2009-2015 as amended, (including Variation no. 1 – Core Strategy) with

particular reference to: Housing Policy Tourism, Retailing, Economic Development, Pollution Control, Protection of Visually Sensitive Areas, Development of Renewable Energy, Provision of Infrastructure and Development Control Standards.

Considering the level of vacant, under-construction and unfinished housing developments in both counties, and in the interests of developing a common approach to resolving the issues arising, this Local Authority consider that a similar approach to that taken in the recently adopted Variation No. 1 to the Leitrim County Development Plan, should be adopted. In this regard reference should be made to the 'Justification Test' and 'Sequential Test' in relation to proposals for new housing developments in both counties, and in the interest of developing a common approach to resolving the issues arising, this Local Authority consider that a similar approach to that taken in the recently adopted Leitrim County Development Plan, should be adopted. In this regard, reference should be made to the 'Justification Test and Sequential Test in relation to proposals for new housing developments in urban areas where there is a surplus of housing. Likewise, consideration should be given to the inclusion of a specific policy statement in relation to 'Unfinished Estates'.

In general terms, the following are considered to be amongst the issues of particular importance in the preparation of the plans, (the list is not exhaustive):

- Placing people in particular communities at the centre of Plans;
- Supporting the development of the Border Region with particular regard to securing consistence with the Plans of adjoining counties, RPG's and National Plans and Policies
- Securing Key Infrastructure
- Promoting and facilitating economic development with particular emphasis on the development of Tourism and indigenous industry
- Ensuring the efficient and effective use of Resources
- Facilitating Renewable Energies
- Protection of the Environment with particular emphasis on securing the aims and objectives of the River Basin Management Plans.
- Ensuring that planning decisions and actions are evidence based
- Ensuring that the Plans are concise, precise and relevant and in general terms more readily accessible.
- Ensuring that the Plans deal appropriately

## **2.5 Response from the Prescribed Bodies(as designated in Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended)**

The following prescribed bodies responded to the notification, by acknowledging receipt of the letter of notification:

- (1.) Inland Fisheries Ireland :** The Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) is a Statutory Body established on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2010. Under Section 7(1) of the Inland Fisheries Act 2010 (No. 10 of 2010), the principal function of IFI is the protection, management and conservation of the inland fisheries resource. Under section 7(3) of the IFI Act, it is stated that without prejudice to subsection (1) the IFI shall in the performance of its functions have regard to:
- (g) the requirements of the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (S.I.No. 94 of 1997) and the need for the sustainable development of the inland fisheries resource (including the conservation of fish and other species of fauna and flora habitats and the biodiversity of inland water ecosystems),
  - (h) as far as possible, ensure that its activities are carried out so as to protect the national heritage (within the meaning of the Heritage Act 1995).

Having examined the Strategic Issues Paper and the SEA Strategic Issues Paper, we have the following observations to make regarding issues that we believe the Development Plan should address.

County Cavan contains a wide range of fishery habitats with four main river catchments located in the county, namely, Erne, Shannon, Inny, Boyne, Dee and Glyde. These catchments contain a wide variety of fish from Salmonids (Salmon and Brown Trout) to Coarse fish and Pike. Many main river channels and their tributaries are exceptional in the area in supporting Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*, listed under Annex II and V of the EU Habitats Directive) and Sea trout (*Salmo trutta*) populations. Recent data also indicates the presence of spawning populations of Sea, River and Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra* species – Annex II of the EU's Habitats Directive) in the County. This Highlights the sensitivity of watercourses in the County. Only, clean, uncontaminated surface waters should drain to the river network at all times.

**Population, Settlement Strategy and Housing:** Development should only take place where the necessary infrastructure is in place to accommodate that development, thus comply with the Water Framework Directive and other legislation to the protection of the aquatic environment.

**Community, Recreational and Public Open Spaces:** Angling is a popular recreational pastime in the county. With the vast amount of angling waters available we believe the plan should indicate the importance of the development facilities to encourage anglers of all abilities to access this valuable natural resource.

**Economic Development and Employment:** The Plan should acknowledge the major contribution which angling generally makes to tourism in the county and should provide for close co-operation with IFI in relation to development, promotion and marketing of the angling product in the county.

**Physical Infrastructure:** The potential impact of roads and watercourse crossings on fish and fish habitats include barriers to fish passage, water pollution, removal of bed material and disturbance of riparian vegetation. The impacts of poorly designed river/stream crossing structures can be serious in terms of habitats loss. Prevention of the free upstream migration of fish species concerned and contravenes the legal obligation under the WFD to protect the ecological status of river catchments and channels. Indeed, it is an offence under the Fisheries Acts to prevent the free passage of fish. IFI recommends that the new Plan should include a clear policy on the use of clear span structures, where possible, on fisheries waters and that IFI should be consulted on any such proposed developments. Consultation with fisheries bodies should commence early in the planning project and the guidelines "Requirements for the protection of fishery habitat during the construction and development works at river sites" should be referred to in addition to the NRA guidelines.

**Water and Wastewater:** The Development Plan is an opportunity to promote policies and awareness of water conservation which may ultimately result in a reduction in water use. Water conservation and water use efficiency are central elements of any strategy to enhance water supply reliability, restore ecosystems, and respond to climate change and changing demographics. Significant increases in water conservation and water use efficiency will be required to ensure reliable water supplies in the future. Best practice should be promoted in respect of water conservation in all developments through such methods as rain water harvesting.

Another problem which is particular to summer months (when river/stream flows are often low) is wide scale unregulated water abstraction for crop irrigation. This practice may have significant ecological implications/impacts if large volumes of water are abstracted over a short period of time from nursery or spawning

streams, such as abstractions during dry weather or drought periods could have severe repercussions for aquatic habitats, fish stocks and accordingly the ecological status of watercourses in terms of the WFD.

**Wastewater:** Sufficient treatment capacity must be available both within the receiving sewerage systems locally and downstream of waste water treatment plants over the full duration of the plan in order that the ecological integrity of the ultimate receiving waters are protected. IFI would highlight the importance of compiling a comprehensive and robust assessment of both local infrastructural needs and Local Authority capacity to meet those needs into the plan. Should particular WWTP's fail to provide expected capacities during the life of the plan, IFI would highlight the risk of associated significant environmental impacts which may result from local development.

There are a number of plants in the county, which are at or nearing capacity. Upgrading these plants which discharge into fishery waters should be prioritised. The plants, which are aware of require upgrading include: Kingscourt, Virginia and Bailieborough. The treatment plant at Ballyjamesduff is also approaching capacity.

**Renewable Energy:** Windfarms: The potential impacts of the proposed development on fisheries relate largely to the construction of the turbines and access roads and the laying of cables, etc. When this work is carried out, in close proximity to a watercourse there is a potential for negative impacts on the aquatic habitat, e.g. water pollution, interference/disturbance with the instream and riparian habitat. Renewable energy projects such as windfarms should be carried out in accordance with any fisheries guidelines issued. Consultation with fisheries bodies should commence early in the planning project.

**Rural Areas:** Development should comply with the WFD and other legislation to the protection of the aquatic environment. In relation to agriculture, we would urge the inclusion of a policy to ensure stringent implementation of the Nitrates Regulations/cross-compliance.

**Urban Areas:** Watercourses are natural corridors for fish and wildlife movement. They may be of significant amenity value or have such potential. They may also be of significance in terms of a towns' traditional and social history. It is essential that watercourses be maintained in an environmentally and aesthetically sensitive manner for future generations to cherish and protect. IFI requests that the Development Plan provide for the maintenance and preservation of all watercourses and associated riparian habitats.

**Natural Heritage:** Environment:- The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) entered into force in December 2000 requires the protection of the ecological status of river catchments – this encompasses water quality and requires the conservation of habitats for ecological communities. One of the primary objectives of the Directive is to establish a framework which prevents further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems. Protection of aquatic ecosystems requires that river systems be protected on a catchment basis.

The Development Plan should include policies to ensure that developments do not lead to the spread of invasive species. Invasive species may drive local native species to extinction via competitive exclusion, niche displacement or hybridisation with related native species.

## **(2.) Geological Survey Ireland:**

### **Compilation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Development Plan, “Soils and Water” chapter:**

The “Soils and Water” chapter of the SEA should contain information on soils, geology, geological heritage, surface water and groundwater.

Relevant data are available on GSI website at [www.gsi.ie/mapping](http://www.gsi.ie/mapping) (either in the form of mapviewers or datasets to download for soils, bedrock, karst, groundwater vulnerability, landslides...)

Geological heritage data are not available as the audit of County Geological Sites has yet to be carried out for Co. Cavan. Please find attached provisional inventory of 20 sites or so for Co. Cavan, which will be confirmed during the audit. Should you have any query in relation to the geological heritage of the County, please contact Sarah Gatley at [sarah.gatley@gsi.ie](mailto:sarah.gatley@gsi.ie), 01-678 2837.

### **What key issues will be addressed in the new development plan?**

#### ***“Protection of our environment and our natural heritage”***

The Heritage Act (1995) defines natural heritage as including flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks.

Geological heritage is part of Cavan’s natural heritage and should feature in the “Soils and Geology” chapter of the SEA.

Rigorous evaluation of the County’s geological heritage through an audit of County Geological Sites (CGS) will ensure adequate protection against inappropriate development as per objective of the current County Development Plan (CDP), as described in item 1 of this letter regarding the review of Cavan CDP.

Once documented, the sites should be integrated in the Local Authority’s planning system (in the CDP and in the planning department Geographical Information System). Where applications for development appear to possibly impact on CGS, consultation with GSI should take place to inform on possible mitigation measures, if applicable.

Should you have any query on geological heritage or the above mentioned, please contact Sarah Gatley, Head of the Irish Geological Heritage and Planning Programme at [sarah.gatley@gsi.ie](mailto:sarah.gatley@gsi.ie), 01-678 2837.

GSI also produced guidelines with the Irish Concrete Federation on how to address geological heritage features when identified in pits and quarries. I’ve enclosed a copy for you information. The guidelines can also be downloaded from GSI website

at:<http://www.gsi.ie/Programmes/Heritage+and+Planning/Planning/Quarrying+Guidelines.htm>

### **What are the main environmental issues facing Cavan between now and 2020?**

#### ***- Soils and Water: impact on landscape, geology, soils and water;***

Consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland should take place in relation to planning applications for quarries (either for new applications or applications for retention).

#### ***- Air/Noise/Climate: renewable energy;***

Consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland should take place in relation to wind farms applications as per DoEHLG Wind Energy Development Guidelines (chapter 5.3.)

**- Material Assets:** In order to document the material assets of the county, please note that GSI Minerals Programme has been compiling an “Aggregate Potential Mapping” (APM) project (for crushed rocks and sand and gravel pits) with an online viewer recently launched and accessible either from GSI website:

[www.gsi.ie/mapping](http://www.gsi.ie/mapping) or direct link: <http://spatial.dcenr.gov.ie/APM/index.html>

Cavan data are not uploaded yet on the viewer but have been compiled. Should you require the dataset, please contact Gerry Stanley, Head of the Minerals Programme at [gerry.stanley@gsi.ie](mailto:gerry.stanley@gsi.ie), 01-678 2863.

Reference to the GSI/ICF guidelines mentioned above “Geological heritage and the extractive industry” should also be referred to.

I hope that these comments are of assistance for the preparation of Cavan new CDP and SEA, and if the GSI can be of any further help, please contact me.

(A hard copy of this correspondence along with a copy of the GSI/ICF guidelines have also been posted to you).

### **(3) Health and Safety Authority**

In their document ‘Policy and Approach of the Health and Safety Authority to COMAH Risk-based Land-Use Planning’ should be consulted for the preparation of the plan and the plan should include planning policy in relation to major accident hazard sites notified under the regulations.

### **(4) NRA**

- This submission acknowledges the requirement for growth in Cavan and identification of Cavan Town as a Hub Town in the National Spatial Strategy. The M/N3 has been identified as a strategic radial corridor in the National Spatial Strategy and in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2010-2022 as well as the N54 and N55 as strategic links.
- The NRA recommends that the provisions of ‘Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ are included in new policies. The Councils are requested to prepare the draft plan, particularly proposed zoning and development objectives with implications for safe and efficient operation of national roads in the area, to ensure compliance with these Guidelines.
- The NRA supports the concentration of development in established urban centres framed within a coherent integrated land use and transportation strategy.
- The NRA seeks to ensure that the carrying capacity, operational efficiency, safety and significant national investment made in national roads in Cavan are protected.
- The revised Core Strategy should not only consider the extent and location of residential lands but also the extent and location of industrial, employment and other commercial type land uses to prepare a co-ordinated and integrated land use pattern.
- Development plan should contain policy to avoid the creation of additional access points from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 50kph apply and to avoid the proliferation of accesses to national roads subject to 60kph speed limit. There is a requirement to co-ordinate zoning designations and/or access strategies with speed limits on national routes.
- The sustainable integration of land use and transportation needs to be a strategic principle in the draft development plan not only in the transportation section but also as a principle that feeds through social, economic and especially more local area policies and objectives.
- Development objectives should guide developers to design for sustainable transport requirements at the earliest stages of development design.
- Traffic and Transport Assessments are not a substitute for an overall transport assessment of the area prior to preparation of the draft plan. Therefore a Strategic Transport Assessment should be undertaken in the preparation of the Cavan Town and Environs Plan.
- Traffic and Transport Assessments and Road Safety Audits should be carried out on new developments where appropriate.
- The draft plan should contain policy on the control of non road traffic signage on or adjacent to national roads.
- New developments should submit proposals for identification and mitigation of noise.

### **(5) Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht - Nature Conservation**

The new plan should contain a natural heritage section and the sites, habitats and species listed should be taken into account in the preparation of the new draft plan. Objectives to protect, conserve and protect these sites, habitats and species should be included in the draft plan. The draft plan should ensure nature conservation



designation sites are protected through policies and objectives and that the plan takes cognise of relevant circular letters. This submission makes the following recommendations:

- That new plan fully adheres to Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines
- Any development arising from the plan complies with proper planning and sustainable development
- Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht is fully consulted regarding assessments to address possible environmental impacts especially impacts in relation to designated sites e.g. walking trails
- Maps and site synopses of designated and proposed sites are contained in Appendices of the plan
- The plan needs to recognise that protected species can occur outside designated sites and take note of
  - a. 2020 Biodiversity target agreed at Nagoya Convention on Biological Diversity Intergovernmental Conference in 2010
  - b. National Biodiversity Plan
  - c. Need to protect Biodiversity
- Article 10 of Habitats Directive outlines the need to include linear features and stepping stones for Biodiversity in land use plans e.g. hedges, rivers canals and roadside verges, marshes, woodlands
- Proposed plan should emphasise the importance of hedgerows and where require removal should not be done during nesting season and should be replaced.
- Any walkways along rivers or lakes should ensure they are a suitable distance from the water's edge so as not to interfere with habitats and species.
- A policy needs to be put in place to deal with and protect against the accidental introduction of invasive species. Invasive species needs a policy and plan of action in the new draft plan.
- SEA and Screening for AA or full AA will be required during the process of draft plan preparation. This submission has outlined guidance in relation to baseline information for the Environmental Report, the SEA process and the AA process.

### **National Monuments Section**

The Planning and Development Acts, Local Government Act 2001 and European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valetta, 1992) all require that the protection of archaeological heritage is taken into account in the development plan making process. The Department request that the plan includes a standard objective for the protection of archaeological heritage. The Department also recommends the inclusion of a section/chapter in the draft plan regarding 'Archaeological Heritage' which would clearly outline the main planning objectives regarding the archaeological heritage of the Development plan. This submission has included recommended wording of this section of the development plan. The Department has recommended that the development plan includes a record of all areas of importance for the archaeological heritage and all Recorded Monuments should be included on maps.

## **2.6 Response from the public**

The following comments from the public were made in response to the Strategic Issues papers and the public consultation:

### **(1.) GVA Planning:**

#### **Key Points**

Recent analysis of retail environment in Cavan Town indicates that there are structural problems facing the retail environment of the town. The Retail Excellence Ireland – Town and City Review 2012 indicates that less than 65% of those surveyed use the town as their first choice. A Millward Brown Landsdowne Study confirms that the town is presently

lacking a competitive retail offer and requires additional retail representation in both convenience and comparison. Residents are continuing to shop in centres like Enniskillen, Dublin, Navan and Blanchardstown. Shopping expenditure must be retained in the town centre and this can only be achieved by encouraging further retailers to locate within the town centre. It is within the remit of the Planning Authority to integrate economic and spatial planning and to provide for financial incentives for new retailers to invest within the town centre.

Cavan Town and Environs has seen significant population increases over since 2006, however the town has failed to attract significant investment in the retail sector, thereby resulting in very high levels of trade leakage to Northern Ireland and Dublin.

In order for the town to develop, it needs to have an adequate supply of residential zoned land, prioritise a set of economic and spatial development actions that will promote employment creation, develop the attractiveness of the public realm and retain expenditure within the county.

The Planning Authority should take a lead role in the implementation of 'Putting People First, Action Programme for Effective Local Government' which seeks to integrate economic and spatial planning. Suggest 3 economic development policies

1. Prepare economic strategy in consultation with private sector investors including retailers – this needs to identify the economic challenges facing the retail sector and implement the economic development actions and physical interventions including improved connectivity.
2. Re-evaluation of commercial rates and ring fencing a % of commercial rates for improvements to the public realm of the town to improve the quality of shopping experience
3. Reduction in development contributions

Cavan Urban Design Framework 2007 will require significant revision to ensure it is reflective of the needs of retail end users.

GVA support the Eastern Access Route and consider that it is important to develop further connections between the town centre, adjacent lands and backland sites.

**(2.) Energy Descent Action Group**

**Key Points**

This group has created an Energy Descent Action Plan which is a guide to reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and reducing our carbon footprint over the next 20 years. This is written for the people of Co. Cavan and community of Cavan Town. Issues include:

- The beginning of the end of cheap oil
- The Earth's climate is warming
- Our food and water supplies are vulnerable
- World population is booming
- The world economy and financial system is shaking.

The document has provided suggestions in the County for the following topics

- Food
- Health
- Housing
- Community
- Skills/Education/Enterprise/Economics
- Transport

- Energy
- Waste

### **(3.) Bernard Allan**

#### **Key Points**

- A town bus network should be considered for Cavan Town linking the town centre, bus station, hospital, retail parks, residential areas and recreational areas. These bus networks are considered viable with populations in excess of 10,000 persons and so, such a service should be viable in Cavan Town.
- The dismantled Cavan-Monaghan- Northern Ireland railway alignment through the urban area of Swellan and Loreto should be protected from development and not used for any purpose that would be incompatible with the potential restoration of the rail service in future decades e.g. a road would be incompatible but a walkway/cycleway would be compatible. The protection of the alignment should be formalised in the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.

### **(4.) Carrickane Residents Association**

#### **Key Points**

- Request completion of Loreto Road Circuit footpath to create a safe walking circuit and facilitates hospital, school and town traffic.
- They request access to town sewerage system in order to prevent potential pollution of rivers and lakes
- Anxious to see lands at Lisdarn dezoned.
- They regularly clean up rubbish from Loreto Woods and so request more free days for collection of electrical goods and these could be arranged perhaps in Cavan Mart.

## **2.7 Next Steps in the process**

The comments from the Environmental Authorities and Statutory consultees, in response to the SEA Scoping Issues Paper, will be noted in the finalisation of the Scoping Report. This draft Environmental report will incorporate comments which propose the nature and extent of environmental issues for Cavan Town & Environs, which in turn will influence the drafting of the new Development Plan. This will ensure that all environmental considerations are taken into account when formulating policies for the plan.

This *draft* Environmental report establishes the environmental baseline data which has been collected and will contribute to the identification of sensitive environmental issues and informs the making of the development plan. Alternative development scenarios have been developed to ensure that the Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan includes objectives and policies which minimise the potential for significant environmental effects from the implementation of the plan.

As a starting point to the SEA process, the Baseline Environmental data is taken from the existing Environmental Report which was prepared for the Cavan County Development Plan (2008 – 2014). Environmental data has also be sourced and updated, as well as additional information on current issues included.

The Elected Representatives from both Cavan Town Council and Cavan County Council (representatives from the constituencies which are included in the ‘Environs’ area of the plan) will be presented with the opportunity to make comments on the *draft Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan (2014-2020)* and the *draft*

Environmental Report, from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2013 (for a period no less than 8 weeks), prior to these reports being made available to the Environmental Authorities; Prescribed Bodies and the Public during the second statutory phase of public consultation.

### 3. KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW *DRAFT CAVAN TOWN & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2014-2020)*

#### 3.1 The new Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan

The new County Town & Environs Development Plan (which should be read in conjunction with the new Cavan County Development Plan) will, if adopted, span a further 6 year period from 2014 to 2020.

**3.2. Cavan County – the context:** Cavan Town is a market town, a commercial centre and the principal administrative centre for County Cavan, which is located 70 miles from Dublin, at the junction of the N3 and N55 National Primary Routes. It is recognised as a gateway to and from Northern Ireland and as a pivotal point on the east-west route between Dundalk and Sligo

Once the seat of the O'Reilly's of East Breffni, Cavan Town has a character defined by its lakes, its skyline of spires and its hills and trees. It has a wealth of historical architectural features mainly attributed to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. These include the Roman Catholic Cathedral (1942), the Church of Ireland church (1810) and the Court House constructed (1825)<sup>1</sup>. The Abbey is a fine example of a building constructed in the 1300s<sup>2</sup>. Cavan Town lies in close proximity to Killykeen Forest Park and Lough Oughter which is recognised as one of the finest coarse fishing lakes in Ireland.

The development of Cavan Town & Environs, over recent decades has been primarily concentrated to the east of the town, which has been partly influenced by the natural drumlin topography and the proximity to the Major National Route (N3).

The hinterland of Cavan Town is predominantly rural based. Having its own Town Council, it functions as the dominant services and enterprise centre for the county. Cavan Town is the only centre identified as aligned with its Hub town status (NSS) as performing an important 'regional retailing function, within the county<sup>3</sup>. It has a large sphere of influence over an extensive predominantly rural hinterland. The IDA has estimated that some 175,000 people live within a radius of 25 miles of the town. Major infrastructural improvements are evident such as the construction of N3/N55 link (which means that most traffic is locally generated or arises from activities in the town), pedestrian footpaths improvements, provision of Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) broadband and facilitation of a significant amount of environmental enhancements.

There are two national transport corridors passing through Cavan Town and Environs which are the main Dublin-Enniskillen-Sligo route and the East-West link from Drogheda-Dundalk-Carrickmacross-Cavan-Enniskillen-Sligo.

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<sup>1</sup> This is attributed to William Farrell and John Bowden [Ireland.ie 03/01/2006 'Cavan Town']

<http://www.ireland.ie>

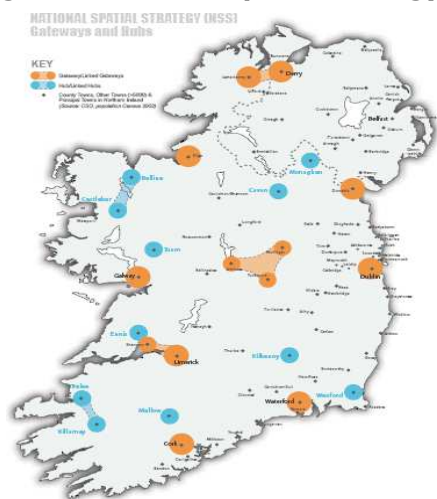
<sup>2</sup> Ireland.ie <http://www.irelandnorthwest.ie>

<sup>3</sup> DoEHLG (2012) *Guidelines for Planning Authorities - Retail Planning*

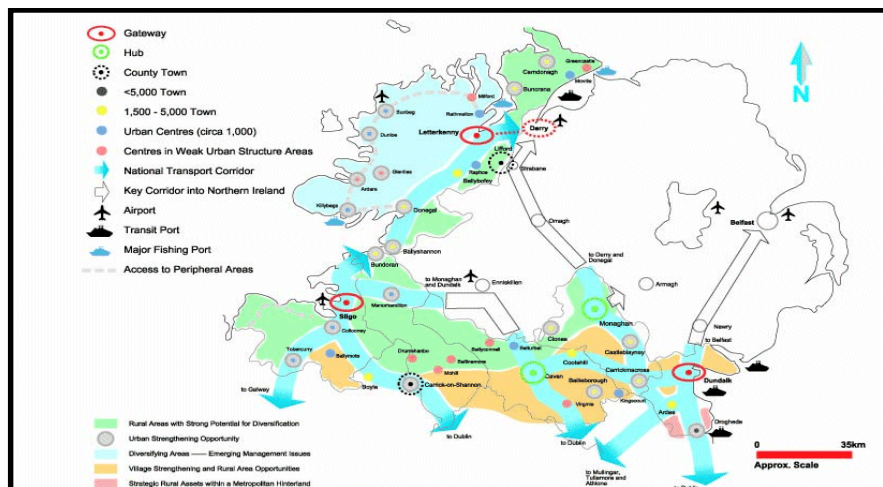
Given its strategic geographic position, unspoiled, litter-free<sup>4</sup> and attractive environment, it has been selected as one of only nine *Development Hubs* by the National Spatial Strategy (2002-2020). The aim of the document is to strive for balanced regional development in each region of the country. The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (2004, p.58) state:

*“Cavan will capitalise on its strategic position and will act as a catalyst, developing potential future development in the enterprise and community sectors. In the context of renewed cross-border co-operation, Cavan will become more of a crossroads, rather than having a peripheral position. This will enhance the suitability of Cavan for economic development, particularly in terms of cross-border development”.*

**Figure 2: National Spatial Strategy**



**Figure 3: National Spatial Strategy – Border Region**



The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) identifies the county as being located within the ‘Border Region’ . The NSS divides the border region in two three broad areas:

- The north western part of the border region, mainly Donegal
- The western part, mainly Sligo and Leitrim
- The central and eastern parts: Cavan, Monaghan and Louth

These areas are identified as having distinct characteristics which essentially results in county Cavan being divided into two broad area types. The east and the majority of the county is located in an area identified as having ‘Village Strengthening and Rural Area Opportunities’ and the West is located in an area identified as being ‘Rural Areas with Strong Potential for Diversification.’

The County is in a key location, both nationally and within the Border Region, as three national routes within the County link many of the main towns within Cavan and provide linkages to towns within the region.

These national routes open the county up to the rest of Ireland and act as a route way into and out of Northern Ireland.

<sup>4</sup> Cavan Town was awarded ‘Second Cleanest Town in Ireland’ in December 2005 at the Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Awards.

**3.3. Population, Targets & the Core Strategy:** The population census captured the population of County Cavan as 73,183 persons in 2011. A significant increase from 2006 as illustrated in the table below:

**Table 1: County, Border Region and State Population Change 2002-2011**

County, Region or State	2002	2006	% Change	2011	% Change
<b>Cavan</b>	56,546	64,003	13.2	73,183	14.3
<b>Border Region</b>	432,534	468,375	8.3	514,891	9.9
<b>State</b>	3,917,203	4,239,848	8.2	4,588,252	8.2

Source: Census of Population, Volume 1: Population Classified by Area 2002 and 2011.

In recent years, the east of the county has experienced substantial growth in population, though certain areas have experienced both modest growth and some decline. The pull of the Greater Dublin Area and an expanding commuter belt has effected the substantial growth in towns in the south-east of the county.

The inter-census period of 2002 and 2006 (CSO, 2006) shows a county growth of 13.2%. This is double the percentage increase between 1996 and 2002. County Cavan also shows the highest growth in Ulster (ROI). Whilst the inter-census period of 2006 and 2011 showed a greater increase of 14.3%

In terms of population County Cavan has experienced unprecedented growth in the last decade or so. Reports from the 2011 census along with other statistics indicate that this growth is continuing.

The Regional Planning Guidelines – for the Border Region (2010-2022) have indicated that Cavan Town, as a Hub Town, will grow from its 2006 population of 7883 to 11,600 in 2016 and 12,800 by 2022. These Population targets will be addressed in a revised Core Strategy to be contained in the new draft plan document. It is a Strategic Goal (2.2) of the Border Regional Planning Guidelines to ‘ensure that the development of the... Hubs.... as strategic drivers of growth for the Region and to facilitate integrated sustainable development between urban and rural areas’.

**Table 2: Population Co. Cavan (CSO, 1996 - 2011)**

Town	Electoral Division (ED)	1991	1996	% Change 1991-1996	2002	% Change 1996-2002	2006	% Change 2002-2006	2011	% Change 2006-2011
<b>Cavan Town</b>	Cavan Urban	3,332	3,509	+5.3%	3,538	+0.8%	3,934	+11.2%	3,649	
Environs of Cavan	Cavan Rural* Moynehall*	1,922	2,114	+10%	2,560	+21.1%	3,949	+54.3%	6556	
<b>Total</b>		5,254	5,623	<b>+7%</b>	6,098	<b>+8.5%</b>	7,883	+29.3%	10,205	

\*=part of ED (The area of the Electoral Divisions of Cavan Rural and Moynehall are much greater than the Cavan Town and Environs area as designated in the Development Plan 2008-2014)



The above table clearly indicates an increase in population growth for the plan area, however, it is noted that there is a decrease in population in the Town area, which should be addressed in the revised Core Strategy for the new plan.

Cavan Town and Environs is experiencing population growth at a rate exceeding county-wide growth, indicating a need for strategic management in this area.

The density of development in Cavan is relatively low, a common trait among many other Irish towns. Over the past 30 years, the town & Environs has expanded in a series of 'layers' though predominantly to the north-east of the centre. Substantial areas of land close to the town centre remain undeveloped, and these now provide an alternative to development at the periphery of the town. It is apparent that Cavan Town is and will continue to be a thriving town that serves a wide catchment area which extends beyond County Cavan.

To achieve the population target as set out in the Border Regional Authority Guidelines (2010-2022) of 12,800 by 2022, the planning strategy must be refined so that future development of the town is balanced and sustainable. The new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan will include a mandatory and revised 'Core Strategy' which aims to achieve these goals.

[The current Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan \(2008-2014\) – as amended by Variation No. 1 of 2010, includes the following strategic planning documents:](#)

These documents provide a long term vision to meet and facilitate the sustainable economic and social development of the town and environs area, through the promotion of a positive climate for development initiatives within the plan area.

### **Integrated Framework Plan**

The IFP outlines the following aims:

- Integration of existing and future land uses, including housing, shopping, employment activities and amenities;
- Incorporation of the principles of sustainability;
- Invigoration to the town centre;
- Provision of the basis for the close integration of development with sustainable transportation modes: walking, cycling and public transport; and
- Placement of a strong emphasis on quality of life issues.

The IFP takes a medium to longer-term view, up to 2020 and will be implemented for the most part through:

- land use measures, as set out in Review of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans over the next 15 years; and
- short, medium and long term infrastructure and transportation measures.

The vision for the IFP *“is to provide the framework for a unique and sustainable town, with a balanced range of functions, facilities and amenities, building on its present strengths of its people, enterprise and natural assets while meeting the needs of the whole community who live, work and visit the area”*.

The IFP promotes sustainability through the minimisation of travel, fewer atmospheric emissions, greater fuel efficiency and a safer living environment for residents. It incorporates the principles of the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Area.

The extensive consultation process with elected representatives, stakeholders and the public which was undertaken as part of the preparation of the IFP provided valuable information and viewpoints that informed the direction of the preferred framework.

### **Transportation Study**

A detailed Transportation Study was prepared under the current Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan 2008-2014 in order to provide an integrated transport network for the town that will give people the opportunity to make trips to, from and within the town using the most appropriate mode of transport, whether by foot, wheelchair, bicycle, public transport or private car. Specific transport recommendations are tailored to Cavan in terms of the physical growth of the Town, in terms of its spatial development patterns and both its economic and social needs.

### **Urban Design Framework**

The third component of the Integrated Framework Plan is the Urban Design Framework which examines the built form, open space and urban regeneration and is committed to:

- facilitating an urban design culture that demonstrates civic vision and looks to the future whilst acknowledging the culture, history, arts and sporting traditions of the Town.
- the creation of a well defined urban form with a strong sense of place, flexible and adaptable built forms and strong pedestrian and vehicular connectivity through the town.
- facilitating the enhancement and linkage of open spaces within the town and the re-activation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century laneway network through imaginative design-led regeneration.

The following actions are required to facilitate the delivery of concepts outlined in the IFP in the short to medium term:

- Review Housing Strategy
- Review Retail Strategy
- Review Current Development Contributions Scheme
- Seek to expand the Town Boundary to reflect Cavan Town's status, spatial and socio-economic context
- Develop programme and implement Transport Study
- Develop programme for infrastructure provision

**Settlement Structure:** The settlement strategy is provided in conjunction with the National Development Plan (NDP), the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Border Regional Planning Guidelines (BRG). Under the NSS, County Cavan was identified as being located within the Border Region, along with Donegal, Louth, Sligo, Monaghan and Leitrim. Cavan Town is identified as a Hub Town in the NSS.

The Border Regional Authority – Regional Planning Guidelines (2010 – 2022), describe the settlement strategy for the region as: *‘.....act to structure future growth in the longer term, to maximise and optimise the development potential to optimise the development potential of the Region taking account of the strengthening linkages between the economies of Northern Ireland and the Republic, and the increasing recognition of the prospects for both economies on the island of Ireland’.*

The region is characterised as being predominantly rural with a weak urban structure and no dominant urban centre. Seven urban centres with important regional roles have been identified, these include the Hub towns of Monaghan and Cavan.

The BRG's have identified the **Balanced Development Model** as being the most appropriate model for development. This option focuses development on the seven key towns, including **Cavan Town**.

**Balanced Development Model:**

This model is considered to be the most desirable for the following reasons:

- It will provide balanced regional development throughout the Region;
- It offers the potential to develop the model further in the County Development Plans through the development of the urban hierarchy
- It will direct an appropriate portion of development and investment to existing urban centres where services exist;
- It reinforces the priority required for the strategic road network between key settlements;
- The key settlements will act as key drivers for the region whilst providing key services and functions for the smaller settlements and rural hinterland;
- It creates a sustainable relationship between urban and rural areas and will support the vitality and viability of rural communities;
- It protects the key environmental sensitive and vulnerable area within the region.

**Key Aims of the Border Region's Settlement Strategy:**

- Strengthen the critical mass of the Region's key urban settlements by prioritising regional population growth and housing requirements;
- Outline a policy framework for the development of the remaining share of population in the Region; and
- Sustain and revitalise lower tier settlements and rural areas within the above development framework.

**Key components of the Border Region Settlement strategy:**

Development of critical mass in the 7 key urban centres which will be the focal points for growth;

- The linking of the key of the key urban centres through the development of Strategic Radial Corridors and Strategic Links;
- Promote and facilitate the emerging north/south corridors on the western (Atlantic Arc) and eastern (Eastern Corridor) seaboard, which will be linked through the Strategic Rail Corridors and Strategic Links;
- Development of the Northern Cross within the Region and into Northern Ireland.
- Improved and enhanced connectivity through the Central Border Region.

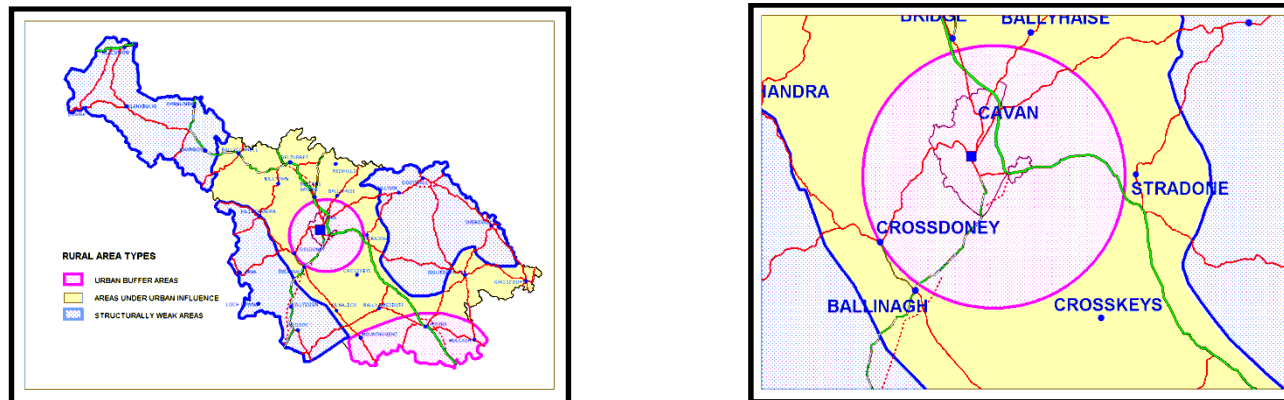
Given Cavan's proximity to Northern Ireland, and the importance of linkages between the border region, as well as, between Cavan County and the border Region. There are eight larger urban centres around Cavan, though they are dominated by Cavan town. There is a well distributed pattern of smaller villages throughout the County which have relatively low population levels. The settlement pattern outside of these urban centres comprise predominantly of individual rural housing. There is a continued demand for urban-generated housing in the environs of Cavan Town.

Much of the county can accommodate well-sited individual houses to appropriate design standards. However, pressures for urban generated housing development in the countryside, gave rise to the following planning difficulties:

- uneconomic provision and demand for public services; or cost inefficient extension of services to facilitate such development.
- a build up of houses, leading to the loss of rural character and to potential pollution dangers;
- weakening of the urban structure;
- housing out of character with the area and with no real links to the countryside; potentially incompatible and often in conflict with the rural economy.
- increased traffic on minor rural roads; and
- damage to visual amenity through poor siting and design.

This type of housing is unsustainable as it creates long-term additional costs for the residents in terms of increased commuting and energy inefficiency.

**Figure 4: Rural Area Types – Cavan County Development Plan 2008-2014**



The above indicates the 'rural areas' which was established under the 'Rural Housing Policy (Variation No.1 2004)' to the Cavan County Development Plan 2003 – 2009 and subsequent plan for 2008-2014 (as varied). This policy identified 'urban buffer areas', 'areas under urban influence' and 'structurally weak areas' of the county. The area around Cavan Town is described as an 'urban buffer' area with specific policies for this area. A review of the impact of this policy will take place under the new development plan.

Agriculture remains the most important industry in the county and, as a result, Cavan will continue to have a relatively large rural population. Policies must continue to identify 'rural housing need' under the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005) and the types of development that will be acceptable; provided the principles of location, site suitability, technical considerations and design are applied.

The concentration of development in towns and villages will result in higher quality and more accessible services and employment opportunities for surrounding rural communities and is sustainable over the long term. There is a continuing need for new housing land. The new Development Plan must ensure that there is adequate serviced land in appropriate locations available for housing, with clear policies regarding proposals to build new houses elsewhere, whether individually or in groups. The policies shall be drafted in accordance with the **Core Strategy**, which currently supports a 'phasing of residential zoned lands' in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, which requires the link between

Regional Planning and Local Planning to be strengthened. The urban structure needs to be strengthened in order to attract potential dwellers and assist the socio-economic development of the area and county.

### **3.4. Employment & Enterprise**

The future Development Plan will encourage further economic development of Cavan Town and the county, with policies for industry to ensure that suitable land is identified for industrial expansion in appropriate locations, and that clear development control policies are in place to deal with individual industrial and commercial proposals, large and small. Industrial land requires good accessibility for the labour force, raw material and product movement. Employment creation in industry and commerce is thus best served by ensuring that adequate serviced land is available in parts of the county which are focal points in terms of population concentration and the communications network.

The Cavan Institute and CITC located in Cavan Town are education providers for both school leavers and for continuing professional development. The Liberty Insurance and Pauwels, are two of the major employers located in the town along with the Public Sector and service Industries. The recent economic downturn has had a serious impact on the viability of the existing Commercial landuses/buildings, with many of the small and medium businesses closing and resultant empty units, particularly along the Dublin road. Cavan Town dominates the retail structure of the county. Retailing is a fundamental service for the whole community, a major source of attraction and activity to visitors and a major employer. Policies should be drafted as to strengthen the retail structure of Cavan Town, new retail outlets are best located within the existing town centre, by new build, infill development and renovation of existing structures. The vitality and viability of the Town Centre area should be protected and enhanced. Out-of-centre retailing should be of a scale that does not fundamentally threaten the continuing viability of in-centre shopping and the central area sustainability in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012). Elsewhere, new shops are best confined to local neighbourhood outlets serving areas that are situated at a convenient distance from the town centre, but are still sited within the urban area or its planned extended area. The County Retail Strategy should be reviewed within the lifetime of the new plan, to ensure that the key policy objectives and revised standards are incorporated into the plan.

### **3.5. The Environment**

The National Development Plan NDP, 2007 – 2013 identifies the objective of the Ireland/Northern Ireland/Scotland Territorial co-operation is to encourage joint strategies for among others, the Environment – *‘By encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of natural and cultural resources as well as the prevention of natural and technological risks’* National Development Plan.

There are a range of environmental assets in the county which, because of their outstanding importance in terms of conservation and protection. These assets include:

- Scenic Views
- Parks
- Riverside Amenity Areas
- Lakeside Amenity Areas
- Archaeological, Historical, Scientific, Architectural and Cultural Items
- Areas of High Landscape Value, Including Waterways

- Walking Routes
- Major Lakes and Lake Environs; and
- Scenic Routes

The new development plan should include policies to ensure that these assets are conserved and protected, both because of their intrinsic value and because they present opportunities for economic development in tourism and other areas.

The Planning Authority has an important role to play in the protection of the environment and will continue to use all the means at its disposal to maintain the environmental quality of county Cavan.

### **3.6. Recreation, Tourism and Community Facilities**

Leisure is an expanding area of activity in modern society generally. There are a good range of recreation, tourism and community facilities throughout the Cavan Town & Environs area. Sporting facilities includes: the GAA Kingspan Breiffne Park; the Equestrian Centre; the Cavan Rugby Club; Cavan Gaels; Cavan Soccer Club; Cavan Leisure Centre (including indoor swimming pool) Drumalee GAA club/grounds

Tourism continues to be identified as a major growth industry and generator of new employment. Cavan Town has a proven track-record of successfully hosting the 2010, 2011 and 2012 International Fleadh. There are a number of quality hotels within Cavan Town & Environs; including: The Farnham Arms Hotel located in the Town Centre; the Cavan Crystal located on the periphery of the Environs and the Radisson SAS which is located adjacent to the Environs boundary.

### **3.7. Transport**

The National Development Plan (2007-2013, p97) identifies the need for co-operation in the Border Region and ‘in seeking to prioritise more balanced regional development, a particular focus will be on enhancing cross-border links with the North and developing infrastructure in the border region’ (Irish Government, 2007, p97).

Cavan is served by a range of comprehensive transport facilities including road networks, bus services and the Shannon-Erne waterway. The dispersed nature of the population and the needs of agriculture have resulted in an extensive road network in the county.

The Planning Authority recognises the importance of providing a safe and efficient road system in the county in order to facilitate the development of the local and national economy, to protect the safety of users of public roads and to safeguard public investment in their provision.

The major transport communication corridors of the N3 (Dublin-Cavan-Donegal) and N54/N55 (Athlone-Cavan-Belfast) are prioritised in the context of the infrastructural development of the national road system and have undergone extensive upgrading works in the lifetime of the current plan. Cavan Town has also undergone improvements to the road transportation network during the lifetime of the current plan: These include: Upgrading of the Dublin (N3) road with the provision of footpaths; cycle lanes and roundabouts to improve (pedestrian, cycle and vehicular) traffic along this strategic link to the town. The construction of the



new Eastern Link road (as envisaged in the Integrated Transport Plan) is nearing completion. This new route serves to alleviate any traffic congestion along the Dublin Road and College Road approach to the Town Centre and also serves to improve access to the Town Centre and the Cock Hill area.

### **3.8. Water and Sanitary Services**

The provision of adequate water supply and sewerage facilities is a pre-requisite for most development. The provision of these services is currently a function of County Council. The role of Irish Water in terms of the management and supply of water services in Ireland will be announced by Government before the start of 2014.

## 4.0 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND OTHER RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

### 4.1 RELEVANT PLANS & PROGRAMMES:

Article 5 of the SEA Directive requires that the planning authority considers ‘reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the land and the significant environmental effect of the alternatives selected. As this is a County Cavan, though it must adhere to policy and strategic options which are pre-determined by higher level plans and guidelines. See

**Figure 5: Hierarchy of Plans and Programmes:**



The Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan (2014 – 2020) will be affected by, and will affect a wide range of other relevant plans and programmes, and environmental objectives. It is therefore important to identify relevant plans and programmes which will affect the new County Development Plan and must be examined in the context of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. International, National and Regional Level Plans and Programmes include:

**Table 3: Relevant Plans and Programmes** as follows:

<b>International Plans and Programmes</b>	
<b>Document Name</b>	<b>Main Policy direction for the Plan</b>
<b>Agenda 21</b>	Local Agenda 21 is a process which facilitates sustainable development at community level. It is an approach, based on participation which respects the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of the present and future citizens of a community in all its diversity and which relates that community and its future to the regional, national and international community of which it is a part.
<b>COMAH (Seveso II) Directive – European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards)</b>	The Seveso II Directive, sometimes referred to as COMAH, stipulates certain requirements for storage of relatively large quantities of substances classified as dangerous.

<b>involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations (2000)</b>	
<b>SEA Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.</b>	This Directive requires plan-makers to carry out an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before the plan or programme is adopted. There are two statutory instruments which transposed the SEA Directive into Irish Law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, S.I. No. 435 of 2004</li> <li>▪ Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, S.I. No. 436 of 2004</li> </ul>
<b>EU 6<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme (1998)</b>	The Environment Action Programme takes a broad look at the challenges of environmental policy and provides a strategic framework for the Commission's environmental policy up to 2012. It identifies four environmental areas for priority actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Climate Change</li> <li>▪ Nature and Biodiversity</li> <li>▪ Environment and Health and Quality of Life</li> <li>▪ Natural Resources and Waste</li> </ul>
<b>European Biodiversity Strategy (1998)</b>	This strategy aims to anticipate, prevent and attack the causes of significant reduction or loss of biodiversity at the source. This will help both to reverse present trends in biodiversity decline and to place species and ecosystems, including agro-ecosystems, at a satisfactory conservation status, both within and beyond the territory of the European Union (EU).
<b>European Spatial Development Perspective (1999)</b>	The main aim of the ESDP is to maintain the individual characteristics of the various countries within the EU while simultaneously increasing integration between the member states, socially and economically with the protection of the environment as a core element. The ESDP has three underlying objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic and Social Cohesion across the Community.</li> <li>2. Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage</li> <li>3. Balanced competitiveness across the EU</li> </ol>
<b>E.U. Water Framework Directive</b>	The Directive rationalises and updates existing water legislations and provides for water management on the basis of River Basin Districts (RBD's).
<b>Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive</b>	The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of discharges of urban waste water and of waste water from industrial sectors of agro-food industry.
<p><b>Other International Directives/ Conventions and Papers include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ EU Freshwater Fish Directive</li> <li>▪ EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive</li> <li>▪ EU Major Accidents Directive</li> <li>▪ Energy Performance in Buildings Directive, 2005</li> <li>▪ Nitrates Directive</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Directive</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Directive</li> <li>▪ Dangerous Substances Directive</li> <li>▪ Environmental Impact Assessment Directive</li> <li>▪ Bathing Water Directive</li> <li>▪ Habitats Directive Birds Directive</li> <li>▪ EU White Paper on Renewable Energy (1997)</li> <li>▪ Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licensing</li> <li>▪ UN Convention of Biological Diversity</li> <li>▪ European Landscape Convention 2000</li> <li>▪ Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention 1971)</li> <li>▪ European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta Convention)</li> </ul>	

- [Granada Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe 1985](#)

Note: Many of the documents listed above are referred to in the 'Baseline Data' section of the Amended Scoping Issues Paper.

<b>National and Regional Level</b>	
	<b>Main Policy direction for the Plan</b>
<b>National Spatial Strategy (2002)</b>	The National Spatial Strategy published in November 2002 is a twenty year planning framework designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic, physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, on places and on building communities. Cavan Town has been identified as a 'hub'. (The NSS is based upon the European Spatial Development Perspective).
<b>National Development Plan 2007-2013</b>	The National Development Plan (NDP) involves an investment of public, EU and private funds over the period 2000 - 2006. The funding is to provide for economic and social infrastructure, employment and human resources, productive sector as well as the Peace Programme. The Plan will involve significant investment in health services, social housing, education, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, and water and waste services.
<b>Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland (1997)</b>	"Sustainable Development - A Strategy for Ireland" was published in 1997 by the Department of the Environment. The Strategy recognises the need for good spatial planning and the inclusion of sustainability concerns in urban and built environment policies. The Strategy recognises that the pattern and density of urban development has a major influence on travel patterns. The Strategy encourages high movement activities to locate in areas of maximum accessibility to public transport so as to reduce growth in transport demand. As a general principle, the minimisation of potential growth in transport demand will be incorporated as a leading consideration in land use planning. The Strategy also aims to ensure a clear demarcation between urban and rural land use, to help prevent urban sprawl and to encourage more sustainable development patterns in settlements.
<b>National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS)</b>	The National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) is the government strategic initiative to place the needs of the poor and the socially excluded at the top of the national policy agenda. The NAPS recognises the unacceptable scale of poverty and its impact on those directly affected and on the wider society and it particularly notes the distinct spatial aspects of poverty in urban and rural areas. The strategy emphasises the importance of a cross-departmental policy response in dealing with the problem.
<b>Transport 21</b>	<i>Transport 21</i> is a strategy which will see €34.4 billion invested over the next 10 years in Irish transport. Connecting communities and promoting prosperity is the core aim of this strategy. The programme seeks to meet the transport needs of the country's citizens and also underpin our competitiveness into the future. A comprehensive and efficient transport network is essential if we are to continue to improve our living standards while remaining competitive in the global market place. Transport 21 recognises that quality, integrated transport is critical for competitiveness, return on investment and regional development.
<b>The Border Regional Authority - Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022)</b>	The Vision for the Region is <i>"By 2020 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 building of distinct sub regional identities, in an outstanding natural environment with innovative people, which in themselves, will be our most valuable asset..."</i>  Cavan Town is identified for growth as a Hub within the Regional Planning Guidelines. The RPG states that <i>"Cavan will capitalise on its strategic position and will act as a catalyst, developing potential future development in the enterprise and community sectors. In the context of renewed cross-border co-operation, Cavan will become more of a crossroads, rather than having a peripheral position. This will enhance the suitability of Cavan for economic development, particularly in terms of cross-border development"</i> .
<b>National Biodiversity Plan (2002)</b>	This Plan was published in 2002. It aims to secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement and sustainable use, of biological diversity in Ireland and to contribute to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity globally.

<p><b>National Climate Change Strategy (2007-2012)</b></p>	<p>The strategy was published in 2007. Under Kyoto Protocol, Ireland agreed to a target of limiting its greenhouse gas emissions to 13% above 1990 levels by the first commitment period 2008 – 2012 as part of its contribution to the overall EU target. Ireland ratified the Kyoto Protocol on the 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2002, along with the EU and all other Member States, and is internationally legally bound to meet the challenging greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. To ensure Ireland reaches its target under the Kyoto Protocol and, building on measures put in place following the publication of the first National Climate Change Strategy in 2000, the Government has published the new National Climate Change Strategy 2007 – 2012.</p>
<p><b>Making Ireland's Development Sustainable (2002)</b></p>	<p>This document identifies focuses mainly on the link between economic activity and pressures on the environment. Sustainable development emerged as an idea in the late 1980s and led to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At the Summit, world leaders agreed to implement an action programme for sustainable development called, <i>Agenda 21</i>. The Irish Government published <i>Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland</i> in 1997 which applies <i>Agenda 21</i> in Irish circumstances. <i>Making Ireland's Development Sustainable</i> reviews progress with sustainable development in Ireland since Rio, assesses the challenge we now face and sets out policies and actions to meet that challenge.</p>

<b>Other Relevant Guidance</b>	
<b>Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)</b>	These guidelines update and replace the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (January, 2005) taking account of recommendations of the Review of the Economic Impact of the Retail Cap – Forfas (April 2011). Consequently, these revised Guidelines contain, in particular, revised policies regarding floorspace caps. A number of policies have influenced these Guidelines: National Spatial Strategy; The National Climate Change Strategy; Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future; Government Policy on Architecture, Regional Planning Guidelines(2010-2022; the Planning Guidelines on Development Plans;(2007); Development Management (2007) Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities and Towns and Villages), and on Spatial Planning and National Roads (2012). The Guidelines identify Cavan Town as aligned with its Hub town status (NSS) as performing an important regional retailing function.
<b>Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005)</b>	In supporting housing development patterns in rural areas that are sustainable, policies and practices of planning authorities should seek to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Ensure that the needs of rural communities are identified in the development plan process and that policies are put in place to ensure that the type and scale of residential and other development in rural areas, at appropriate locations, necessary to sustain rural communities is accommodated,</li> <li>(2) Manage pressure for overspill development from urban areas in the rural areas closest to the main cities and towns such as the gateways, hubs, and other large towns.</li> </ol> <p>A strong theme in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines is the need to strengthen villages and towns. Planning authorities need to ensure that cities, towns and villages offer attractive and affordable housing options to meet the housing needs of urban communities and persons wishing to live in urban areas.</p>
<b>Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines (2005)</b>	The guidelines include the criteria to be applied when selecting proposed protected structures for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), guidance to Planning Authorities on declarations and determining planning applications in relation to a protected structure, a proposed protected structure or the exterior of a building within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). It also contains supplementary detailed guidance to support Planning Authorities in their role to protect the architectural heritage when a protected structure, a proposed protected structure or the exterior of a building within an ACA is the subject of development proposals and when a declaration is sought in relation to a protected structure.
<b>The Planning System and Floodrisk Management -Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)</b>	The OPW and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, provide guidance on Planning Policy in relation to flooding. Development plans should be pro-active in addressing flooding by including: for example: policies to protect, improve or restore floodplains or the coastal margins. The SERA process addresses any likely significant effects on the environment, and their amelioration, from the implementation of development plans through all stages of the plan-making process. A flood risk identification (Stage1) is to assess whether full flood risk assessment is required, should ideally be carried out in a manner that is integrated with the SEA process, rather than constituting an additional or separate process. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) should be prepared and mapped flood zones identified as part of the development review process.
<b>Quarries and Ancillary Activities Guidelines (2004)</b>	Aggregates are a significant natural resource. The extractive industries make an important contribution to economic development in Ireland. However, the operation of quarries can give rise to land use and environmental issues which require to be mitigated and controlled through the planning system. These Guidelines seek to identify those issues and to suggest best practice in dealing with them. It is important that Planning Authorities recognise that quarries (including sand-and-gravel pits) vary greatly in size, with varying environmental impacts, and that the planning response to proposed developments should be tailored accordingly.
<b>Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines (2000)</b>	These Guidelines recommend the assessment method known as <u>Landscape Character Assessment</u> which favours a method of characterisation i.e. the discernment of the character of the landscape based initially on landcover – trees, vegetation, settlements, water etc. and landform which results from geological and geomorphological history. Added to this first level of assessment is a second layer described in the Guidelines as values, takes historical, cultural, religious and other understandings of the landscape into account. This method of assessment allows for a proactive approach to landscape so that it is viewed for its ability to accommodate developments, gives indicators as to which developments might be most suited, under what conditions and using what design criteria.

<b>Sustainable Rural Housing (2005)</b>	These guidelines set out in detail how the Government's policies on rural housing are to be implemented by Planning Authorities in making their development plans and in the operation of the development control system to ensure a vibrant future for all rural areas.
<b>Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006)</b>	These Guidelines offer advice to Planning Authorities on planning for wind energy through the development plan process and in determining applications for planning permission. The guidelines are also intended to ensure a consistency of approach throughout the country in the identification of suitable locations for wind energy development and the treatment of planning applications for wind energy developments. They should also be of assistance to developers and the wider public in considering wind energy development.
<b>Forestry management Plans</b>	Coillte is the semi-state company, estab. Under the Forestry Act (1988) is responsible for the management of former State forests, the core purpose of the company is to commercially manage these forest assets. In the late 2008 and into 2009, a review of Coillte's Forest Management Plans was carried out:- County Cavan has 10. No. Forest Management Plans for Cavan Cootehill; Foxfield, Dunari; Baileborough; Bawnboy; Swanlinbar; MacNea East; Glangevlin forestry plantations. The plans can be viewed at <a href="http://www.coillte.ie">www.coillte.ie</a> .
<b>National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)</b>	The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a state initiative under the administration of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS).
<b>Delivering A Sustainable Energy Future For Ireland - The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (White Paper)</b>	This White Paper sets out the Government's Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020 to deliver a sustainable energy future for Ireland. It is set firmly in the global and European context which has put energy security and climate change among the most urgent international challenges. The White Paper sets out the actions to be taken in response to the energy challenges facing Ireland. The objective is to deliver a sustainable energy future, starting now, with a time horizon of 2020 but also looking beyond that.
<b>National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)</b>	<p>The role of National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To secure the conservation of a representative range of ecosystems and maintain and enhance populations of flora and fauna in Ireland,</li> <li>▪ To implement the <u>Wildlife Act, 1976</u>, the <u>Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000</u> and the <u>EU Habitats and Birds Directives</u>,</li> <li>▪ To designate and advise on the protection of <u>Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)</u>, <u>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</u> and <u>Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)</u> having particular regard to the need to consult with interested parties,</li> <li>▪ To make the necessary arrangements for the implementation of National and EU legislation and policies and for the ratification and implementation of the range of international Conventions and Agreements relating to the natural heritage,</li> <li>▪ To manage, maintain and develop <u>State-owned National Parks and Nature Reserves</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (P.E.)</b>	<p>The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the provision of wastewater treatment and disposal systems for single houses with a PE less than 10. Guidance is provided on site suitability assessment, selection of appropriate wastewater treatment system, design criteria for conventional septic tank systems and secondary treatment systems, and installation, operation and maintenance of the selected system.</p> <p>This document modifies some of the information in the earlier treatment manual for on-site systems for single houses. The key messages of the code of practice are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The importance of proper site assessment taking account of not only local conditions specific to the proposed site but wider experience in the area, patterns of development, provisions of the development plan and other policies etc.</li> <li>▪ The need for design of on site wastewater disposal systems specific to the local conditions</li> </ul>

<b>&lt;10 (October, 2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The need for follows through by the developer/ occupier – i.e. installation/ commissioning/ maintenance as per design and attendant recommendation/ conditions – otherwise breaches of various legislative codes is occurring.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Level</b>	
<b>A Strategy for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of County Cavan (2002-2012)</b>	<p>This is a Strategy with a 'Shared Vision', for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of the County. The strategy document involved rigorous consultation with all sectors to develop achievable objectives and actions which would be implemented over a 10 year period. The agreed vision for County Cavan is "to retain Cavan's People in the County through the maintenance, enhancement and promotion of the quality of life therein". The overall aims for the development of the County's are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to stimulate and sustain the growth of Cavan's economy through increased innovation and research</li> <li>▪ to ensure that the infrastructure of County Cavan does not impede its economic and social development</li> <li>▪ to broaden the appeal of County Cavan as a quality tourist destination</li> <li>▪ to ensure that Cavan is a county that provides "quality of life" for all its people by focusing on social inclusion and tackling poverty and disadvantage</li> <li>▪ to retain the maximum number of people in agriculture through the sustainable production of quality agriculture produce whilst providing viable opportunities for those seeking off farm employment thereby maintaining rural communities</li> <li>▪ to protect and sustain and enhance the clean, green environment of County Cavan</li> <li>▪ to develop, promote and protect the cultural environment of the County whilst celebrating its cultural diversity and artistic strengths.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste Management Plan for the North East Region 2005 - 2010</b>	<p>This Plan sets out the waste management policy for the North East Region consisting of counties Cavan, Louth, Meath and Monaghan, who originally came together in 1998 to plan for waste management on a regional basis. The Plan identifies the current position with regard to waste management, the policy for future improvement and development and the means to implement and monitor progress in the years to come. The objective for the Region is to develop a sustainable approach to managing resources, by minimising waste and managing the waste that is generated in a safe and environmentally sound manner. Achieving this will need strong leadership from local authorities but also the participation and support of all sectors of society in the North East.</p>
<b>Cavan Heritage Plan (2006-2011)</b>	<p>The Cavan Heritage Plan (2002) was published in 2006. It is a local heritage plan that can be traced to the National Heritage Plan (2002), which acknowledges that the protection of heritage must begin at the local level as "the preparation and adoption of Local Heritage Plans involving local heritage fora, bringing together communities, local authorities and the government". The Cavan Heritage Plan contains aims, objectives and actions to be undertaken over the Plan period.</p>



Changes	Comments
05/01/12	Added Green /Infrastructure links to Section 2.4
07/03/12	Updated link to EPA Envision GIS Website
12/03/12	Added Air Quality in Ireland 2010, (EPA, 2011)
12/03/12	Added National Waste Report 2010 (EPA, 2012)
<b>Summary of Latest Updates in 2012</b>	
12/03/12	Added the Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland – A report for the year 2010 (EPA,2011)
12/03/12	Added The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland – Report for the Year 2010, (EPA, 2011)
20/04/12	Added Reference to new National Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-16
29/05/12	Added Reference to Article 4.7 of WFD added to Section 1.1
29/05/12	Added Reference to EU and Comhar Green Infrastructure Links Section
17/08/12	Added Reference to Integrated Water Quality Report 2011 SE Ireland (2012)
17/08/12	Included update to Focus on Urban Wastewater Discharges Report (2012)
17/08/12	Updated reference to the latest The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland Report for 2011 (EPA,2012)
17/08/12	Replaced Ireland’s Environment Report References with 2012 edition (EPA, 2012)

#### 4.2 Environmental Protection Objectives

Environmental Protection Objectives must be established based on International, European Union or National level strategies and documents, which are relevant to the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans. The Planning Authority has also drawn on public consultation for relevant Objectives.

The Development Plans have a large number of Development Objectives (see Appendix 5). The effect of these Development Objectives and policies on the environment has been measured and cross-checked against the Environmental Protection Objectives (EPO). This has been accomplished through the use of a matrix. It has identified policies that may result in significant environmental impact on the environment so alternatives may be considered or mitigation measures suggested and in some case, may have involved the removal of the policy entirely.

The following are the **Environmental Protection Objectives** for the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans:

##### **Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna:**

- B1** Conserve designated habitats and protected species
- B2** Conserve and enhance the diversity of interdependent habitats and species in the wider environment
- B3** Protect terrestrial and aquatic habitats from invasive species

**Population and Human Health:**

- P1** Improve people's quality of life based on high-quality residential, working and recreational environments and on sustainable travel patterns
- P2** Minimise the amount of waste to landfill
- H1** Minimise noise, vibration and emissions from traffic, industrial processes and extractive industry

**Landscape and Soil including minerals:**

- L1** Conserve and enhance natural and historic landscapes and features within them
- L2** Conserve and enhance townscape quality
  
- S1** Give preference to the re-use of brownfield lands, reducing the need to develop Greenfield lands
- S2** Reduce consumption of non-renewable sand, gravel and rock deposits

**Water:**

- W1** Protect and enhance the quality of surface, ground and drinking water
- W2** Promote water conservation and sustainable water use, based on long-term projections of available water resources
- W3** Mitigate the effects of floods

**Air and Climate:**

- A1** Reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emission
- A2** Promote energy efficiency and maximise use of renewable energy sources

**Material Assets:**

- M1** Maximise use of the existing built environment
- M2** Maintain infrastructure in the Cavan Town and Environs area and mitigate the effects of further infrastructure provision

**Cultural Heritage:**

- C1** Promote the protection and conservation of cultural heritage including architecture and archaeology

**Methodology for the Assessment and Determination of Significance of Effects****Step 1:**

The main Issues relating to the environmental topics or receptors (i.e. Biodiversity, Population and Human Health, Landscape etc.) are examined in the 'Baseline Data' section (see section 7.0).

**Step 2:**

The Environmental Protection Objectives were chosen based on international, national, regional and local level environmental issues (see Chapter 5.0).

**Step 3:**

Options for Scenarios for the Development of Cavan Town and Environs were considered (see section 8.0).

**Step 4:**

The Environmental Protection Objectives were compared to the Development Objectives (see Appendix 1) in order to assess significant effects of the environment, considering the context of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan and the findings were linked to the 'scenario options'.

**Step 5:**

Mitigation measures for development objectives are proposed which are ways of offsetting the effects on the environment (see Section 9.0). Section 9.0 also contains recommendations which have been included in the Draft Development Plans.

**Step 6:**

Monitoring measures are proposed through the use of the 'Environmental Protection Objectives', a range of targets and a number of indicators for progress.

**4.3 Methodology for the Assessment and Determination of Significant Effects on the Environment**

There are a number of steps in the SEA process (see figure 1). The preparation of the Development Plans requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment. Accordingly the preparation of this Environmental Report is a statutory requirement.

The Environmental Report follows the requirements of Schedule 2B (S.I. 436 of 2004) see Appendix 2. Chapter 4 details the relevant plans and programmes which have been taken into consideration during the preparation of the Draft Development Plans. Existing Environmental Issues in the Cavan Town and Environs are were identified in the Scoping Report and Environmental Objectives (based on the environmental receptors – biodiversity, water, air etc.) were drafted from national environmental policy while taking existing environmental problems in the area into account. The chosen Objectives match those in the Draft County Development Plan's Environmental Report.

Objectives and policies in the new Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans were drafted and compared to the Environmental Protection Objectives. Subsequently, the likely significant effects of implementation of the Development Plans were established through the identification of conflicts between the two sets of objectives and policies. This was assessed in a matrix format (see Appendix 5).

Where conflicts arose, opportunities to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the Development Plan were examined and if necessary, some policies were improved with measures to mitigate the effects on the environment.

Alternative development scenarios for the County were formulated, based on the environmental receptors (i.e. landscape, biodiversity, human health, etc.) and areas with existing environmental problems. The preferred development scenario was reached for the *Draft Cavan Town and Environs* area, based on the Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan 2020 (as adopted in July, 2007).

Mitigation measures and methods of offsetting potential impacts have been proposed during the course of the preparation of the documents. This has resulted in objectives and policies which are more robust and environmentally sustainable. Similarly, methods of monitoring and indicators of change in the environment have been proposed with set targets to be reviewed over the duration of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans.

**Table4 Summary of SEA Methodology**

Action	Comments
<b>1. Screening</b>	An Environmental Report is considered necessary for the Cavan Town and Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan. No Screening was undertaken.
<b>2. Scoping Issues Paper</b>	Scoping Issues Paper prepared containing baseline environmental data.
<b>3. Consultation with the Environmental Authorities</b>	Submissions received from the Environmental Authorities in response to the first round of public consultation.
<b>4. Preparation of Environmental Report and Draft County Development Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="120 1310 499 1390">▪ <b>Environmental Objectives established and</b></li> </ul>	Joint meetings were held with the Planning officers responsible for the preparation of the draft Plan and the author of the SEA reports, in order to ensure that the drafting of policies and objectives in the plans were consistent. This also ensured that the documents were examined to identify the effects on the environment of implementing the objectives and

<p><b>Development Objectives established</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Assessment of Alternative Scenarios</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Mitigation measures detailed</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Monitoring measures detailed</b></li> </ul>	<p>policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Objectives and Polices created in Draft Development Plan assessed in the <i>draft</i> Environmental Report and Development Scenarios for Cavan Town and Environs were examined based on the Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan 2020.</li> <li>▪ Feedback from on-going Plan preparation process and Environmental Report preparation</li> <li>▪ Favoured scenario chosen.</li> <li>▪ Mitigation measures discussed and chosen.</li> <li>▪ Monitoring incorporated into existing methods.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Monitoring the Development Plans</b></p>	<p>Monitoring significant environmental effects over the lifetime of the Development Plans</p>

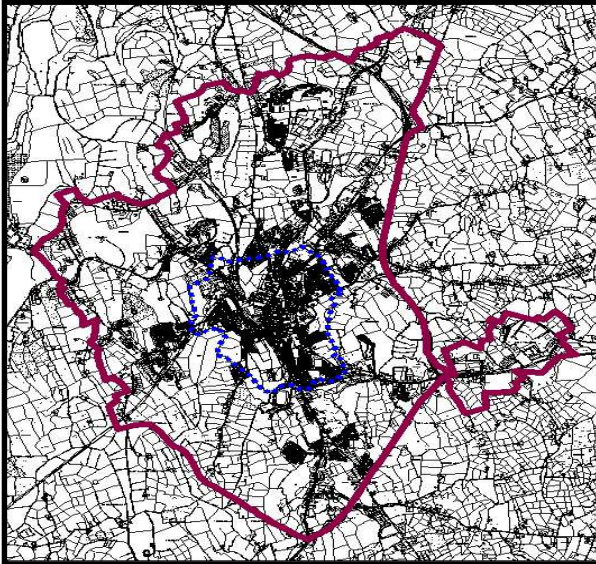
## 0.5 BASELINE DATA AND KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES RELATING TO THE PLAN

The following chapter forms the base data for this Environmental report and has identified key issues which are required to be considered in the draft Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan. The environmental receptors and key environmental issues which are most likely to experience impact as a result of the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan and its implementation.

### 5.1 SEA Study Area

The 'Town Council' area is the administrative boundary of Cavan Town Council. The 'Environs Area' is the administrative area of Cavan County Council. The study area for the SEA of Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan is that depicted in Figure 6 (below):

**Figure 6: Administrative Boundary**



### 5.2 Environmental Characteristics/ Receptors

We are currently at stage 3 of the SEA process (See figure 1 on page ....). This presents the findings of the Scoping Issues Paper (See APPENDIX 1: SEA & AA) and builds on the information gathered under the existing SEA Environmental Report. During the preparation of the current Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan (2008 – 2014) an SEA process was undertaken and an Environmental Report, including an SEA statement was prepared for same. This Environmental Report (2008) forms the starting point from which the current draft Environmental Report for the new Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan will be prepared. The necessary updated information including: the latest legislative changes; EU; National and Regional Guidelines have been consulted and reports The baseline data has been gathered from establishes the current existing state of the environment and is the basis to assess and predict potential impacts. The headings used (i.e. Biodiversity, Water etc.) will correlate with the environmental

objectives [which forms part of the Environmental Report](#). The baseline data provides details of sources used in the collection of data as well as identifying gaps in that information.

This '[Draft Environmental Report](#)' has been undertaken in accordance with '*Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment - Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities*' (Irish Government, November 2004). – (See APPENDIX 2: Annex1-or Schedule 2 B in S.I. 436 of 2004.)

An 'Environmental Assessment' of a Development Plan must examine the significant effects of the proposed Plan on the environment including short, medium and long-term effects; permanent and temporary effects; positive and negative effects; and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects on issues including:

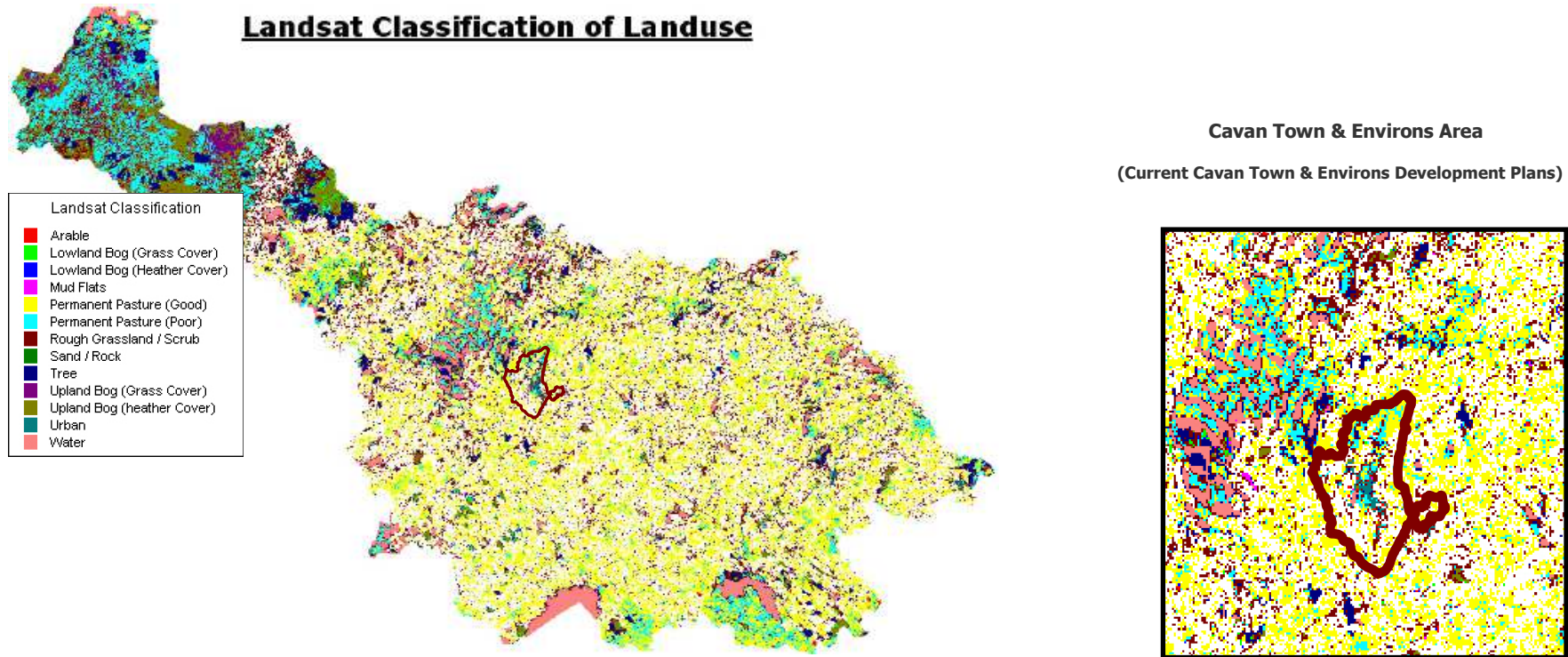
- Biodiversity
- Population
- Human Health
- Flora
- Fauna
- Soil
- Water
- Air
- Climate
- Material Assets
- Cultural Heritage (architectural and archaeological)
- Landscape and the inter-relationship between these issues

### **5.3 Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna**

Biological diversity, or biodiversity, is the term given to the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. The biodiversity we see today is the result of billions of years of evolution, shaped by natural processes and, increasingly, by the influence of humans. It forms the web of life of which we are an integral part and upon which we so fully depend.

This diversity is often understood in terms of the wide variety of plants, animals and micro-organisms. County Cavan has a wide variety of habitats, each with their own flora and fauna. Most of our habitats have been impacted upon by human beings over time. The clearing of vegetation from the country as a whole, has resulted in the replacement of natural habitats with semi-natural habitats. The intensification of agriculture, which took place in the second half of the last century, increased the removal of hedgerows and woodland. In recent years the development of many one-off greenfield sites in the county has also resulted in an increase in the removal of hedgerow. The Landsat Classification below identifies the landuses of the Cavan Town and Environs area as having both 'good permanent pasture' and 'poor permanent pasture' –

**Figure 7: Landstat Classification for County Cavan (including insert for Cavan Town & Environs)**



County Cavan has a large number of lakes and is described as ‘the lake country’. The countryside is characterized by a range of field sizes, bordered by low hedgerows. Dairy and beef farming are the main forms of agriculture. Much of the county lies in a lowland drumlin belt which is a distinctive geographical feature consisting of small hills of boulder clay deposited at the last ice age around 13,000 years ago

**5.3.1. Habitats of the Cavan Town and Environs Area**

The National Parks and Wildlife Service have responsibilities in designating areas of special environmental interest in the context of habitats identified as supporting fauna and flora of particular value. The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997, the Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 are the main legislative instruments governing the protection of our natural environment. They provide for the protection of wild fauna and flora and for the conservation of areas of special importance to wildlife. The following information can be found in the existing Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans 2008 - 2014.

The woodlands at Loreto College (Drumkeen Woodland) are designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). Woodland is scarce, with much of our trees located in hedgerows and demesne parklands. Hedgerows play an important part in the County’s ecological networks, connecting areas of local biodiversity with each other. Ecological networks are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows and river/ streams, which provide corridors for wildlife species enabling movement



within their normal range. Rivers are a good example of ecological corridors. Another form of corridor which is available to wildlife in the Town and Environs area is the old railway line. Cavan has a number of lakes situated in its Environs area which support a variety of species. The existing Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans identify a number of green areas around the town which have been zoned as 'amenity/recreation'. The importance of these areas should be recognised for the ability to enhance the quality of life of the people in the area. The Farnham Estate contains gardens of significance to the people of Cavan and visitors alike. The Tree Council of Ireland has identified two Common Oak trees, one Tulip Tree, one Fern Leaf Beech and one Hornbeam located on the Estate. Cavan Town also has a number of sporting grounds such as Breffni Park and Terrycoyle Park among others.

Other areas for consideration include waterside and lakeside features, fishing, boat and water based activities. The open spaces around the Town and Environs are important not only from a social and community aspect but for their potential to contribute to the biodiversity of the area. These areas can incorporate community facilities such as playing areas, walking and cycling routes, historical and archaeological trails.

The Greenlough, located on the Dublin Road, has recently (2012) been subject to an improvement scheme, which creates increased access to the public – an amenity area including: a walkway; bicycle stand and viewing point, was developed as part of the RAPID programme.

**Table 5: Habitats of Special Amenity in the extended Cavan Environs Area**

SITE CODE	SITE NAME	Type	Tranche	Advertised	Transmitted	S.I.
000980	Drumkeen House Woodland (Loretto)	NHA	N/A		N/A	
000007	Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs	cSAC	5	6/6/03	10/09/04	S.I.94 of 1997
004049	Lough Oughter	SPA	N/A		02/11/95	S.I.284 of 1995

NHA = Natural Heritage Area      SPA = Special Policy Area      Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service  
 pNHA = Proposed Natural Heritage Area      cSAC = Candidate Special Area of Conservation

### 5.3.2 Flora of County Cavan and Cavan Town and Environs Area

Most native trees in County Cavan are deciduous, broadleaf trees that shed their leaves in winter, though there are native conifers - Yew (*Taxus baccata*) and Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) with the re-introduction of Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Other trees that were introduced such as Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) are now common. However there may be some occurrences of Whitebeam (*Sorbus hibernica*), Rock Whitebeam (*Sorbus rupicola*) and Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) which is a species listed in the Irish red data book.

A study (Cavan County Council & CAAS) undertaken on the Green Lough area identifies a number of species which are common to both the lake area and others in the Cavan Town and Environs area. One particular species which was found on the Lough in summer is a yellow water lilly (*Nuphar luteum*) which is an indication of the richness of the waterbody which is similar to many of the small drumlin lakes. Much of the northern and western shore consists of species of reed and sedges found in Green Lough include the common reed (*Phragmites australis*), bottle sedge (*Carex rostrata*) and other sedge species such as (*Carex vesicaria*) and (*Carex nigra*) and reed grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). Willow trees (*Salix cinerea*) are also found along with marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), spike rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), march cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*), marsh willow herb (*Epilobium palustre*) and water mint (*Mentha aquatica*).

**Figure 8: Green Lough Area (south of Dublin Road and east of Ballinagh Road)**



On drier ground species like meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), march valerian (*Valerian Valeriana officinalis*), wild angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*) and marsh speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*) take over, along with some hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*).

On the eastern shore, rushes (*Juncus effuses*) grow on firm ground with marsh ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*), sedges (*Carex disticha*), buttercups (*Ranunculus repens* and *Ranunculus acris*) and curled dock (*Rumex crispus*).

Those mentioned are but a few of the species located in Green Lough. In all, there are 56 species of vegetation identified in areas around this lake. The area has a number of interesting ecological features, not least in the variety of habitats found within such a small site, close to an urban centre. Although it has no major stands of important or rare vegetation, there is a good variety of marsh vegetation.

**5.3.3 Fauna of County Cavan:** Cavan is a land-locked county so there are six orders of wild mammals found in the County: - Insectivora (shrew and hedgehog), Chiroptera (bats), Lagomorpha (rabbits and hares), Rodentia (rodents: rats, mice, squirrels, voles), Carnivora (weasel family, foxes), Artiodactyla (deer and goats).

The Irish Hare can be found on mountain bogs and throughout the lowland pastures. Woodlands are home to badgers, foxes, squirrels, deer and the elusive Pine Marten. Otters can be found in our waterways and a number of bat species have been recorded roosting under bridges.

The Common Lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*) is Ireland's only native reptile and can be found in grassland, disused quarries and hedgerows. Although it is typically an animal of dry habitats, it can be frequently found in bogs and heaths. It is protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 (Amendment 2000).

In the Green Lough area, species such as mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), teal (*Anas crecca*), pochard (*Aythya ferina*) and tufted duck (*Aythya fuligula*) are common. Whooper swans (*Cygnus Cygnus*) sometimes feed on the eastern side of the lake, while some mute swans (*Cygnus olor*) occur more regularly. However, greater numbers of small species occur in the marginal vegetation, including snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), sedge warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) and grasshopper warbler (*Locustella naevia*). Whitethroats (*Sylvia communis*) and willow warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) are found in the drier, bushy area at the southern end.

**5.3.3 Designated sites:** Cavan Town lies in the Erne Catchment, one of the five main catchments in County Cavan, which support a wide variety of fish species in our rivers and lakes. Although it is unknown what species are found in the small lakes within the Cavan Town and Environs lakes, the Lough Oughter system and Killykeen River

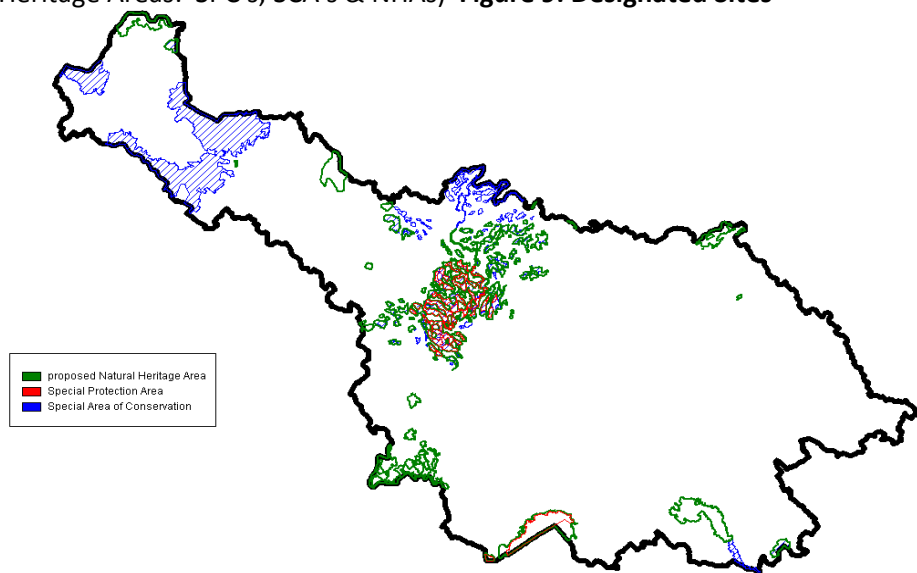
(located north and west of the area) contains game fish such as pike (*Esox lucius*), Bream (*Abramis brama*), Roach (*Rutilus rutilus*), Hybrids and Perch (*Perca fluviatilis*). Eutrophication (over-enrichment) of lakes can have detrimental effects on fish stocks and lake habitats, so it is important to control or reverse its effects.

Certain plant, animal and bird species are protected by law. This includes plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order, 1999 (or other such Orders) and animals and birds listed in the Wildlife Act, 1976 and subsequent statutory instruments, those listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive, and those listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive. Where an area has been designed for protection pursuant to National or European policy, or where designation at local level is a statutory requirement, a particular environmental quality has been identified.

The Rural Environmental Protection Programme, an initiative of the Department of Agriculture and Food, is a scheme to encourage environmentally-friendly farming practice. Farmers who operate REPS received an annual payment per hectare. The scheme aimed to protect wildlife habitats and endangered species of flora and fauna by establishing farming practices that are consistent with conservation. There was an increase in the number of farms that are operating the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme [REPS]. In 2005, Department of Agriculture and Food sources noted that there were 1,788 farmers in County Cavan participating in the scheme. This scheme has been replaced by the [Agri Environmental Options Scheme \(AEOS\)](#).

#### 5.3.4. Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC's)

These are prime wildlife conservation areas in the country, considered to be important on a European as well as Irish level. They are chosen from the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), although a number of known high quality sites which are not yet NHAs have also been included. The legal basis on which SACs are selected and designated is the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), transposed into Irish law in the European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997. The Directive lists certain habitats and species that must be protected within SACs, Irish habitats include raised bogs, blanket bogs, turloughs, sand dunes, machair (flat sandy plains on the north and west coasts), heaths, lakes, rivers, woodlands, estuaries and sea inlets. The 25 Irish species which must be afforded protection includes Salmon and Otters (see Appendix 4: Heritage Areas: SPC's; SCA's & NHAs) **Figure 9: Designated Sites**



### 5.3.5. Designated Sites (SACs, SPAs and pNHAs) – Cavan Town

There are no Special Areas of Conservation in the Cavan Town and Environs area. However Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC (000007) located to the north-west of the area is designated (National Parks and Wildlife, 2007).

### 5.3.6. Special Protection Areas (SPA's)

These sites are areas of importance for birds (and often are important for other types of wildlife). The EU Birds Directive 79/409/EEC requires designations of SPAs for – Listed rare and vulnerable species such as Whooper Swan, Greenland White-fronted Goose, Peregrine Falcon, Corncrake and Terns. Regularly occurring migratory species, such as ducks, geese and waders. Wetlands, especially those of international importance, which attract large numbers of migratory birds each year. (Internationally important means that 1% of the population of a species uses the site, or more than 20,000 birds regularly use the site.

### 5.3.7. Natura 2000 Network

Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas collectively form part of 'Natura 2000', a network of protected areas throughout the European Union.

There are no Special Protection Areas in the Cavan Town and Environs area, however, Lough Oughter SPA (004049) located to the north-west of the area is designated (National Parks and Wildlife, 2007)(NHAs) – *Natural Heritage Areas*<sup>5</sup>

The basic designation for wildlife is the **Natural Heritage Area (NHA)**. This is an area considered important for the habitats present or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. To date in Ireland, **75 raised bogs** have been given legal protection, covering some 23,000 hectares. These raised bogs are located mainly in the midlands. A further **73 blanket bogs**, covering 37,000ha, mostly in western areas are also designated as NHAs.

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) is compiling a list of geological/geomorphological sites in need of protection through NHA designation. A committee of expert geologists provides an initial list of sites which then undergo a process of survey, reporting and review, to provide recommendations regarding NHA status or otherwise. The GSI has completed its list of karst (i.e. exposed limestone) and early fossil sites.

In addition, there are 630 **proposed NHAs (pNHAs)**, which were published on a **non-statutory** basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. These sites are of significance for wildlife and habitats. Some of the pNHAs are tiny, such as a roosting place for rare bats. Others are large - a woodland or a lake, for example. The pNHAs cover approximately 65,000ha and designation will proceed on a phased basis over the coming years.

Prior to statutory designation, pNHAs are subject to limited protection, in the form of: Agri-environmental farm planning schemes such as Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS 3 and 4) and the [Agri Environmental Options Scheme \(AEOS\)](#) continue to support the objective of maintaining and enhancing the conservation status of pNHAs. The farm plans operate for a period of 5 years. REPS 4 plans will continue to operate until 2014.

- Forest Service requirement for NPWS approval before they will pay afforestation grants on pNHA lands

- Recognition of the ecological value of pNHAs by Planning and Licencing Authorities.

Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000) , NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation

The basic designation for wildlife is the Natural Heritage Area. In 1995, proposals for over 1,100 NHAs were published, but it was not until December 2000 that powers were introduced for the statutory process of their designation and protection. Many of these NHAs have overlapping designations of SAC and/or SPA. There are currently 802 proposed NHAs which are not SAC/SPA. They cover an area of about 113,000 hectares. These will be reviewed, and other sites surveyed, during the course of the designation process. Some of the proposed NHAs (pNHAs) are tiny, such as a roosting place for rare bats. Other are large – a blanket bog or a lake, for example (National Parks and Wildlife, 2007)<sup>6</sup>.

There are no designated Natural Heritage Areas in the Cavan Town and Environs Area. However, Drumkeen House Woodland, site code no. 000980 is a proposed Natural Heritage Area and as such will be afforded every protection in the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.

Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs, which is located to the North West of the area is also designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area<sup>7</sup>.

In the Cavan Town and Environs, there are a number of amenity areas which are of notable value:

- Green Lough and associated wetlands
- Swellan Lough and associated wetlands
- Drumgola Lake and associated wetlands
- Killynebber Lough and associated wetlands
- Loreto Woodlands lake and parkland area
- Proposed Walking Route (old permanent way)

These areas of natural heritage may be regarded as undesignated sites, given that they perform an important function as corridors for wildlife, which would ultimately link to designated sites outside the Cavan 'Town & Environs boundary. The legislation acknowledges the function and importance of 'undesignated sites' and therefore, the Development plans should afford them a status by inclusion in the policy for natural heritage and the environment. Con Smith Park contains valuable habitats and is a resource for the people of Cavan. In the current Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan a number of trees and tree groups are identified as follows: -

- Ridgeline trees at Latt
- St. Patrick's College Grounds, includes roadside group and northside treeline
- Ridgeline Trees at Drumlark
- Ridgeline Trees at Drumelis
- Conifers bounding hospital grounds (west side)
- Tree Group at former Rectory (Voc. Edd. Offices)
- Ridgeline trees at Swellan Upper associated with the Rath

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.botanicgardens.ie>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.npws.ie>

- Riverside wooded area on Coleman Road (north-east side)
- Farnham Street Trees, including single trees on Library side, hedgerow trees to rear (west side), trees in Church of Ireland grounds, trees in Courthouse grounds, trees fronting Boy's School grounds
- Trees in Old Abbey grounds
- Trees bounding Terry Coyle Park
- Trees on access to Royal School
- Ridgeline trees at Killynebber

The Strategic Environmental Assessment report carried out by Cavan County Council for the Cavan Town and Environs area, it was recommended that 'Cavan County Council should endeavour to retain areas of local environmental and ecological importance such as lakes, streams, undeveloped river banks, wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows, tree and tree groups. Where this is not possible the Council should attempt to restrict essential tree felling, hedgerow maintenance and vegetation clearance to the period outside the sensitive bird nesting season (1<sup>st</sup> March – 31<sup>st</sup> August)'. It is considered that these issues will be to the fore in the creation of the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.

**Figure10: Special Protection Areas (SPA's)**

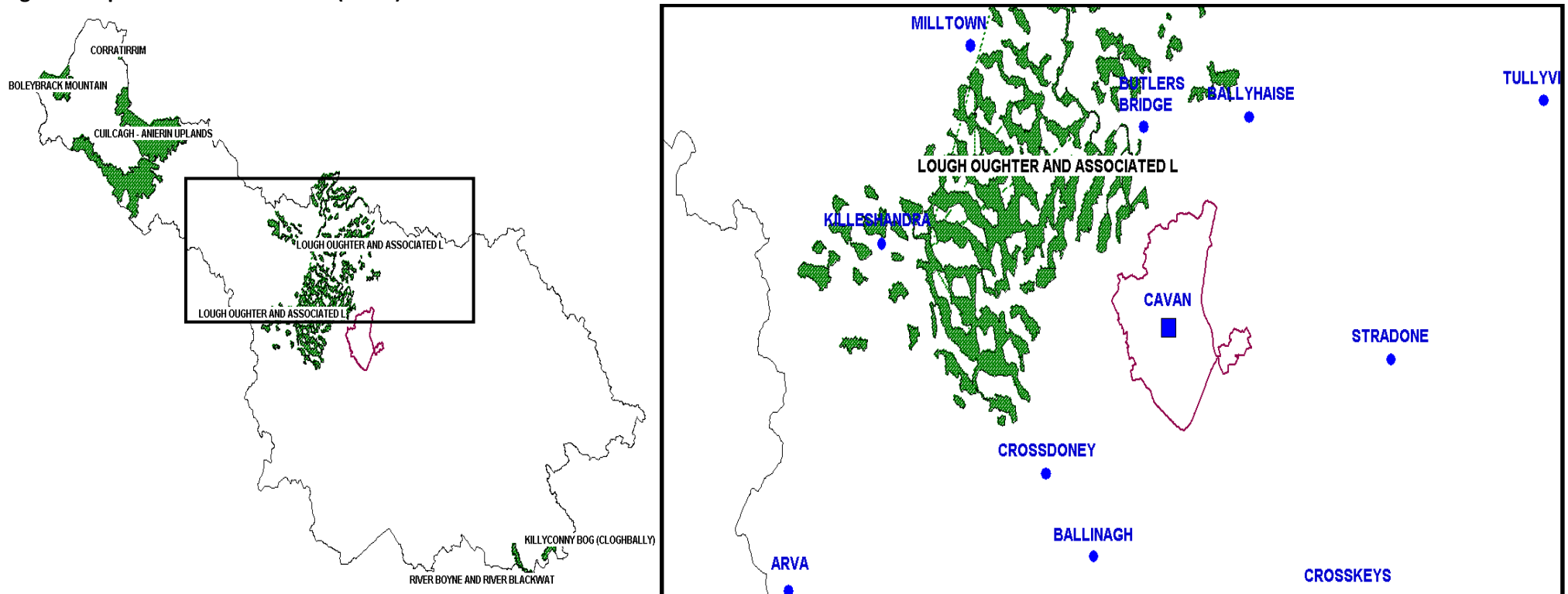
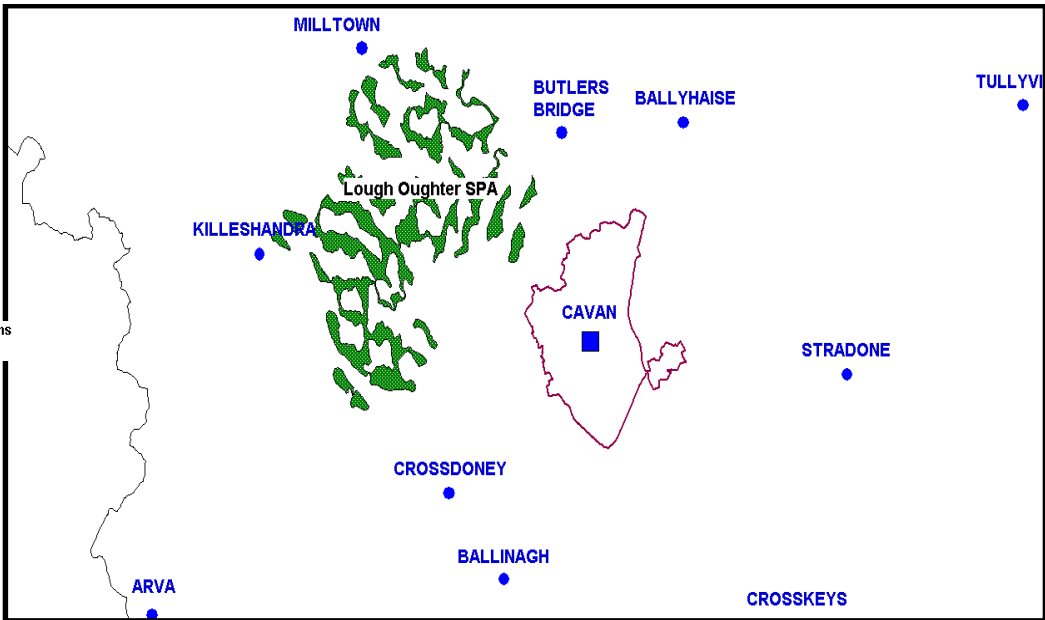
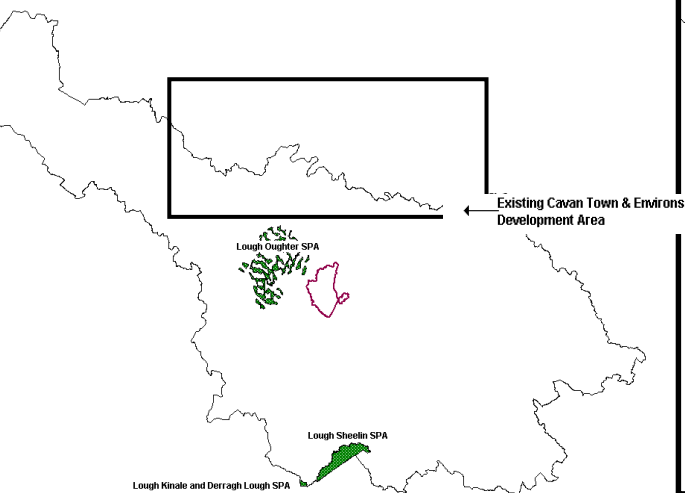
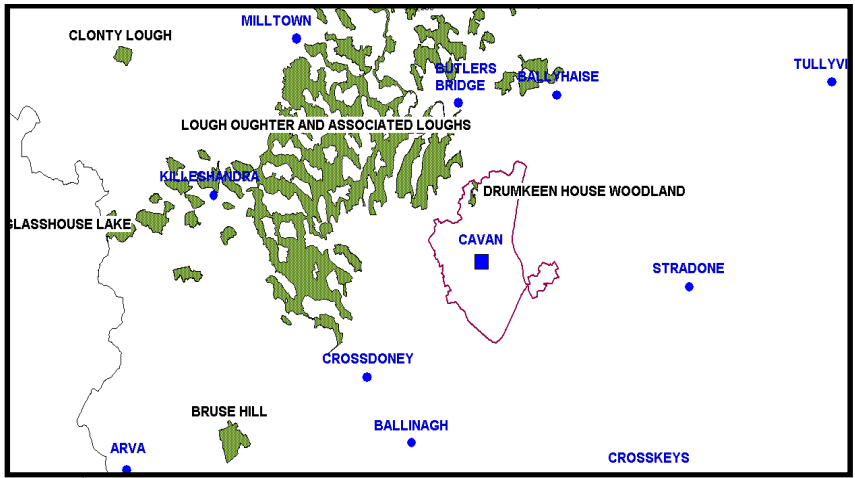
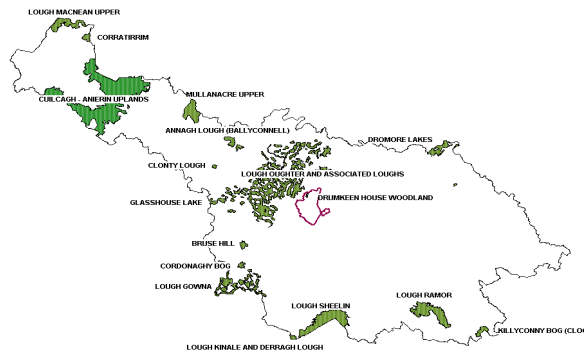


Figure 11: Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Special Area's of Conservation (SAC's) adjacent to the Cavan Town & Environs area

Source: Cavan County Council, 2012





**5.3.8. Appropriate Assessment and the SEA process:** In accordance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural Habitats and of wild fauna and flora, the Habitats Directive, the Council is required to prepare an Appropriate Assessment, as follows:

*“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (Natura 2000 sites) but likely to have 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 sites conservation Objectives...”.*

The legislation and guidelines governing the SEA process, state that the processes of preparing a Development Plan, SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) should be integrated and prepared in an iterative manner. The Environment Report should outline how the SEA process will be carried out in tandem with the preparation of the preparation of the new Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and its accompanying AA. The SEA process, which should also include Strategic Review Meetings and SEA/AA/Development Plans workshops, ensured that the Plan is informed by environmental considerations from the outset. An SEA Team should be fully involved in the analysis of development options throughout the process of the Plan preparation to ensure that environmental considerations and environmental effects are considered in the formulation of strategic goals and development objectives.

The current Cavan County Development Plan (2008-2014), as amended, introduced the requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening as part of the Variation No. 2 of 2011. This is in line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010, as amended. The AA Screening is carried out on all applications that fall within the Buffer Zones of the Natura 2000 Network of sites in the County. See Attached Map as Appendix 3: AA Buffer Zone Map The Cavan Town & Environs falls within the Buffer Zone for the SAC Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC (000007) and the Lough Oughter SPA (004049). Therefore, any development that is likely to have significant impact on a Natura 2000 site – will be subject to the screening process.

An Appropriate Assessment of the draft new County Development Plan and the Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan for the period 2014-2020 is being prepared in tandem with the Environmental report and the draft plans.

### **5.3.9 Main Issues in relation to Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna**

Key issues must be identified at this strategic stage so that development can be directed to appropriate areas which will avoid any designated or sensitive areas of natural heritage in order to minimize potential impact.

- ⊕ The drainage of wetlands, building on flood plains or land used by migratory birds, runoff from developments into watercourses, removal of hedgerows, culverting of streams, increased recreational use of natural assets due to increased population are all impacting on our biodiversity
- ⊕ All development which takes place on greenfield sites causes an impact. The replacement of natural and semi-natural habitats with artificial surfaces results in loss of species from that location. However, it must be noted that an accumulation of species loss from greenfield developments can result in a loss of a habitat and the species associated with that habitat.
- ⊕ Housing developments, land reclamation and intensive farming on an area can result in segregation of habitats and a significant loss of hedgerows. Road developments can also result in significant habitat fragmentation. Drainage of wetlands and building on flood plains or land used by migratory birds seriously impacts on biodiversity



- ✚ Aquatic flora and fauna are vulnerable to soil erosion, run-off from agriculture, industrial and municipal effluents. Eutrophication of our lakes which can result in fish kills, has been a problem for the County, however, the introduction of Bye-Laws by the County Council in relation to agriculture, waste-water treatment systems and motorised boats has improved and will continue to contribute to the improvement of the aquatic environment. Under the Water Framework Directive, water quality must achieve a 'good status' by 2015. Cavan's inland fisheries are very important from an ecological point of view but also as a source of tourism revenue. Another important threat to our native species of flora and fauna are invasive non-native species such as Japanese Knotweed, Zebra Mussel (which have colonised the Rann side of Lough Oughter), Rhododendron and Giant Hogweed which are species causing major ecological changes and damage to the habitats, where they become established.
- ✚ As there has been a substantial increase in hedgerow removal in recent years, a Hedgerow Survey of Cavan County was undertaken in 2006. ( as an action of the County Cavan Heritage Plan 2006 – 2011). The focus has been on the extent, composition, structure, condition, and management of hedgerows in the county. Despite the extent of the removal of hedgerows in recent years, the remaining hedgerows are species rich when a comparison was made with surrounding counties. The policies of the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.
- ✚ Our protected species include otters, bats, badgers and salmonids. There are many other species of biodiversity value in Cavan Town and Environs area. Sources of local biodiversity include ponds, ditches, watercourses and lakes, these should be acknowledged in the plan.

#### Opportunities

- While there are nationally and internationally designated sites identified and protected, it is also important that local habitats of value/ importance (e.g. woodlands, wetland features) are all protected. These include hedgerows and trees or groups of trees and undesignated sites.
- The Tree Register of Ireland (TROI) Project 1999 surveyed trees in County Cavan with many in the Cavan Town (Farnham Estate) area. A number of trees will be protected by objectives of the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan. Cavan County Council will continue to ensure that trees should be retained as groups and any trees removed should be in the context of overall good environmental management rather than motivated by commercial redevelopment or other similar reasons.
- It is important that nature conservation is brought to the fore of policy making in the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan. We need to create a balance between forestry and biodiversity, promoting the Native Woodland Scheme, Forestry Policies and measures which ensure that native broadleaves become much more common (as least 30% broadleaf in line with the CAP Rural Development Plan 2000 – 2006) as exotic conifer planting has dominated in the past.
- A Feasibility Study and Concept Plan for an Ecology Park and Amenity Area at Green Lough, Cavan has been undertaken and completed. Cognisance will be taken to this study in the preparation of the development plans and opportunity to capitalise on the unique natural asset for the Town & Environs of Cavan, both in terms of its biodiversity value and as an amenity asset for the town.
- A Bio-diversity Plan for the County has been undertaken at present. While baseline data on habitats and species is as yet insufficient to allow for on-going monitoring, Heritage Council Management Plans (e.g. Habitats) can be linked with SEA monitoring etc.
- Any management plans in places for the nationally and internationally designated sites (SACs, SPAs, NHAs) in County Cavan are considered will be consulted in the preparation of this Environmental Report especially if any activities in the vicinity of the designated areas may cause a significant impact. (this includes any

infrastructural projects such as Part 8 developments). Applications occurring within a specified distance or buffer zone (as established for the Natura 2000 network of a designated features (such as water bodies, valuable habitats etc.) will be subject to Appropriate Assessment.

- Habitat mapping and habitat quality will be examined in the Cavan Town and Environs area and throughout the county especially with regard to non-designated sites.
- The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides for water management on the basis of River Basin Districts (RBDs). It addresses inland surface waters, estuarine and coastal waters and groundwater. Monitoring of the River Basin District will provide information on biodiversity and will form part of the monitoring of the Development Plan.
- Wetlands in the Cavan Town and Environs area are an important resource due to their importance in terms of flood control, enhancement of water quality and the importance placed on these areas by the Water Framework Directive. There are no Ramsar sites in the Cavan Town area though there are a number of wetland areas which should continue to be protected such as the Green Lough area.

#### **Information Gaps and Limitations**

- Baseline data on habitats and species is as yet insufficient to allow for on-going monitoring.
- Information largely paper based with exceptions of designated areas in digitised format (GIS)
- Lack of habitats surveys for some non-designated sites
- Notification of changes to designations can be slow
- 

#### **5.4. Population & Human Health**

**5.4.1 Current Situation** Cavan Town is the dominant urban centre in County Cavan and has a long history of habitation which is reflected in its built and natural heritage. Through the utilization of natural resources, the natural environment has been gradually modified. Cavan County Council and Cavan Town Council must manage the potential impacts on air, water and soil in order to limit the potential for adverse impacts on human health. It is also worth noting that it is important to create an urban area that is conducive to encouraging healthy activities through the provision of services or green spaces, cycle paths and activities for children etc. We must ensure that environmental resources that we have inherited can be passed on to the future generations.

The hierarchy of settlements in County Cavan is dictated by regional and national policy. It is considered that the settlement hierarchy and strategy provided in the existing County Development Plan broadly adheres to that recommended in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region and the National Spatial Strategy. There are eight larger urban centres around Cavan, though they are dominated by Cavan Town. The settlement pattern outside of the urban centres comprises predominantly of individual rural housing. Figure 4 identifies the 'urban buffer' area which was designated around Cavan Town and Environs (Cavan County Development Plan 2003 – 2009 Variation No.1 of 2004), in acknowledgement of the pressure for rural housing development in this area.

**5.4.2 Interrelationships between population and human health-** There are inter-relationships between human health and the population and a number of the environmental components such as drinking water quality (sourced from both ground and surface waters) and bathing water quality. Air quality, transport infrastructure, traffic and settlement patterns encompassing commuter settlements are all linked with human health and population. In order to sustain a population of the county, there needs to be a health economy.

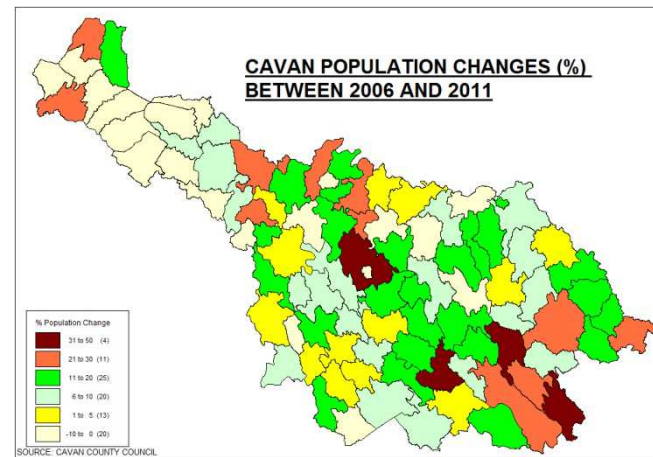
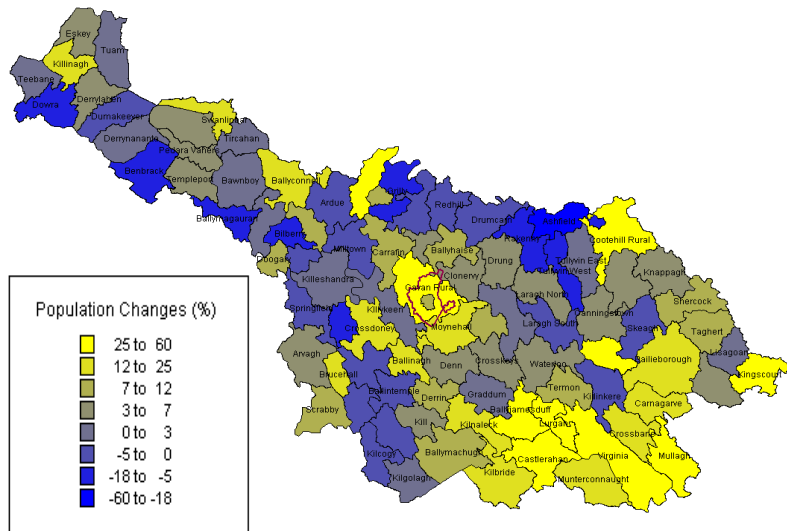
The population of the County has risen from 64,003 persons in the (CS0, 2006) to 73,183 persons in the (CS0, 2011) indicating a 14.3% rise overall. Though the population within Cavan town and the towns in the East of the County has risen, the west of the county has seen a decline in population (as is consistent with the findings of the 2006 Census).

In the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), the county town of Cavan was identified as a Hub Town and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (BRG's – 2010 - 2022) set a target of (12,800) for the year 2020. Cavan Town & Environs has already reached its target population of 10,205 by 2011.

**Table 6: Census of Population for Cavan Town & Environs from 2002 – 2011,**

Town/ Division	Electoral	2002 Census	2006 Census	2011 Census
<u>Environs Cavan Total</u>				
Cavan Rural E.D*.		2,560	3,693 (growth 54.7%)	6,170
Moynehall E.D*.		2,387	256 (growth 48.0%)	386
Total Cavan Urban & Environs		173	7,883	10,25 (29.45%)

**Figure 12: Population changes between 2002 – 2006 & Population changes between 2006-2011**



**5.4.3 Housing & future land requirements:** County Cavan has seen at least 11 000 housing units (both private and public) being constructed over a nine year period – large number of houses are constructed in the countryside (i.e. rural urban generated one-off houses). This is a significant factor, especially considering the journey to work and reliance on private motor vehicles which impacts on the environment and is of increasing concern with regards to quality of life issues. The (DoE,C&LG) – Housing Section have published statistics on house-building for Ireland. The following includes house completions for both Private and Social housing in the County of Cavan

**Table 7: House Completions in County Cavan, by Number – 2004 - 2012**

Year	Private	Social	TOTAL
2004	-	-	1707
2005	-	-	2129
2006	-	-	2686
2007	-	-	2108
2008	955	107	1062
2009	510	68	578
2010	292	3	295
2011	259	13	272
2012	129	3	232

Source: Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government website: [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie)

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (DoE,C&LG) – Housing Section, undertake a Housing Land Availability Study (HLA) Returns on an annual basis. The Housing Land Availability Returns 2012, carried out by the Planning Department in Cavan County Council, indicated that there were 80 uncompleted dwelling units in the Cavan Town and Environs plan area and that there was permission granted for 711 units with 2 years life remaining. These statistics indicate that there is adequate housing stock in vacant and permitted developments (total 791 units vacant and un-commenced with 2 years left on planning permission) to meet the housing needs of Cavan Town and environs for this plan period (2014-2020).

- ⊕ By developing what developments are under construction, what have not been developed and what are proposed to be developed (i.e. where planning has been granted, and an Extension of time to Planning Permission has been granted which will be included in the Core Strategy of the draft Development Plan. The Core Strategy and the Settlement Strategy of the Development Plan will determine the amount of land required to meet the population growth in the County. **Workforce:** The economic development of the county is an important consideration in terms of location of zoned land. The following considerations will be taken into account from the CSO, 2011:

At the time of the 2011 Census, the population of Cavan (classified as over 15 yrs and who participate in the Labour force – as opposed to having another status such as student, retired or homemaker – is known as the labour force participation rate. It is measured as the number in the labour force – at work or unemployed, expressed as a percentage of the total aged 15 or over:

**Table 8: Principle Economic Status**

Principle Economic Status	2006	2011	Change	% change
Not in Labour Force	18,911	21,311	2,400	12.6%
Pop. Aged 15 or Over (A+B)	49,751	55,951	6,200	12.4%

Source: Census 2011: Social Inclusion Unit Cavan County Council: report Census 2011 – Highlights for Cavan

Within County Cavan, the male labour force participation rate for 2011 is 35.4% while the female rate is 26.5%. The number of people outside the labour force:- students; those looking after the home or family, returned persons and those unable to work due to disability increased by 12,6% or 2,400 persons between 2006-2011. The largest contributor to this increase was the number of retired persons which increased by 20.5% (1,232 persons) from 2006 – 2011.

**5.4.4. Employment & Unemployment** within the County has trebled (that is: lost; given-up a previous job or looking for their first regular job) based on their declared principal economic status in April 2011 for Cavan was 7,331 or 21.2% of the total labour force, an increase of 4,810 compared to 2006. There has been a greater increase in the number of unemployment amongst males in co. Cavan – 1,475 in 2006 to 4,765 in 2011 (a 65% increase).

There are 1,010 less people at work within the county of Cavan by – Broad Industrial Group during the inter-census period. The Construction industry has gone way down from 4,082 in 2006 to 1,765 in 2011 while Education has gone up from 1,472 in 2006 to 2,172 in 2011. There was an increase in Agric, Forestry and Fishing Sector – which traditionally has seen a decrease over the preceding years. In terms of the categories defined under Broad Industrial Group for Employment, the highest sector for employment in the was in the wholesale and Retail trade, followed by Manufacturing Industries and Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing; Health & Social Work.

**5.4.5. Education:** County Cavan has shown an increase in the number of students from 4,325 in 2006 to 5,477 in 2011 (a change of 26.6%), which may be attributed to the lack of economic opportunities available in the County and State, due to the economic downturn. Social sciences, business and law is the most common area of study for the people within the County to go on to complete their 3<sup>rd</sup> level qualification followed by ‘Health & Welfare’ and thirdly- Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction. Cavan as a County has a high dependence on agriculture which militates against, to some extent, its industrial performance. With a few exceptions the County is dominated by small firms. Industrial units in Cavan are generally small in national terms but they are still considerably bigger than the rest of the Border Region (Cavan, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Monaghan & Louth). In terms of total industrial output per person, it is below the national average. Whilst the wages and salaries in Cavan remain low relative to the national average, they are high relative to output.

The continued development of small businesses has to play an important role in promoting local employment opportunities. In the early stages of business start-up, it is sometimes necessary or appropriate for enterprises to be run from home. Additionally, the pressures to reduce car usage for environmental and social reasons highlights the benefits of home-working.

These changes are supported by the continued rapid development of information communications technology which is encouraging and allowing practices such as teleworking and satellite offices to develop in many professions. Sattelite offices can provide access to employment for those without access to a car, to facilities with small children, the disabled and the elderly. It is anticipated that home-working will continue to increase significantly in the future mainly due to advances in IT that equip people to work from home.

The majority of households would have at least one car (40.6%). Only 14% would have no car and 36% of households in Cavan have 2 cars, thus a total of 86.2% of households in Cavan are likely to have a car, which is significantly higher than the national average of 82.4%. Thus indicating a high dependence on private transport.

**5.4.6. Internet and Broadband** - The table below, indicates that 17,270 households in co. Cavan have a personal computer. This represents a significant jump from 2006 when only 10,796 of the population owned one. There has also been a huge improvement in the availability of access to broadband across the county with 55.4% of households having access to broadband in 2011 compared to only 9% of households having access in 2009. The proportion of homes using slower types of internet connection decreased accordingly from 29.9% in 2006 to 9.5% in 2011, with those having no internet connection fell from 48.1% to 32.7%.

**Table 8: Internet and Broadband ownership/connections**

	Total	PC Ownership			Access to Internet		
County Number	25720	Y 17,270	N 7,905	N/S 545	Y 14,250	N 8,426	N/S 599
%		67.1%	30.7%	2.1%	55.4%	9.5%	2.3%

Source: Census 2011: Social Inclusion Unit Cavan County Council: report Census 2011 – Highlights for Cavan

Nationally Broadband usage has increased from 21.11% in 2006 to 65.3% in 2011. In Cavan, this would still fall significantly into the lower ranking counties in terms of Broadband coverage.

#### 5.4.7 Main Issues in relation to Population and Human Health

- ⊕ In order to accommodate the population growth in the county, sufficient water and waste infrastructure must be provided alongside new developments.
- ⊕ The Planning Authority will need to employ a series of demand management techniques through the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan in order to encourage more sustainable forms of development in smaller towns and villages, and seek to allow persons who can reside in local areas to work locally, in order to reduce air emissions and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the need to travel and improve the quality of life encouraging sustainable travel patterns.
- The principles of Transport 21 should be integrated into the Core Strategy and policy objectives for the Cavan Town & Environs Plan

#### **Waste**

Waste Material is a considerable issue in terms of the health of the population of County Cavan. Although there are no SEVESO sites within the county which fall within the Major Accidents Directive (Control of Major Accidents Hazards involving Dangerous Substance) Regulations, 2000 (SI. 476), there are a number of industrial sites and intensive land-use sites.

In terms of household waste generated in the Border Region, (See Table....below), Cavan is performing well with the second lowest Mixed Residual collection in the Border Region. The EPA report that: The Border Region (25.4%) had the highest proportion of household waste brought to bring banks and civic amenities

compared with 13.5% in the Mid-East Region. Over one-third of household waste was brought to bring banks and civic amenity sites in Cavan (36.7%), while Limerick City the corresponding proportion was only. 7.5%.

**Table 10:: Household waste by county in the Border Region, 2010 – by %of row** ( Source: EPA, 2010)

County	Mixed Residual Collection	Kerbside Recyclables	Bring Banks & Civic Amenities	Other	Tonnes 000
Cavan	47.6	14	36.7	1.5	19.1
Louth	44.6	17.2	32.9	5.4	50.6
Donegal	67.2	12.8	14.8	5.2	25.7
Monaghan	57.3	23.7	16.6	2.4	15.6
Leitrim	51.8	20.5	16.5	11.2	6.5
Sligo	63.9	10.6	17.9	7.7	17.2

- ✦ The Draft Development Plan will have clear policies in relation to SEVESO sites in accordance with guidance from the Health and Safety Authority.
- ✦ It is important that all facilities which require IPPC licences (a majority of which discharge to municipal sewers, water bodies and air), Section 4/16 licences (Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977) are identified in the Environmental Report in order to highlight environmental resources and to ensure that any short-term or long-term environmental effects are examined and mitigated where possible.
- ✦ Cavan also has a large number of watercourses to which effluent is discharged by Cavan County Council from its municipal waste water treatment plants and privately by licence issued by the Environment Section of Cavan County Council. The assimilative capacity of these water courses represents a significant asset to facilitate development within the county. The capacity of the existing infrastructure, the impact on water courses, plans for and details of upgrades, and the assimilative capacity of watercourses, is currently being compiled within the Council.
- ✦ The only operational landfill site in the county is the Council site at Corranure, two miles from Cavan Town on the Cootehill Road. It is currently licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency to accept 90,000 tonnes per annum. Corranure Landfill accepts a wide range of materials for recycling. Figure 16 (below) identifies the counties which are part of the North-East Region Management Plan area and the representative population sizes of the towns in each county.
- ✦ The Local Authorities will continue to pursue a policy of rationalisation of landfills in the long term. They will continue to ensure that all landfills are operated to the highest international standards in accordance with waste licenses issued by the EPA.
- ✦ In accordance with the Waste Management Acts, 1996 – 2003, Local Authorities in the North East are required to prepare a register of closed landfill sites within the Region for the purposes of identifying what, if any remedial measures are required to be carried out at the sites.
- ✦ Other issues of importance include the redevelopment of brownfield sites which may lead to the generation of contaminated soils and the provision of recycling facilities and recycling initiatives for the population of Cavan Town and Environs. There are currently four ‘Bottle Banks’ in Cavan Town (Leisure Centre, Tesco Car Park, Breffni Terrace and Resource Centre) and litter management is being tackled through a ‘Litter Management Plan’. There is also one Litter Management Officer and two Litter Wardens for the county who respond to littering or dumping incidents and are involved in awareness campaigns.



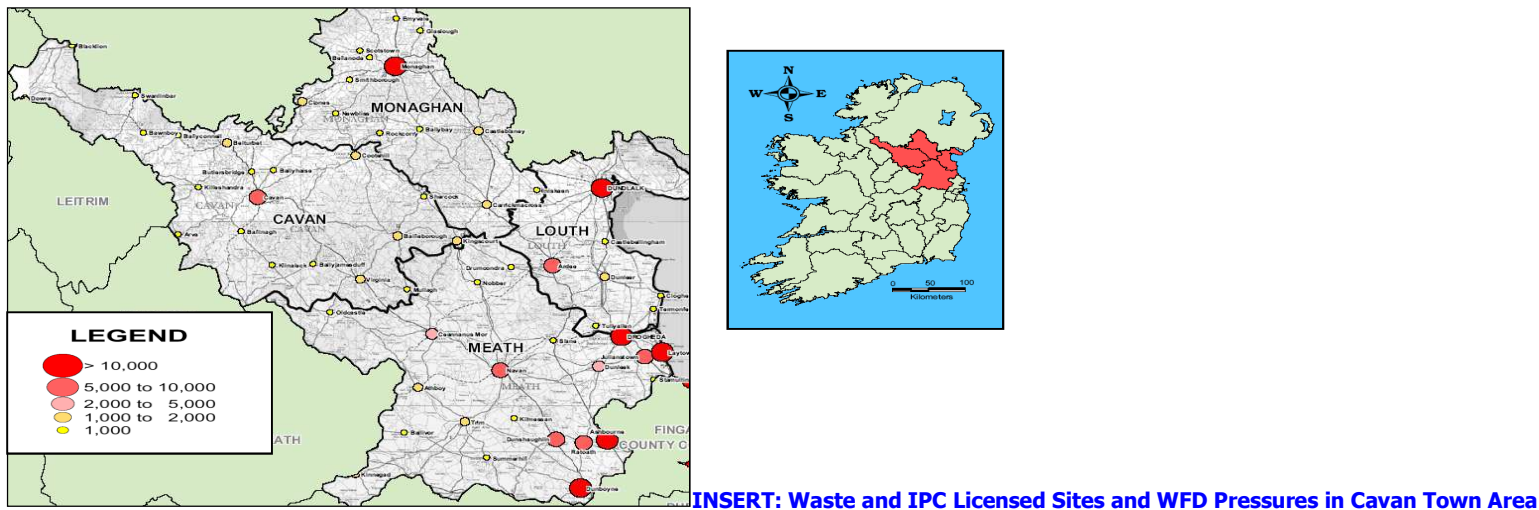
- The new Draft Development Plan will have regard to the waste policies identified in the North East Waste Management Plan for construction and demolition waste, hazardous waste, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), end of life vehicles, tyres and sludge wastes.

**Landfill:** The only operational landfill site in the county is the Council site at Corranure, two miles from Cavan Town on the Cootehill Road. It is currently licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency to accept 90,000 tonnes per annum. Corranure Landfill accepts a wide range of materials for recycling. Figure 15 (below) identifies the counties which are part of the North-East Region Management Plan area and the representative population sizes of the towns in each county.

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**Figure 13: North-East Waste Management Plan**



**INSERT: Waste and IPC Licensed Sites and WFD Pressures in Cavan Town Area**



**Waste Water:** Cavan also has a large number of watercourses to which effluent is discharged by Cavan County Council from its municipal waste water treatment plants and privately by licence issued by the Environment Section of Cavan County Council. The assimilative capacity of these water courses represents a significant asset to facilitate development within the county. The capacity of the existing infrastructure, the impact on water courses, plans for and details of upgrades, and the assimilative capacity of watercourses, is currently being compiled within the Council.

#### **Ground Water Protection Scheme**

The mapping of the county [has been undertaken by the Geological Survey of Ireland \(GSI\)](#) The Ground Water Survey will identify flood risk arising from surface water. The permeability of both surface soils and subsoil will be analysed and a detailed baseline with an aquifer potential, vulnerability and source protection will be available to the planning Authority.

#### **Drinking Water Sources**

Water quality is not only important for ecological reasons; all development depends on quality water supplies whether the abstraction is from rivers, lake or boreholes. With an increasing population, there will be a greater demand on these sources. Water based recreation is an important aspect of tourism for both residents and visitors to County Cavan. Urban runoff is increasingly being highlighted as a source of pollution in water courses. The Planning Authority will continue to promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).

**Quarries:** There are no quarry sites within the immediate Cavan Town Environs area, however there are quarries located in the wider environs area which must be monitored in order to ensure that water resources and human health remain unaffected

**Other Issues:** There are a number of other issues which relate to population and human health, though are not covered in detail in this section. They include the following:

- ⊕ Radon – radon in schools, workplace radon
- ⊕ Children’s Health and the Environment
- ⊕ Noise
- ⊕ Noise Regulations – S.I. No. 140 of 2006 Environmental Noise Regulations - housing buffer required
- ⊕ Optimum urban area size and health issues
- ⊕ Economic Growth & Increasing Material and Resource Use
- ⊕ Increasing Waste Generation, Waste Management and Infrastructure Deficit– green bins, brown bins, composting, anaerobic digesters
- ⊕ Export of Recyclable Waste and Promotion of Waste Prevention - Increasing Awareness and Changing Attitudes
- ⊕ Waste Water Treatment Systems in Urban areas.

## 5.5 Landscape and Soil (including minerals)

### Current Situation

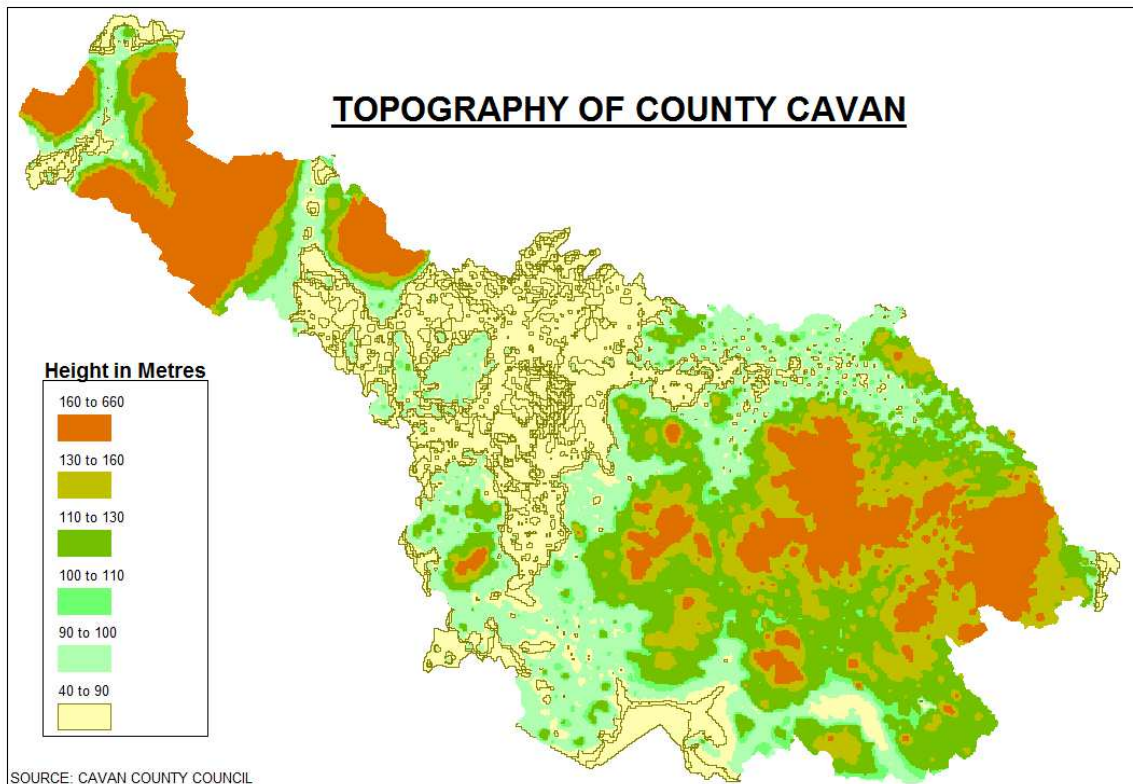
Our landscape contains a broad range of natural resources including rivers, canals, agricultural land, gravel and stone deposits, mineral deposits, bogs, flora and fauna. The County supports a diversity of habitats because of the diversity in topography, rock and soil types.

Landscape includes areas, sites, vistas and features of significant scenic, archaeological, geological, historical, ecological or other scientific interest.

The landscape in Cavan has been forged by ice and river erosion and weathering over many centuries and there are several highly scenic areas including lakes and rivers.

Glaciers shaped the lowland drumlins and inter-drumlin lakes we see throughout the County.

**Figure: 14 Topography of County Cavan**



Source: Cavan County Council (2007)

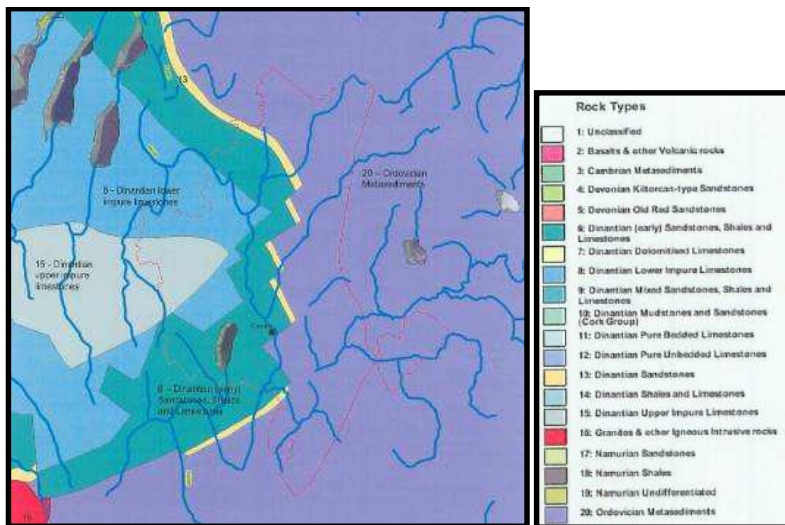
A strong economic climate has given rise to development pressures in Cavan Town and Environs. Cavan Town and Environs lies within a distinctive geographical feature. This lowland drumlin belt consists of small hills of boulder clay (moraines/ tills) deposited at the last ice age circa 13,000 years ago and inter-drumlin lakes. This lithology<sup>8</sup> of the area is mainly turbidite/ mudstone (which were formed under water by powerful currents heavily laden with sediment).

Soil is the biologically active top layer of the earth's surface, consisting of rock and mineral particles mixed with organic matter, organisms, air and water. It is a very important resource which requires very specific conditions for its formation. Consequently it is considered a non-renewable resource. Soils are distinguished by their weathered parent material.

Gleysol and Luvisol are found in the Cavan Town and Environs Area. Luvisol is equivalent to grey brown podzolics, which have a leached soil with strongly developed horizons. The presence of Luvisol soil is considered an indicator of clay enriched subsoil<sup>9</sup>.

The majority of the soils around Cavan Town and its Environs are boulder clays (50%) which may leave poor drainage and as a consequence water levels are prone to fluctuations. However the Swellan area to the west of the town consists of Grey-Brown Podzolics (80%) soils derived from calcareous glacial drift deposits. Such soils are considered the most productive/ fertile and are usually found under agricultural grassland (O' Carroll 1984).

**Figure15 : Geology – Rock Type in Cavan Town Area**



Source: EPA/ GSI (2007)

<sup>8</sup> Cavan County Council (2006) Atlas Information

<sup>9</sup>

Aalen *et al.*'s 'Geology of Ireland' depicts the Cavan Town and Environs area lying within a sheet of Silurian and Ordovician rock formations. Figure 12 (EPA, 2007) depicts Dinantian limestones, sandstones and shales in the western half of Cavan Town area and Ordovician metasediments located in the eastern half of the Cavan Town and Environs area.

The surrounding lands are used for permanent pasture and rough grassland or scrub according to the 'Landstat Classification'<sup>10</sup>. The topography lies between 75 and 150 metres above sea level.

There is no Coillte owned forestry in the immediate Cavan Town and Environs area. However there are a number of wooded areas around the town including Drumkeen House Woodland which is a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

There is one Coillte managed Forest Park - Killykeen Forest Park located to the north-west of the Cavan Town area. Woodland in the Farnham Estate and the Drumkeen House Woodlands outside Cavan Town are all immensely valuable to our landscape.

Hedgerows and stone walls are important visual amenities contributing to the historic character of the landscape as features of traditional farming practices and acting as field boundaries and townland boundaries. They are an important in terms of ecology and biodiversity. Hedgerows are also important nesting sites for many bird species. Hedgerows with soil banks are often used by badgers for sett sites. The corridor role of hedgerows in facilitating the movement of wild flora and fauna through the landscape is believed to be enhanced significantly if hedgerows link into other (natural or semi-natural) habitat features.

#### **Main Issues in relation to the Soil and Landscape of County Cavan**

- ⊕ A variety of development types have potential to impact on the landscape, its soils and geology. They include developments such as windfarms, extractive industries, forestry, agriculture, industrial and commercial development, rural dwellings and road projects.
- ⊕ Any greenfield development will require the movement or removal of soils. Various developments at certain locations have led to the depletion subsoils, topsoils and the mineral/ rock being extracted. For example, new retail outlets are best located within the existing town centre by new build, infill development and renovation of existing structures.
- ⊕ Large industrial processes can also result in land contamination and intensive landuses such as landfill especially in the case of this Development Plan must be monitored and any significant effects mitigated.
- ⊕ Soil erosion can take place when vegetation is removed from a site due to agricultural or forestry practices and during construction works. If the soil is washed away it can enter water systems, causing siltation which has a major potential to impact on water quality and fishery resources. Soils have the ability to absorb nutrients from agricultural and domestic waste water. However, when its absorption capacity is reached, the excess of nutrients are easily washed away into water courses, causing eutrophication (over-enrichment) in lakes and pollution in our drinking water supplies.

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<sup>10</sup> County Council (2006) Atlas Information  
<http://www.cavancoco.ie/ccwspublish/general/documents/Atlasinfo.pdf>

- ⊕ The rivers and lakes of the county are of particular scenic and amenity value. Much of the county lies in a lowland drumlin belt. The countryside is characterised by a range of field sizes, bordered by low hedgerows with dairy and beef farming noted as the main forms of agriculture.
- Landscape Impact Assessments may be required for certain types of developments in vulnerable landscapes.
- The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) is compiling a list of geological sites around the country, in need of protection through NHA designation. These will be designated over a period of time, with the most “at risk” sites receiving protection first.
- Tree Protection Order will also be considered during the Review of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan period.
- Landscape Impact Assessments may also be required for certain types of development in vulnerable landscapes and risk assessments for contaminated sites may be required prior to any development/ activities proposed on sites.
- ⊕ Suitable building designs can be encouraged with possible height restrictions and designs which enhance the surrounding landscape. There are opportunities with derelict sites and brownfield development. A Landscape Character Assessment allows for a proactive approach to landscape and allows the landscape to be viewed for its ability to accommodate developments providing an indicator as to where developments might be most suited.

### **Information Gaps and Limitations**

- A soil survey of the county has not yet been completed
- Baseline data on habitats and species is as yet insufficient to allow for on going monitoring.
- Information largely paper based with exceptions of designated areas in digitised format (GIS)
- Notification of changes to designations can be slow

### **Possible Task(s)**

- Preparation of register of known features of geological/ geomorphological interest
- Remediation of closed mines/ quarries
- Landscape Character Assessment of Cavan Town and Environs and Landscape Visual Assessment
- Designation and protection of sensitive landscapes
- Protection of scenic views and scenic routes
- Guidelines on visual assessment of significant developments in context of key landscape features
- Investigate opportunities for protection of best-quality soils through land use zoning
- Possible opportunities in Eco-tourism and Geo-tourism in the Environs area of Cavan by linking field study centres with others around the county

## 5.6 Water

### Surface Water

The quality of Cavan's surface waters is not only important from an ecological viewpoint but they provide a source of drinking water and they are very important in terms of tourism for both residents and visitors to County Town.

Cavan Town and Environs lies wholly within the Erne Catchment and is part of North-West Region District (A) River Basin District (Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (A)).

In response to the increasing threat of pollution and the increasing demand from the public for cleaner rivers, lakes and beaches, the EU has developed the Water Framework Directive. The Water Framework Directive (WFD), Directive 2000/60/EC, was adopted in 2000 as a single piece of legislation covering rivers, lakes, groundwater and transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters. Its objectives include the attainment of good status in water bodies that are of lesser status at present and retaining good status or better where such status exists at present. There are provisions also for artificial water bodies such as canals. The Directive requires integrated management and planning based on River Basin Districts (RBDs), which consist of river catchments or groups of catchments. Article 8 (1) of the Directive states "Member States shall ensure the establishment of programmes for the monitoring of water status in order to establish a coherent and comprehensive overview of water status within each river basin district". Cavan County Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the quality of river and lake water within its functional area is maintained or improved. The implementation of the Water Framework Directive required a major review of water status and the preparation of the River Basin Management Plans. In 2010, Cavan County Council adopted the River Basin Management Plans (2009-2015). These plans identify the status of waters, the pressures on water and the measures required to protect and restore waters. In order to achieve the objectives and ambitious targets set out in the RBMPs, incorporation of the plans into the spatial planning process is essential to ensure sustainable development. This Directive is unique in that, for the first time, it establishes a framework for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater, and their dependent wildlife/habitats under one piece of environmental legislation. Specifically the Water Framework Directive aims to:

- Protect and enhance all surface, ground and coastal waters.
- Achieve "good status" for all waters.
- Manage water bodies based on river basins (or catchments).
- Involve the public.
- Streamline legislation.
- 

The Directive states that water quality management is centred on river basins, which are natural geographical areas that occur in the landscape. Management of these basins will be achieved through management plans which are created for each River Basin District (RBD). There are 4 no. RBDs in Cavan, as illustrated below:



Figure 16: Water Framework Directive – River Basin Districts, County Cavan

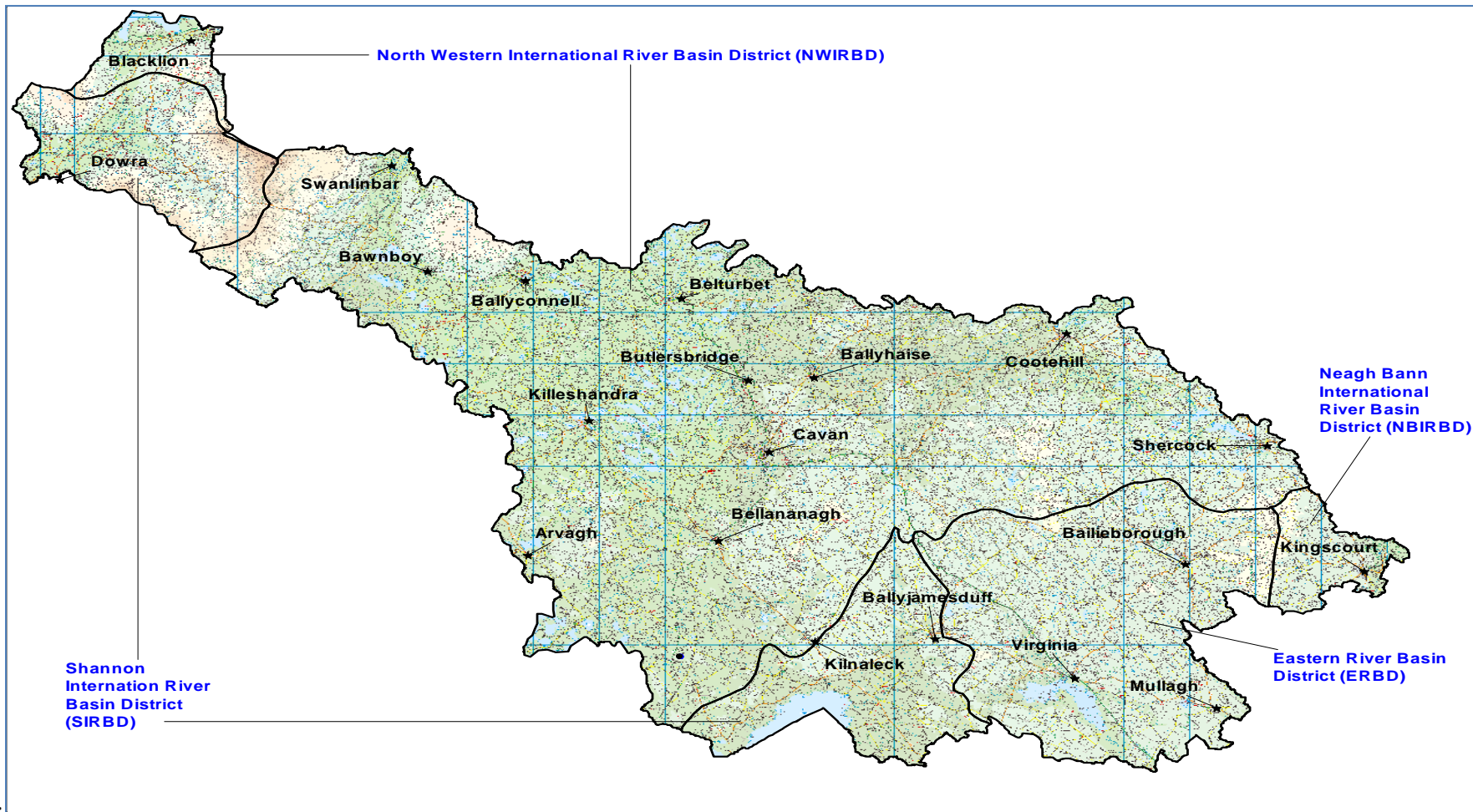


Figure 17: EPA Water Quality Map

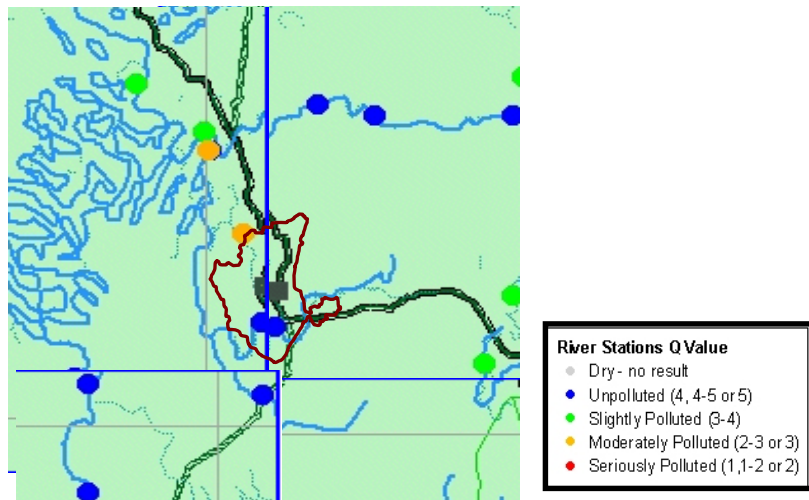
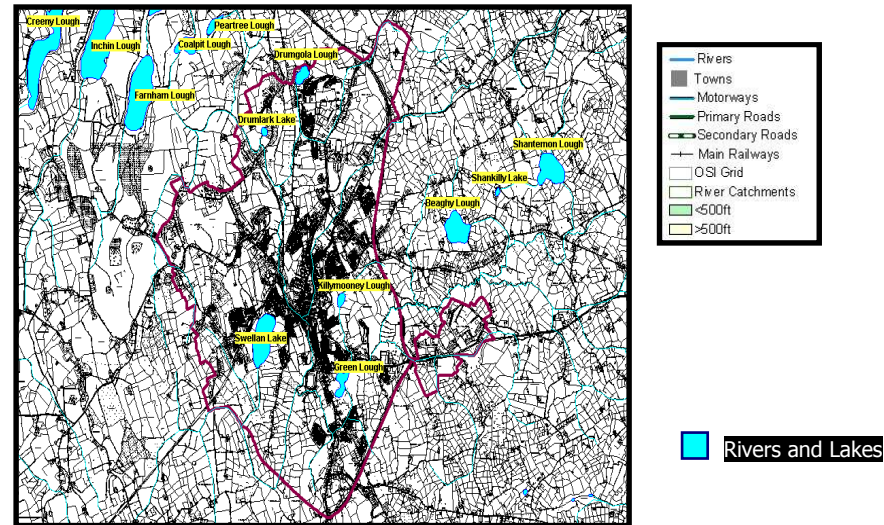


Figure 18: Lakes in the Cavan Town and Environs Area



### Fisheries

The Inland Fisheries Board states that County Cavan contains a wide range of fishery habitats with four main river catchments located in the county, namely, Erne, Shannon, Inny, Boyne, Dee and Glyde. These catchments contain a wide variety of fish from Salmonids (Salmon and Brown Trout) to Coarse fish and Pike. Many main river channels and their tributaries are exceptional in the area in supporting Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*, listed under Annex II and V of the EU Habitats Directive) and Sea trout (*Salmo trutta*) populations. Recent data also indicates the presence of spawning populations of Sea, River and Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra* species – Annex II of the EU’s Habitats Directive) in the County. This highlights the sensitivity of watercourses in the County. Only, clean, uncontaminated surface waters should drain to the river network at all times.

Local Authorities should endeavour to protect the fishery resource by laying down appropriate conditions on developments likely to impact on inland waters. They also suggest that Development Plans in urban areas should promote streams and rivers as part of the aesthetic amenity as rivers and streams can often form the central theme for the development of linear parks while still retaining their qualities as a fishery. The main impacts on fisheries include interference with fish migration, angling, poaching and causing aesthetic offence.

The main species found in the Cavan Town area are coarse fish. The Northern Regional Fisheries Board identifies Bream, Tench, Roach, Hybrids, Perch and Pike in Lough Inchin located to the north west of the Cavan Town and Environs Development area.



## Flooding

Flooding is an important issue when considering location of development [in relation to the flood plain of a watercourse](#). The Planning Authority will continue to have regard to the indicative areas on Ordnance Survey Maps, local knowledge, the advice of the Fisheries Boards, Area Engineers and the Environment section of Cavan County Council: The OPW has identified a number of flood points in the Cavan Town area. In all 13 are identified:

1. Green Lake (the level rises and floods significant area every year after heavy rain)
2. Pollamore at Liberty Insurance site (drain overflows its banks every year after heavy rain, road is liable to flood)
3. Pollamore (river overflows its banks every year after heavy rain)
4. Cavan Breffni Lane (Cavan River overflows its banks every year after heavy rain)
5. Carrickane (Cavan River overflows its banks every year after heavy rain)
6. Swellan Lake, Glenlara (Swellan Lake level rises and floods significant area after very heavy rain. Not every year)
7. Derrycramph (River overflows its banks every year after heavy rain)
8. Larragh Crescent (River overflows its banks after very heavy rain. Not every year)
9. Railway Road (Cavan River overflows its banks after very heavy rain. Road is liable to flood and properties are affected. Not every year)
10. Farnham Street (Basements of houses were flooded from overflow from a culverted river. Occasionally after extreme rainfall)
11. Con Smith Memorial Park (River overflows its banks after very heavy rain. Not every year)
12. Latt (Road used to flood every year after heavy rain due to inadequate drainage. The surface water network receives water from the Cavan By-Pass. Council has installed larger pipes and alleviated the flooding)
13. Corranure (Drains overflow every year after heavy rain. The drains backup from an inadequate culvert. Council has undertaken remedial work)

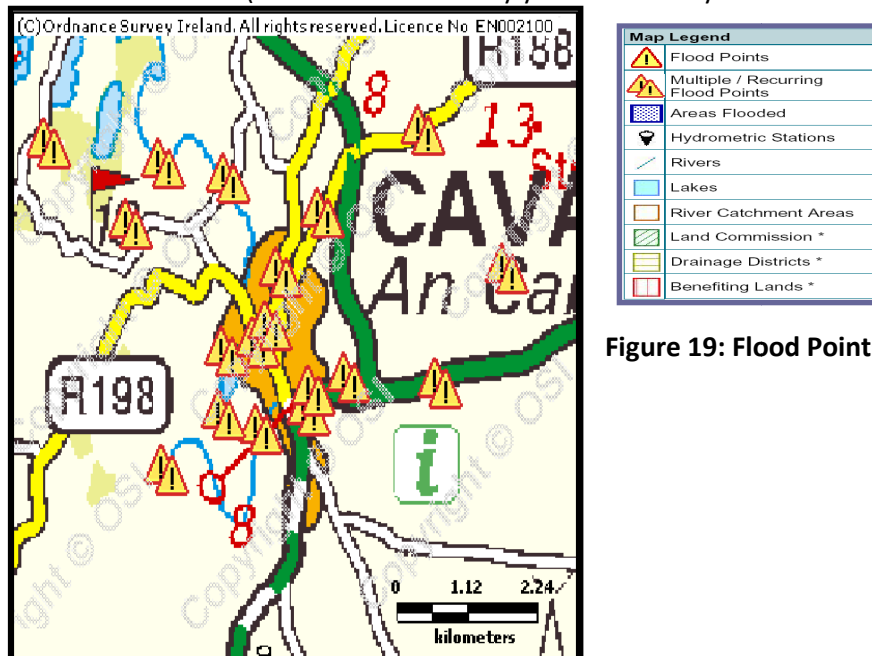


Figure 19: Flood Points – Cavan Town & Environs

It should be noted that the identified flooding areas are all multiple/ recurring flood points and a flood risk management of these areas currently at risk must be taken into account in the preparation of the new Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan. Climate change may have implications with regard to the siting of development and design standards.

## Urban Wastewater

The treatment of wastewater from urban areas is an important factor in the quality of surface waters. The EPA Report “Focus on Urban Wastewater Discharges in Ireland” – Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2011, provides data on the performance of urban wastewater treatment plants and waste water infrastructure in place in Ireland in 2011. It is the second update to “Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland” report, which was published by the EPA in February 2012. The report indicates that:

**Table 11: Compliance in 2010 and 2011 with the Directive’s requirements on total nitrogen in waste water discharged to sensitive areas from urban areas >10,000 p.e.**

Water Services Authority	Urban Area	Reg. No.	Nitrogen Pass or fail in 2010	Reason for fail in 2010	Nitrogen pass or fail in 2011	Reason for fail in 2011
Cavan	Cavan	D0020-01	Fail	Quality & Sample No.	Fail	Quality

**Table 12: Compliance in 2010 and 2011 with the Directive’s requirements on total phosphorous in waste water discharged to sensitive areas from urban areas >10,000 p.e.**

Water Services Authority	Urban Area	Reg. No.	Phosphorous Pass or fail in 2010	Reason for fail in 2010	Phosphorous pass or fail in 2011	Reason for fail in 2011
Cavan	Cavan	D0020-01	Fail	-	-	-

Overall, the performance of the Cavan Urban WWTP indicated that the quality of water discharging into the Cavan River - sensitive waters, (which is located in the N. Western River Basin District) and which has an Urban area (p.e.) of 21,786 and a capacity of the current WWTP (p.e.) of 20,565 has failed its test on quality of discharge.

## Main Issues in relation to Surface, Ground and Drinking Water Quality in County Cavan

- ⊕ The water cycle is in constant motion, most groundwater originates from the surface but it permeates through the strata, to supply (or ‘recharge’) wells or boreholes. Groundwater is exposed to higher concentrations of pollutants that are retained in the layers of rock and soil (Todd, 1980). The exposure also lasts much longer as groundwater moves at a slower pace through the aquifer (water table) (GSI, 1979; Daly, 2000).
- ⊕ There are a variety of development types and locations which have the potential to impact upon water quality. They include agriculture, sewage treatment works, domestic waste water treatment systems, forestry, construction of road/ buildings, industry and extractive industries, landfills, windfarms, motorised boats and spillage incidences. Impacts on water quality due to waste management activities especially landfills may be at a site-specific level but may also impact on groundwater and result in the dispersion of pollutants in the water environment
- ⊕ Flooding becomes an issue if development is constructed in the floodplains of rivers or lakes. If development takes place in close proximity to water courses, it has the potential to contaminate the supply, causing siltation or result in a change in the water channel. Drainage patterns are an important consideration in many parts of the county.
- In urban areas, it is important to have an adequate wastewater collection system infrastructure in place to cope with the unprecedented development in recent years. When zoning lands it is also necessary to provide a good balance between hard surfaces (such as road and parking areas) and green spaces, not only for the

social reasons but in order to absorb rain water. Storm water storage and the percentage of water loss through leaking infrastructure should be continually monitored.

- ✦ The Irish Government acting under European Union direction and the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is required to return ground and surface waters to a satisfactory standard by 2015. Each local authority has responsibility for pollution and environmental protection matters in their functional area<sup>11</sup>. There are eight River Basin Districts on the island of Ireland, four of which are wholly in the Republic, one wholly in NI and three shared cross-border districts. The implementation of the WFD, is a very positive development, and should greatly enhance the protection our rivers and water bodies through a River Basin Management Approach.
- Groundwater needs to be examined in terms of drinking water, aquifer characterisation, aquifer vulnerability, source protection, monitoring and mitigation. The quality of Cavan's fisheries is intrinsically linked with groundwater quality. A Groundwater Protection Scheme has been prepared by GSI for Cavan County Council and will be used to identify vulnerable areas during the preparation of the Draft Development Plan and Environmental Report. It is expected that vulnerable Scenarios should be developed, based on the Ground Water Protection Scheme
  - It is essential that Cavan County Council and Cavan Town Council keeps pace with growing population and the provision of adequate waste water treatment infrastructure.

OPW - Flood Risk and Development – Suggested Policy Guidelines for Inclusion in Development Plans <http://www.flooding.ie/planning.htm>  
<http://www.floodmaps.ie/>



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<sup>11</sup> The EPA will issue formal notification on Water Quality to the Local Authority if there are any serious pollution areas identified.

## 5.7. Air; Noise and Climatic Factors

### 5.7.1 Current Situation – Climate of County Cavan

County Cavan is an inland County and its climate is uniform across the region and relative to the rest of the country. Ireland has an abundance of rainfall with low evapo-transpiration, high humidity, mild winters (4.5°C) and cool summers (15.5°C) (IFA, 2004). The following figure from Met Éireann indicates that the east of the County on average receives 800-1000 mm of rainfall, with the more mountainous areas of north-west Cavan receiving 1600-2000mm per annum.

### 5.7.2 Climate Change

European Environment Agency (EEA) describes Climate change as: *'..... happening now: temperatures are rising, rainfall patterns are shifting, glaciers and snow are melting, and the global mean sea level is rising. We expect that these changes will continue, and that extreme weather events resulting in hazards such as floods and droughts will become more frequent and intense. Impacts and vulnerabilities for nature, the economy and our health differ across regions, territories and economic sectors in Europe. It is very likely that most of the warming since the mid -20th century is due to the observed increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations as a result of emissions from human activities. The global temperature has risen by about 0.8 °C over the past 150 years, and is projected to increase further. Exceeding an increase of 2 °C above pre-industrial temperatures raises the risk of dangerous changes for global human and natural systems.'*

Climate change is recognised as a potential threat to the future sustenance of the planet, with the potential negative impacts on landforms and people arising from a warming of the climate and resultant changes in weather patterns, rise in sea levels, loss of habitats, species and ecosystems and other natural occurrences. Such is the concern over climate change that under the Planning and Development Act, 2010 – Section 10(2)(n) it is a mandatory requirement to include objectives within a Development Plan regarding the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to: *'(i) reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy and other costs due to long term decline in non-renewable resources (i) reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and (iii) address the necessity of adaptation to climate change.'*

In Ireland, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government prepared the following publication: **The National Climate Change Strategy (2007 – 2012)\*** which sets out the measures in which the reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) for Ireland must be achieved. The targets have been agreed under the Kyoto Protocol and Ireland has committed to limit the growth in its emission to 13% above the 1990 levels over the 2008-2012 period. Measures already in place and additional measures outlined in the strategy will effectively reduce our overall emissions from almost 80 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per year to our Kyoto target of 63 million tonnes.

Achieving these emissions will require a sustained effort from all sectors including: Government, public authorities; business and industry; farmers; families and individuals.

The main greenhouse gas we emit is carbon dioxide which is released when we burn fossil fuels like coal, oil, gas or peat to heat our homes, run our cars, generate electricity and provide power for our industries. In addition, agriculture is also a significant source of methane and nitrous oxide.

Working together to achieve these national targets, without compromising competitiveness, economic performance and quality of life is seen as the only way forward. In turn, we will benefit from harnessing more renewable energy, using energy more efficiently and embracing low carbon technologies.

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 builds on Ireland's first Climate Change Strategy published in 2000 and its purpose is to:

- Show clearly the measures by which Ireland will meet its 2008 – 2012 Kyoto Protocol commitment; and
- To show how these measures position us for the post 2012 period 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.

The Strategy presents measures to be undertaken for each of the 8 no. sectors identified including: energy supply; transport; residential; industry; commercial & services; agriculture, land-use & forestry; waste management & public sector. (See Appendix....Key Measures /targets of this strategy).

The EPA report entitled “Ireland’s National Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2010 – 2020 (April, 2010) projects the following sectoral share of total greenhouse gas emissions over the period 2008 – 2012 for the ‘With Measures and Additional Measures scenarios:

- Agriculture – 28%
- Energy – 23%
- Transport – 21%
- Industry and Commercial – 15%
- Residential – 11%
- Waste – 2%

As noted in the EPA’s State of the Environment Report (2011), there has been substantial reductions in Ireland’s GHG emissions due, in part, to the impact of the economic downturn, Ireland is on-track to meet its Kyoto Protocol commitment for the 2008 – 2012 period. The next step is to meet the emissions reductions required under the EU 2008 Climate and Energy Package. The European Commission Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy by 2050 points to EU-wide GHG emission reductions requirements of up to 80% by 2050. Ireland has an unusual emissions profile with emissions from Agriculture being proportionally higher than other member states and projected to increase by 2020. Projections by the EPA indicated that even in the best case scenario, Ireland will breach its annual obligations for the GHG emissions under the EU 2020, in 2017. The impacts of climate change are already occurring in Ireland and are projected to intensify over the coming decades – this must be factored into future planning and investment choices.

### **5.7.3. Air Quality in Ireland: Current situation:**

The EPA Report: Air Quality in Ireland (2011) – Key Indicators of Ambient Air Quality ,provides an overview of air quality in Ireland for 2011, based on data obtained from the 29 monitoring stations that form the national ambient air quality network. This includes the following pollutants: nitrogen oxides; sulphur dioxide; carbon monoxide; ozone; particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and black smoke); benzene and volatile organic compounds; heavy metals; and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

The network is coordinated and managed by the EPA, as the National Reference Laboratory for Air Quality. Monitoring stations are located across the country, with new stations added in 2011 in Shannon Town, Co. Clare and Claremorris, Co. Mayo. The EU legislation on air quality requires that member states divide their territory into zones for the assessment and management of air quality. The zones were amended in the 2009 Regulations (DEHLG) to take account of population changes and updated assessment of air quality. County Cavan is located in zone D, which is categorised as ‘Remainder of Stations’ or areas outside of major urban centres or countryside. The results of monitoring indicate that these areas generally have ‘good’ air quality. (INSERT Table – Air Quality by Station, 2011)

The results of the monitoring are compared to limit values set out in EU and Irish legislation on ambient air quality. As recommended in the 2011 *Review of the Environmental Protection Agency*, map-based assessments are presented.

Overall, air quality in Ireland continues to be good and is among the best in Europe. This is due largely to the prevailing clean westerly air-flow from the Atlantic and the relative absence of large cities and heavy industry. However, Ireland faces a number of challenges in the near future when trying to meet our obligations under EU legislation.

Levels of NO<sub>x</sub> in traffic-impacted city centre areas will continue to be a problem due to the difficulty in achieving large-scale reductions in road traffic numbers. Emissions from residential solid fuel use contribute to high levels of particulate matter and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in villages, towns and cities. Based on particulate matter concentrations for 2009-2011, Ireland is required to reduce exposure to fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) by 10% between 2012 and 2020. This challenging reduction will require an integrated approach across a number of sectors including industrial, transport and residential emissions.

To maintain our good standard of air quality and ensure that in the future our air will be healthy and clean, Ireland must continue to implement and enforce the ban on bituminous coal. Households and businesses should use more efficient methods to burn fuel and shift from solid fuel to cleaner alternatives, while also striving to reduce the demand for energy consumption. We must also reduce traffic emissions through implementing policies to reduce travel demand, increase the use of alternatives to the private car such as cycling, walking and public transport and improve the efficiencies of motorised transport. **(Note:** Real-time air quality information is available on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/monitoring/air/data/> . The website provides members of the public with direct access to current levels of pollutants from relevant fixed stations across Ireland).

#### 5.7.4. Main issues in relation to Air Quality in County Cavan

- ✚ The EPA does not have air monitoring sites in County Cavan. The nearest site is zone D, Kilkitt station which is situated in County Monaghan, close to Cootehill in the north-eastern are of Cavan. This is a rural setting with little traffic or other influences in air quality. Continuous monitoring of nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides and ozone identifies the air quality as 'good' (EPA National Air Monitoring Programme). It is likely that towns such as Cavan however, would have a lower air quality.
- ✚ The emission of pollutants from vehicles is one of the main threats to air quality in Ireland and in the county which contributes significantly to increases in green house gases. In the absence of significant reduction of nitrogen oxides from the road transport sector, which have grown rapidly over the past decade, Ireland is unlikely to meet its commitments under the National Emissions Ceilings (NEC) Directive by 2010.
- ✚ Notwithstanding the increase in use of catalytic converters and cleaner fuels etc. which has generally contributed to the reduction in pollution omitted from motor vehicles - this is probably being offset by the increase in the number of cars circulating on the county's roads. The increase in the number of cars, coupled with the increases in the volume and incidences of traffic congestion may lead to an increase in air (and noise) pollution.

If one looks at the Department of Transport Irish Bulletin of Vehicle and Driver Statistics for (2011) , the number of vehicles within the state area as follows: The total number of licensed vehicles In Ireland, at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 was 2,425,157. It exceeds the December 2010 level by 8,769 (0.36%) vehicles. The main components of the vehicle fleet include 1,887,810 private cars, 320,966 goods vehicles and 64, 423 agricultural tractors and 36,582 motor cycles. The following Table shows the increase in categories of Mechanically propelled vehicles within the state from 1985 – 2011:

**Table13 : No. of Mechanically Propelled Vehicles by Taxation Class (at 31st December, 2011).**

Year	Private cars	Goods Vehicles	Agricultural Tractors etc.	Motor Cycles	Others	Total
1985	709,546	93,369	68,552	26,025	17,266	<b>914,758</b>
1990	796,408	143,166	72,814	22,744	19,127	<b>1,054,259</b>
1995	990,384	141,785	77,925	23,452	28,957	<b>1,262,503</b>
2000	1,319,250	205,575	73,806	30,638	52,952	<b>1,682,221</b>
2005	1,662,157	286,548	76,307	34,300	79,368	<b>2,138,680</b>
2011	1,887,810	320,966	64,423	36,582	115,375	<b>2,425,156</b>

(Source: Department of Transport ,2011)

The above table clearly indicates the increase in the number of vehicles on the Country's roads over the period 1985 – 2011, this factor together with major improvements in the road network have resulted in more frequent traffic movements throughout the county and greater distances between home and workplace. Car ownership is essential to almost everyone living in the rural areas of the county.

However, one of the effects of car-dependent lifestyle is the significant increase in traffic movements and the Census 2011 reveals that 86.2% of residents in County Cavan are likely to own a car. The County's Roads Section has recorded at annual intervals from 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012,2013 traffic counts at various locations throughout the county. The results reflect highest number of traffic movements which are consistent with the concentration of population levels around Cavan Town and Environs and along the National Road (N3) to the south-east of the county.

It should be noted that all developments contribute to air and Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG). In addition to the emissions from motorised vehicles, the second most important issue with regard to air emissions in the County, is the burning of solid fuels such as coal, wood and peat etc. IT is also noted that in terms of the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive contains a range of provisions aimed at improving energy performance in residential and non-residential buildings, both new-build and existing. Since January 2007, any new planning applications for buildings for sale or rent must have a Building Energy Rating (BER). Since 2007, .....BER certificates have been issued in County Cavan.

#### **Radon**

Over recent years, radon gas has been identified as being a hazard to human health. Radon active gas which is naturally produced in the ground from the uranium present in small quantities in rocks and soils . The radiological protection Institute of Ireland (RPI) has undertaken a survey of radon in dwellings throughout the country. Approximately 11,500 houses were surveyed nationally and the results indicate that approximately 7% of dwellings have radon concentrations in excess of the maximum acceptable limit. The majority land area in County Cavan has a >1% homes above the reference level, however, an area of 10m grid between Belturbet and Ballyconnell, has a >20% above the reference level which is the highest in the County. Further details are available on the RPII website: [www.rpii.ie](http://www.rpii.ie) which includes a map indicating the areas of the County which have which have Radon exposure.

## **Main Issues in relation to Climate and Air Quality in County Cavan**

- ✦ Air quality and climate conditions are issues which must be addressed at national, regional and local level. In County Cavan, it is necessary to consider what can be done to reduce the pressures on the atmosphere. Certain parts of our county are suitable for wind energy developments which are a renewable energy source.
- The zoning of land for residential purposes, employment creation and service provision must be considered in terms of with a view to reducing trip generation. Making sustainable means of travel more attractive (such as the provision of cycle paths) is also an important policy consideration for the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.
- ✦ The growth in population means that there will be an evitable greater production of emissions in the Cavan Town area. The town lies adjacent to a national transport corridor from Dublin to Enniskillen. Problems associated with congestion have been eased with the opening of the by-pass in 2006.
- ✦ Climate change effects may change the levels of precipitation and low-lying areas may become more susceptible to flooding.
- The Planning Authority must focus on building a sustainable approach to future planning of Cavan Town and Environs, through the integration of landuse and transportation, the provision of green areas and high quality design both aesthetically and in terms of energy efficiency. A clear transportation strategy has the potential to limit trip generation and promote sustainable means of travel, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- ✦ Waste generation in the county and the disposal of waste to the landfill at Corranure results in the generation of emissions such as methane and hydrogen sulphide. The North East Region Waste Management Plan 2005 – 2010 identifies the way forward in terms of waste management in the region and for the County.
- The Planning Authority will include the requirements of S.I. No. 140 of 2006 Environmental Noise Regulations in the Draft Development Plan. This will require potential developers to identify and implement noise mitigation measures within the zone of influence of existing national roads or of planned new national roads.
- It is expected that the new Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan will contain a chapter on sustainable forms of development, energy efficiency, the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive, 2005, building standards, design and insulation.

## **5.8 Material Assets**

### **5.8.1 Current Situation**

Cavan has a variety of material assets which include the following:

- Built environment (protected structures/ archaeological monuments)
- Infrastructure (roads, telecommunications, wastewater, drinking water)
- Natural assets (quarries, agricultural production, forestry and conservation areas e.g. pNHAs)

The utilisation of Cavan's material assets leads directly and indirectly to potential environmental impacts. How we manage these resources is affected by the implementation of national and regional plans and programmes.

### **5.8.2 Main issues in relation to the Material Assets of County Cavan**

- ✦ In terms of wastewater, the capacity of existing and proposed infrastructure must be adequate to cater to the existing and estimated future population of Cavan Town and its Environs.



- Water Services Investment Programme (WSIP) scheduled phasing of plant upgrade/ construction which includes: The upgrading of 5 no. Sewage Pumping Stations; the installation of new sewerage pipelines linking and the Upgrading of the Cavan Sewage Works
- The sources of drinking water/ ground water supplies identified through the Ground Water Protection Scheme (GSI) threats to the quantity or quality of the supply are currently implemented through the monitoring and evaluation of development applications through the Environment Section of the County Council. Mechanisms for monitoring of groundwater.
- Cavan’s material assets also include the ability to use renewable forms of energy such as wind energy, geothermal energy, solar energy and hydro energy.
- Cavan Town is being considered as an extension of the Bord Gais distribution network, Virginia, Kingscourt and Bailieborough are already on the existing distribution network. The area is served by the 10kV line with a planned 20kV conversion line, there is also a 38kV network line, a 38kV Station at Drumalee Cross and Derrycramph and a 110kV Station located at Shankill to the east of Cavan Environs area.

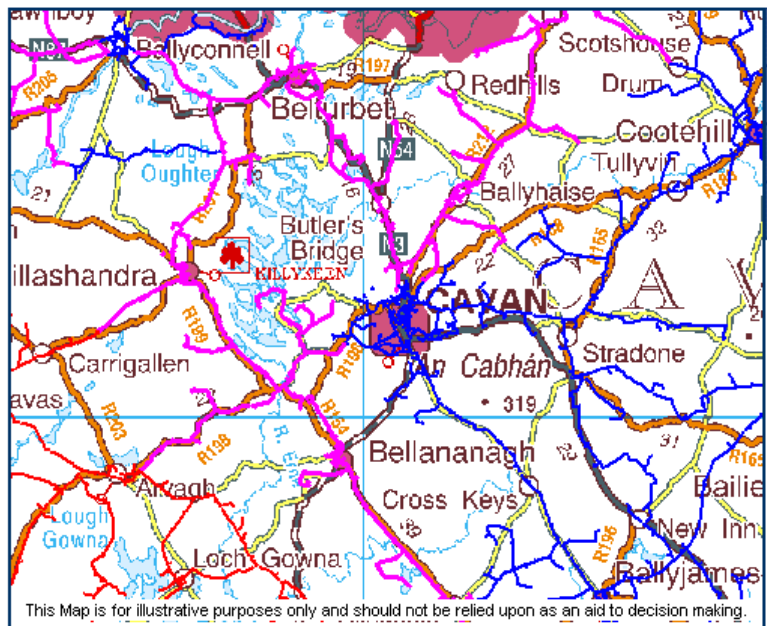


Figure 20 : ESBN Medium Voltage 20kV (kV=kilovolts) Conversion and  
Source: Ordnance Survey Ireland, 2003 and ESBI Computing, 2007

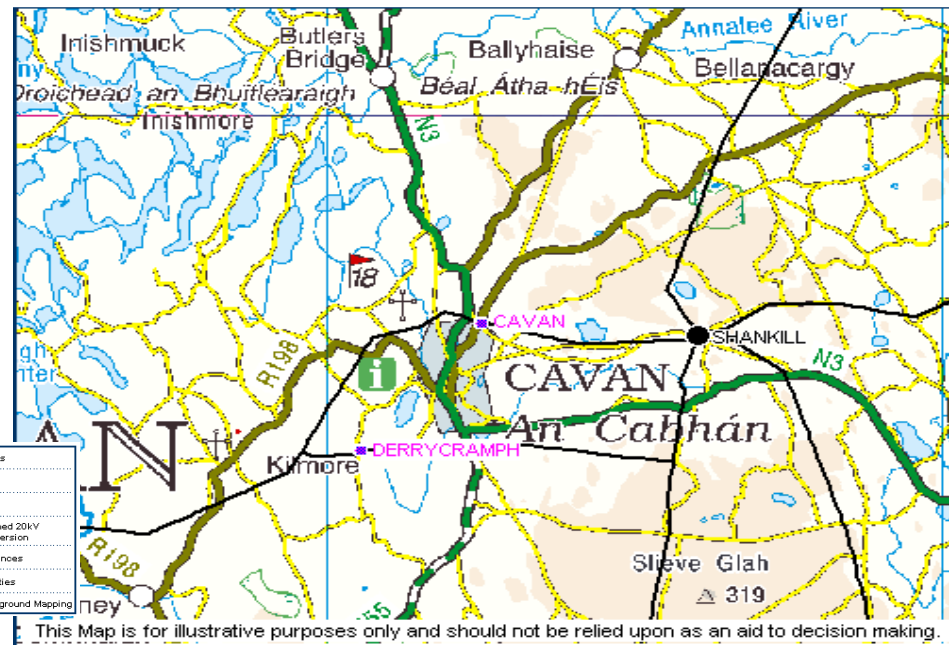


Figure21 : ESBN 38 kV (kV=kilovolts) Network  
Source: Ordnance Survey Ireland Refurbishment Programme

- The Planning Authority will continue to support the infrastructural development of transmission networks in order to extend current capacity and improve their condition. However, the visual impact of the infrastructure (both energy and telecommunications) will be an important consideration by the Planning Authority.

**Broadband:** Cavan Town is located in an area that is currently served by broadband service providers. The provision of telecommunications infrastructure tends to involve large scale planning and can have short and long-term impacts on the landscape. Through analysis of the landscape and population, it will be possible to identify areas and locations which may be suitable for developments of this nature.

**Transportation:** The national road network is a remit of the National Roads Authority (NRA) and the provision of roads will in general be subject to Environmental Impact Assessments (such as new roads over 500m in an urban area) and consent from the planning authority. In the past 10 years, there have been substantial developments in the road infrastructure in the County including the recently opened N3-N55 By-pass.

In the provision of new roads, it is important to examine the impact on local biodiversity and ensure that habitats are not segregated.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2007 a Variation to the current Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan 2003 – 2009 was adopted incorporating a Transportation Study for the Cavan Town and Environs Area. This document forms part of a long-term Integrated Framework Plan 2007 – 2020 and provides a transport vision, transport recommendations, transport modelling and phasing and costing for the Cavan Town and Environs area. Cycle lane provision is to be improved, footpaths widened and pedestrianisation of some parts of the town in order to facilitate more sustainable forms of travel.

A road and street hierarchy is defined in order to allow for different forms of traffic management to be applied to each class of road and street.

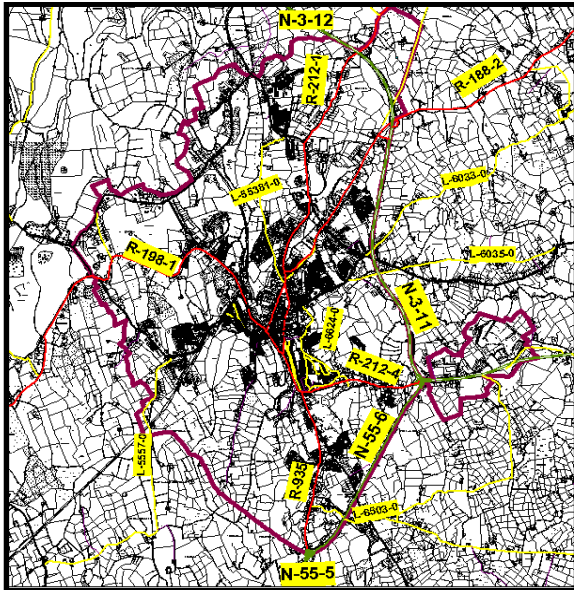
Walking routes are proposed which will attain optimum usage, linking places where people want to go, with direct routes to follow desire lines, with easy to use crossings, with good quality footways of adequate width and free from obstruction, attractive and safe and easy to follow with helpful signage. Potential amenity walking and cycling links are also proposed into and through the town centre.

Given the scale of the existing town, the population target of 16,000, the proposed consolidation of its future population, there is limited scope to develop and operate a town bus service as a financially self supporting service. It is certain that a state or privately operated service will not develop in the study area without significant and continuous subvention. The Transportation Study recommends that a community based bus service be explored for Cavan Town and Environs. Additional bus stops should be provided at strategic locations with the town's environs. Car-parking, taxi facilities and the movement of heavy goods vehicles and delivery management have also been explored through the Transport Study. width and free from obstruction, attractive and safe and easy to follow with helpful signage. Potential amenity walking and cycling links are also proposed into and through the town centre.

Given the scale of the existing town, the population target of 12,800 by 2022 the proposed consolidation of its future population, there is limited scope to develop and operate a town bus service as a financially self supporting service. It is certain that a state or privately operated service will not develop in the study area without significant and continuous subvention. The Transportation Study recommends that a community based bus service be explored for Cavan Town and Environs. Additional bus stops should be provided at strategic locations with the town's environs. Car-parking, taxi facilities and the movement of heavy goods vehicles and delivery management have also been explored through the Transport Study.

The disused railway line around the town is also an asset, whether it is restored to its former use in the future, or if it is used for amenity purposes in the short term.

Figure 22 : Road Network around Cavan Town& Environs



Source: Cavan County Council (2012)

## 5.9. Cultural Heritage including architectural and archaeological

### 5.9.1 Current Situation

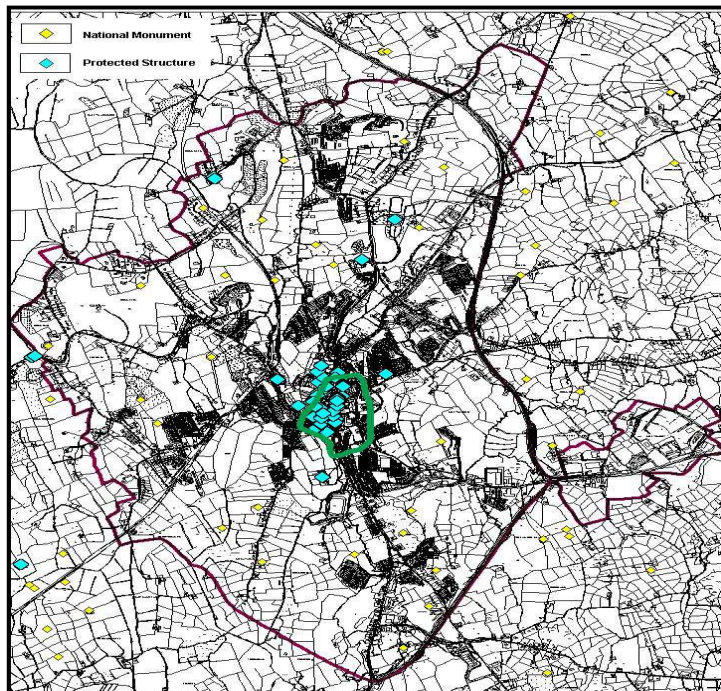
The Heritage Act (1995) defines heritage as including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways (please note, some of these areas have been covered in previous sections). Our heritage is what has been passed down to us from previous generations and it is important to consider what we will be able to pass on to future generations.

The heritage of County Cavan is a unique resource providing us with a cultural identity and defining the society which we live in. According to a (source: Cavan Town& Environs Development Plan 2008-2014)

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Monuments Database the total number of monuments which are distributed across all counties in Ireland is 10,731. The majority of monument types are classed as earthworks (4,909 No.), enclosures (1,896 No.) and buildings (1,232 No.). Figure 37 opposite identifies the richness of our architectural and archaeological assets.

Cavan has a Heritage Forum, comprising of members from statutory organisations, local government, local developers, landowner representatives, community and voluntary sectors, Cavan County Heritage Forum was established in June 2005 and is divided into three expert working groups: - built, natural and cultural heritage.

**Figure 23: Protected Structures and National Monuments in Cavan Town and Environs**



### 5.9.2 Archaeology

The National Monuments Acts 1930 –2004 provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and structures, features, objects or sites listed in this Record are known as Recorded Monuments. Monuments protected under the Act include prehistoric monuments and any monuments and places associated with commercial, cultural, economic, industrial, military, religious or social history.

There is an archaeological zones designated in Cavan Town and a total of 2017 National Monuments within the county. The National Monuments Acts, 1930–1994 includes provisions for Preservation Orders. These will be considered in the Review of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.

National monuments are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004. The following table identifies the national monuments within the Cavan Town and Environs area are expected to be influenced by the new Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan.

**Table 13: National Monuments (Record of Monuments and Places, OPW)**

Monument Type	National Monument No.	No. in existing Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan (where applicable)
GRAVEYARD	CV020-00102	No.18 & 19
RATH	CV020-005	No.4
RATH	CV020-008	No.3
RATH	CV020-009	No.2
RATH	CV020-025	
RATH	CV020-032	No.9
ENCLOSURE	CV020-036	No.6
RATH	CV020-037	No.5
CHURCH "FRIAR'S WELL"	CV020-05002	No.7 & 8
RATH	CV020-051	No.12
RATH	CV020-054	No.17
TOWN DEFENCES	CV020-05501	Urban Archaeological Zone [Townlands – Kinnypottle, Tullymongan Lower, Townparks (Cavan Urban D.), Tullymongan Upper,



		Lurganboy (Upper Loughtee By.) Abbey Land, Drumvanagh]
CASTLE	CV020-05504	Urban Archaeological Zone
SCHOOL	CV020-05507	Urban Archaeological Zone
BRIDGE	CV020-05508	Urban Archaeological Zone
MARKET/ FAIR PLACE	CV020-05509	Urban Archaeological Zone
ENCLOSURE	CV020-056	No.1
RATH	CV020-057	No.10
RATH	CV020-058	No.11
RATH (DRUMGOON FORT)	CV020-070	No.14
RATH	CV020-071	No.15
RATH (SWELLAN FORT)	CV020-072	No.13
RATH	CV020-085	No.16
LISMAGRATTY	CV021-063	
DRUMBO	CV020-027	
RATH	CV025-030	No.28
RATH	CV025-032	No.23
CRANNOG	CV025-033	No.22
RATH	CV025-058	No.27
ENCLOSURE	CV025-074	No.20
RATH	CV025-075	
BAWN	CV025-09802	No.29 & 30
RATH	CV025-101	No.24
STANDING STONE	CV025-102	No.26
RATH	CV025-106	No.21
MOATED SITE	CV025-110	
RATH	CV025-124	No.25

### 5.9.3 Architecture

The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is contained in existing Cavan Town/ Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan 2003 - 2009 as amended. Section 10(2) f of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended makes the protection of architectural heritage mandatory. Many of the protected structures in the Town area have been examined and recommendations as to additions/ deletions will be forthcoming and included in the Environmental Report.

The current list of Protected Structures within the Plan area is as follows:

**Table14: Ecclesiastical Structures**

Name	Rating	Grade	Special Interest
Cavan Presbyterian Church	Regional	II	Architectural, Cultural & Social
Cathedral of St. Patrick & St. Felim	National	I	Architectural, Social, Historical & Cultural
Cavan Parish Church	National	I	Architectural, Social, Historical & Cultural
Convent Church	Regional	II	Architectural, Social, Historical & Cultural
Abbey Street Burial Grounds	National	I	Archaeological, Architectural, Social, Historical & Cultural

\*

**Table 15: Structures which contribute to the streetscape, street elevation, architectural harmony and homogeneity of the street by way of their character and essential architectural styling only**

Name	Rating	Grade	Special Interest
11 College Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
5 College Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
College Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
9 College Street	Regional	IV	Architectural

4 Abbey Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
6 Abbey Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
29 Bridge Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
30 Bridge Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
Bridge Street (99 Shop)	Regional	IV	Architectural
3 Bridge Street	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street, (formerly part of St. Clare's School)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street/ Thomas Ashe Street (Black's Newsagents)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Jewellers/ Opticians)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Hickey's)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Ray Reilly's)	Regional	IV	Architectural

**Table 16: Contribution is specifically identified by a particular architectural feature, detail, design or materials used**

Name	Rating	Grade	Special Interest
Methodist Manse	Regional	II	Architectural & Social
The Presbytery, Cavan	Regional	III	Architectural & Social
Former Methodist Church	Regional	III	Architectural, Cultural & Social
Brookvale Cottage	Regional	II	Architectural
Masonic Hall	Regional	II	Architectural
23 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural
Erskine Terrace	Regional	II	Architectural
Former Provincial Bank	Regional	II	Architectural
7 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural
6 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural
5 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural
4 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural
18 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural
16 Farnham Street	Regional	II	Architectural, Historical & Cultural
Farnham Street/ Thomas Ashe Street	Regional	II	Architectural
Farnham School	Regional	III	Architectural
Main Street (Shiels)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Cavan Travel)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Church Street (J.V. Kelly & Co.)	Regional	III	Architectural
29 Church Street	Regional	III	Architectural
Church Street (Dr. McGauran)	Regional	III	Architectural
Church Street (Luke McCabe)	Regional	III	Architectural
Church Street (Luck McCabe)	Regional	III	Architectural
Annesley Terrace, Church Street	Regional	III	Architectural
Main Street (AOR Insurances)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Louis Blessing)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Fox's)	Regional	IV	Architectural
County Council Offices	Regional	II	Architectural
Main Street (Cathal Leddy)	Regional	III	Architectural

**Table 17: Shopfronts including those whose contribution is specifically identified by a particular architectural feature, detail, design or materials used**

Name	Rating	Grade	Special Interest
Main Street (Keenan & Reilly)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Imperial)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Convent Frontage)	Regional	II	Architectural, Historical, Social & Cultural
Main Street (Hickey's)	Regional	IV	Architectural
Main Street (Ray Reilly's)	Regional	IV	Architectural

**Table:18:Public Buildings with outstanding architectural features, design or materials used**

Name	Rating	Grade	Special Interest
Cavan Courthouse	National	I	Architectural, Historical, Social & Cultural
Cavan Town Hall	National	I	Architectural, Historical, Social & Cultural
Main Street (Ulster Bank)	Regional	II	Architectural, Historical, Social & Cultural
Main Street (Bank of Ireland)	Regional	II	Architectural, Historical, Social & Cultural
Main Street (ACC Bank)	Regional	II	Architectural, Historical, Social & Cultural

**Table 19:Structures of Particular Uniqueness and Rarity**

Name	Rating	Grade	Special Interest
Cana House, Farnham Street	Local	V	Cultural, Historical & Social
Flagged Paving, Church Street	Regional	III	Architectural & Historical
Abbeylands	National	I	Archaeological, Architectural & Historical
Cast Iron Water Meter Box, College Street	Regional	III	Historical
Lifeforce Buildings and Mill	Regional	II	Architectural, Technical & Social
Masonry Walls, Railway Road	Regional	III	Architectural & Cultural
Cast Iron Railings, Farnham Street	Regional	III	Historical, Cultural & Social

#### 5.9..4. Main issues in relation to the Cultural Heritage of County Cavan & Cavan Town & Environs

- ✚ Our archaeology and architectural buildings (of special importance) are protected under legislation. However impacts can still occur as a result of development, whether (for example) work is being carried out on the interior/ exterior of the protected structure or an adjoining property where the character of the structure can be entirely changed.
- Zoning needs to be examined in relation to protected structures or national monuments with sufficient buffer zones provided between developments.
- ✚ New developments on Greenfield sites have the potential to disturb undiscovered archaeology. Development which takes place on sites in close proximity to protected archaeology can also impact on the setting of the monument.
- ✚ The planning authority will continue to promote brownfield development in the Cavan Town and Environs area which will lessen the impact on our culture heritage.
- ✚ It is important to preserve heritage features of historical importance that provide a sense of place, individual sites and complexes, historical features and landscapes (such as stone walls) and to identify potential Architectural Conservation Areas.
- ✚ Tourism is a vital part of the economy of the County. Cavan’s cultural heritage describes the range of issues which are important to our sense of identity, our knowledge and understanding of our local people. Local history can be experienced through the County Library and Genealogy Centre in Cavan Town.
- The features or groups of features in the area should be linked throughout the Cavan Town and Environs area and this can be enhanced through the promotion of cycle ways, and walking routes as tourist trails.
- Proposals to refurbish or reconstruct structures in this category will be looked at on their individual merit. Any future development should be sensitive to the specific design features etc. of each structure and here possible retained or sensitively reconstruct such features
- Public Buildings which are listed are of outstanding architectural and cultural importance and every effort should be made to conserve and protect elements of these structures that contribute to their special interest

- Shopfronts will be looked at on their individual merit. Future development should be sensitive to the specific design features and shopfronts etc. of each structure and where possible retained or sensitively reconstruct such features
- Protected structures which form an integral part of the streetscape will be viewed as part of an overall group and their importance lies in their homogeneity and relationship to the overall setting in which they lie. Any proposal, which seeks to replace a building(s) within this category must at minimum be replaced with a building that respects the scale, design, special features, and symmetrical building lines.
- Ecclesiastical structures assume a prominent position in the physical and cultural landscape of Cavan Town and as such form an integral part of the architectural character and heritage of the town. Every attempt will be made to protect these structures in their entirety but with sensitivity to liturgical needs  
Ecclesiastical structures assume a prominent position in the physical and cultural landscape of Cavan Town and as such form an integral part of the architectural character.



## 6.0 ALTERNATIVES

The SEA Directive requires the selection and assessment of alternatives. Article 5 requires the Environmental Report to consider “**reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme**” and the significant environmental effects of the alternatives selected.

Section 4 of this document details the level of the Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan in an overall strategic sense. The documents listed have directed the creation of the objectives and policies of the Draft Development Plan and as a consequence the Planning Authority is bound by the policy and strategic options that have been pre-determined by higher level programmes, plans and guidelines.

Cavan Town is the principal town in County Cavan and the Draft Development Plan is set within the context of the Draft County Development Plan.

In 2007, the Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan 2020, Transportation Study and Urban Design Framework were adopted by Cavan County Council and Cavan Town Councils. The purpose of the Integrated Framework Plan is to provide a broad vision for the future development of Cavan Town and Environs. It establishes a framework that:

- Integrates existing and future land uses, including housing, shopping, employment activities and amenities;
- Incorporates the principles of sustainability;
- Invigorates the town centre;
- Provides the basis for the close integration of development with sustainable transportation modes: walking, cycling and public transport; and
- Places a strong emphasis on quality of life issues.

The Transportation Study and Urban Design Framework were developed in tandem with the Integrated Framework Plan (IFP). The IFP is not intended as a detailed ‘masterplan’ but has guided the preparation of the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans. Particular regard has been given to the designation of Cavan as a ‘Hub’ Town by the National Spatial Strategy (2002) and Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (2010 - 2022). The principles which underpin these strategic planning documents, are considered to be in-line with the aims of the plan and the Core Strategy (refer to Section 3.1 of the Environmental report).

### 6.1 Consideration of Alternative Scenarios for the Development of Cavan Town and Environs

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires the review of a Development Plan, no later than four years after its adoption so as a consequence Cavan County Council does not have an option to ‘doing nothing’. It has a legal responsibility to prepare Development Plans for the sustainable development of the Cavan Town and Environs area.

The Planning Authority has undertaken a Strategic Environmental Assessment in accordance with SEA Regulations 2004 for the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan. Consequently, Cavan Town Council and Cavan County Council must adopt new Development Plans for their respective areas where identified significant effects can be mitigated through specified actions and where these effects on the environment can be adequately monitored over the lifetime of the Development Plans.

The new Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans 2014 – 2020 will contribute to an environmental improvement for settlement in the Plan area, which will aid sustained economic growth in areas where identified significant environmental effects can be adequately mitigated, thus ensuring a more planned and sustainable approach to the growth of the area. This approach will result in development on lands that have the capacity for it, thus contributing to a more sustainable environment.

A number of Scenarios for the Development of the area were developed based on the Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan 2020 which has been formed through analysis of strategic objectives and policies set out at a higher level (see Chapter 4).

A total of four alternative scenarios for the future of Cavan were developed and assessed through consideration of the statutory and operational requirements of the Draft Development Plans. **Alternative Scenarios for CavanTown & Environs**

The alternative scenarios for Cavan Town and Environs are considered below:

**1. Scenario 1 - Unrestrained:**

The first Scenario would continue the sprawl of housing estates and one off houses in serviceable lands. This approach is increasingly seen as unsustainable and unacceptable for reasons that include: levels of land take; distance from the town centre; difficulties of social integration; and heavy reliance on private car usage which recreates and promotes the use of unsustainable transportation modes. The economic cost to maintain the infrastructure of the urban area in this scenario would be high. The demarcation between urban and rural area would be unclear resulting in a poor overall townscape and sprawl into the surrounding rural landscape. The cumulative impact of development on the natural environment would result in greater habitat fragmentation or habitat destruction. The targets set out in the National Spatial Strategy to promote balanced sustainable development would not be achieved through the designation of the town as a ‘hub’.

This Scenario could potentially cause significant impacts on all environmental receptors (biodiversity, population, human health, landscape, soil, water, air, climate, material assets and cultural heritage) causing widespread environmental problems, poor water quality, poor biodiversity, a poor quality built environment and ultimately resulting in poor human health.

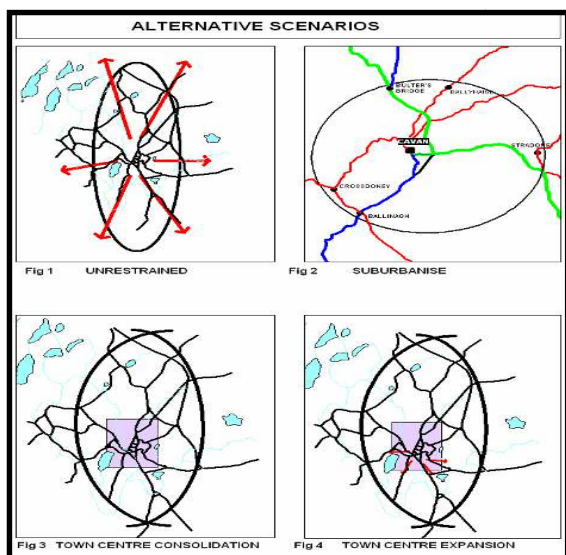
**2. Scenario 2 - Suburbanise (satellites towns/villages)**

Develop a necklace of small towns around Cavan Town as distinct and separate suburbs. This approach would focus on future growth of smaller centres such as Butlersbridge, Ballinagh, Ballyhaise, Crossdoney, Lavey, Stradone as expanded settlements.

In this Scenario, the towns surrounding Cavan will grow taking the focus away from developing Cavan Town as a ‘hub’ as identified in the National Spatial Strategy (2002).

**Scenario 3 - Town centre consolidation**

This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors. This would increase the density permitted in the centre of the town with major emphasis of infilling and brownfield development in the existing urban environment. This Scenario may see a



rapid growth in population as required by the ‘hub’ town and critical mass could be reached for the provision of a viable public transport system and sustainable waste infrastructure promoting reduction, reuse and recycling of materials. Travel patterns could be sustained with much of the population living and working within close proximity to the town centre reducing the need to travel long distances and encouraging more sustainable means of travel. The cost of maintaining infrastructure is considered viable.

**3. Scenario 4 - Town centre expansion and future developments areas:**

Promotion of development lands approximate to town centre (east and west), with higher development densities in appropriate existing and future residential areas, improved integration between

amenities, development and transportation and better design, so as to create attractive urban living conditions providing a good quality of life.

Development in Cavan Town has developed at moderate densities in large residential developments in areas which are relatively close to the town centre and include local shopping areas and primary schools. There are large areas of undeveloped land within the environs area that are currently being used for agricultural purposes. This Scenario would facilitate the development of these lands in a sustainable manner allowing the town to become permeable with linkages from these areas to the town centre and increasing the quality of design of the townscape and creating a clear demarcation between urban and rural areas. The economic cost of infrastructure can be maintained within the area and high levels of service provision and community infrastructure are catered for as well as creating employment opportunities close to residential areas.

### **6.3 Assessment of the Scenarios**

In developing and testing the scenarios, particular regard was given to the concept of environmental sustainability and the principles adopted by the Government in the National Sustainable Development Strategy (1997). The following sustainability considerations are of particular importance:

- seeking a meaningful reduction in the growth in demand for transport;
- ensuring that land use and transportation planning are integrated and that future land use proposals incorporate appropriate transport measures;
- achieving a clearer demarcation between urban and rural land uses than at present;
- increasing emphasis on sustainable transportation alternatives to the private car;
- protection of the built and cultural heritage of the area;
- conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and natural heritage;
- encourage energy efficiency;
- protection of the environment by minimising waste and pollution;
- promote the involvement of the local community in decision making and encourage social inclusion.
- 

The Regional Planning Guidelines (2010 - 2020) have identified a projected growth of 16,000 for the 'Hub' town to be reached by 2020. All scenarios must work towards reaching the target population. They must also define the boundary of Cavan, provide opportunities for sustainable employment and enterprise and development of employment and maximise the use of the natural environment and educational and recreational resources of the area (Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan, 2007). The scenarios were evaluated in the following matrix and compared on performance under the following headings based on the Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan (2007) and based on the Environmental Receptors discussed in relation to the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans.

#### **Integrated Framework Plan**

- Transportation
- Sustainability
- Practicality
- Quality of life
- Compliance with national and regional policy

#### **Environmental Receptors**

- Biodiversity
- Population and Human Health
- Landscape and Soil
- Water
- Air

- Material Assets
- Cultural Heritage

**Table 1: Scenarios for Cavan Town & Environs Evaluation Matrix**

KEY	Promotes	Neutral		Not Compatible
	?	?	?	?
Scenario	1 Unrestrained	2 Suburbanise	3 Town centre consolidation	4 Town centre expansion/ development
Biodiversity	?	?	?	?
Population & Human Health	?	?	?	?
Landscape & Soil	?	?	?	?
Water	?	?	?	?
Air	?	?	?	?
Material Assets	?	?	?	?
Cultural Heritage	?	?	?	?
Transportation	?	?	?	?
Sustainability	?	?	?	?
Practicality	?	?	?	?
Quality of Life	?	?	?	?
Compliance with National & Regional Policy	?	?	?	?
<b>Overall</b>	?	?	?	?

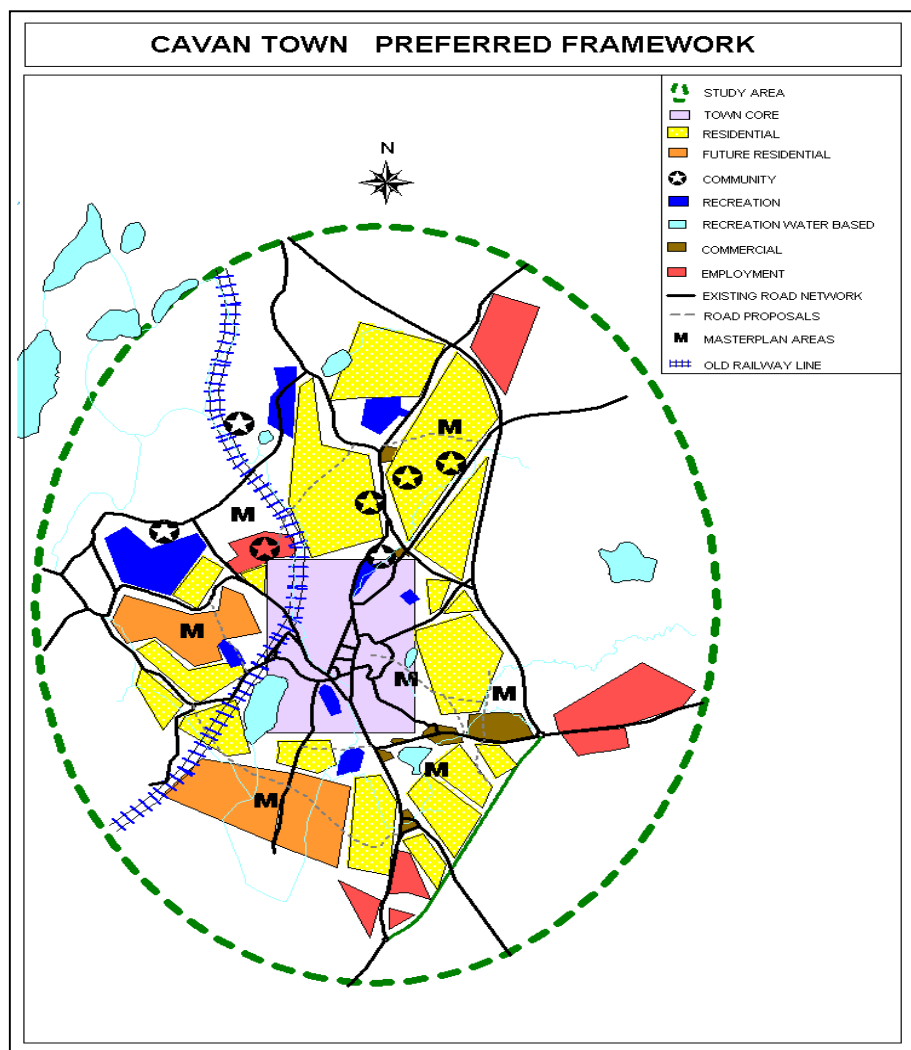
**Scenario 1** does not provide a sustainable transport solution as it reinforces dependency on the private car. Due to the dispersed development, public transport will not be economically viable. It impacts on many environmental receptors in the long run and overall quality of life in the long term is lower than the other scenarios. It will not achieve the goals set out for ‘hub’ towns under the National Spatial Strategy (2002) and Regional Planning Guidelines (2004) and Scenario 1 is therefore not recommended.

The economic viability of practical sustainable transport is less certain for Scenarios 2 than for Scenarios 3 and 4, development is more dispersed and critical thresholds will not be achieved. There are potential impacts on water quality as not all of these settlements have wastewater treatment plants. It is unlikely that these areas will create a good mix of employment opportunities and services may be dispersed between the settlements. This Scenario does not comply with National and Regional policy guidance.

**Scenarios 3 and 4** have the potential to achieve critical thresholds for sustainable growth of the town. Higher density development, promoted particularly in Scenarios 3 and 4, requires considerably smaller areas of land and consolidates development so walking, cycling and travel by sustainable means are feasible. The land take requirement associated with higher densities allows for consideration of alternative uses. Scenario 4, envisages an expanded town centre with an additional potential for creation of sustainable jobs and also significant levels of choice for both enterprise and residential development. The development of the urban area through town centre expansion will impact on biodiversity with the consequent loss of habitats by developing greenfield sites. Whilst Scenario 3 represents a more ideal situation from a sustainability point of view, it is less likely to be achieved than scenario 4.

Increased densities will be the norm in all future urban developments, in response to sustainability issues and government policy. Consequently, the choice is not between high density near the centre and low density on the periphery, but rather between different locations at comparable density levels based on sustainability issues such as energy efficiency, and reduction of reliance on private car. From the above, it is recommended that the preferred framework for future land use and transportation in Cavan in the medium to longer term be based on a combination of **Scenarios 3 and 4**. That is town centre consolidation, with limited expansion and the co-ordinated development of existing and future residential areas, through the phasing of residential zoned lands as contained in the Core Strategy and associated maps.

**Figure .....: Cavan Town – Preferred Framework**



Source: Cavan County Council (2007) Cavan Town and Environs Integrated Framework Plan 2020

#### **6.4 Mitigation Measures and Incorporation of Mitigation Measures & Assessment Results into the Plan**

Mitigation measures have been identified below to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the new Draft Cavan County Development Plan.

#### **6.5 Environmental Protection Objectives and Development Objectives and Policies of the Draft County Development Plan**

The Environmental Protection Objectives (see Section 5) provide a standard against which the Objectives and Policies of the Draft Development Plan were proofed or tested for compatibility so that the potential significant adverse environmental impacts and significant positive impacts could be highlighted. This assessment can be found in Appendix 1.

The Environmental Protection Objectives are derived from various policies, local issues and the initial Scoping process. The Development Objectives and Policies were refined by way of an iterative process utilising issues raised during the research on the environmental baseline for the Environmental Report.

In certain places the Development Objectives match the Environmental Protection Objectives indicating the link between those issues of importance within the EU, National, Regional and Local policies, and those which are specific to the County.

Alternative strategic scenarios were considered in Chapter 8 and mitigation measures have been proposed to counteract any adverse environmental effects highlighted, thereby maximising the environmental sustainability of the Draft Development Plan.

The matrix (see Appendix 6), indicates positive, negative, no impact, uncertain impacts, cumulative, long and short term impacts. The assessment or predictions of impacts can be qualitative or quantitative and are to a large extent based on previous experience and consultation carried out internally in the Planning Authority.

#### **6.6 Significant Impacts of Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans – Objectives and Policies and Mitigation**

The following are a summary of the impacts identified in Appendix..... where the Objectives and Policies of the Draft County Development Plan were compared against the Environmental Objectives. This chapter should be read in conjunction with Chapter 7 and sections entitled 'objectives, targets and indicators'

### **Chapter 2 – Core Strategy**

#### **Chapter 3 - Employment Enterprises**

The most significant impact of employment and enterprise objectives and policies is the effect on air quality. All development increases the amount of emissions into the air. As a consequence we need to mitigate the effects of the policies and objectives. A strong landscaping policy, energy efficiency policy and the use of Mobility Management Plans will attempt to offset the emissions which are generated. Mobility Management Plans for example consist of a package of measures put in place by an organisation to encourage and support more sustainable travel patterns among staff, clients and other visitors.

The cumulative impact of all development on surface and ground water quality is an important consideration. Development management must consider the location of developments in relation to the Ground Water Protection Scheme (when finalised).

Waste to landfill may be increased as part of all new developments. However, with strong waste policy on prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling and recovery, and provision of waste infrastructure and adherence to the North East Waste Management Plan 2005 – 2010 and future Waste Management Plans, this can be offset.

There are a variety of positives and negatives related to employment and enterprise in Cavan Town and Environs. Through strong development management, impacts on the environment can be mitigated.

### **Mitigation**

All development will create emissions, though through the creation of clusters of industry and enterprise in the urban areas subject to normal development criteria, may offset some air emissions, provided the land is not over-intensively used.

The Planning Authority will also encourage suitable siting of employment and enterprise areas, including adequate screening or landscaping.

### **Energy**

In general the policies and objectives for energy have positive impacts on the environmental receptors. It is worth noting that only small scale wind energy developments will be considered within urban and industrial areas. Cumulatively however, they do have the potential to impact on the character of the townscape and possible impacts on the population in an area due to noise etc. The scale of energy developments could impact on cultural heritage. Hydro-energy developments which may depend on the damming of waters could have an impact on flood control. The main positives for these policies are related to the quality of population and human health and are aimed at improving air quality and climatic conditions.

### **Mitigation**

The energy policies have been strengthened - To promote and encourage sustainable energy supplies 'in appropriate locations subject to normal technical and environmental considerations'.

### **Retail**

Retail developments significantly contribute to waste generation in the County. They also attract vehicles and generate trips. Out-of-centre retail or commercial developments can impact on the town centres.

### **Major Accidents Directive (Seveso II Sites)**

Long-term impact of these sites - It is vitally important that sites of this nature are considered for their effects on all the environmental receptors. Problems with the operations of such sites would affect the County and Country as a whole. Significant impacts of dangerous substances could have major negative on all these receptors including human health, biodiversity, water, air and climate.

### **Mitigation**

It is essential to have continuous risk management on any such sites.

## **6.7 Chapter 4 – Physical Infrastructure**

### **Land Use & Transportation Planning Transportation**

The provision of roads has negative impacts on biodiversity and landscape, human health, water and air quality for the County. Maintaining the road system and extending the road network uses up non-renewable sand, gravel and rock deposits. However, our economic development depends on a safe and efficient road network. Public transport initiatives are encouraged for the

County in the aim of reducing the number of trips in unsustainable travel modes. National Roads and Other Roads - Policies are aimed at reducing congestion, though it increases accessibility for vehicles causing air emissions, using non-renewable resources to maintain or provide new infrastructure. Noise and vibrations are other important impacts which are harmful to human health.

Run-off from hard surfaced roads mixed with oils will have an effect on water quality in nearby streams or ditches. The cumulative effect of run-off from roads in the countryside and especially roads in towns (where it is combined with other hard surfaces) is problematic to local rivers and lakes.

Air quality standards will continue to be reduced by continuing to invest in roads, however provision of safe cycle paths and walkways to educational establishments or public transport initiatives will help reduce the number of trips

generated and are positive in reducing air pollution and encouraging energy efficiency (see Cycling and Walking objectives and policies).

Road safety and accessibility to buildings are key issues which affect the population of Cavan Town and Environs.

### **Mitigation**

The Planning Authority will continue to place an emphasis on maintaining existing infrastructure rather than creating more roads. The Planning Authority has included policies and objectives in the Draft Development Plans to explore options to increase provision of public transport services and an objective has been included to ensure that the Council considers the recommendations of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the County (when finalised) in the construction of any new roads.

### **Accessibility including Cycling and Walking**

The provision of adequate parking spaces may both encourage the use of vehicles but it may also reduce the location of cars that would contribute to congestion.

Provision of adequate public footpaths, overhead lighting, road pavements, cycling links and bicycle parking will facilitate pedestrian safety and security for movement within the Town. This is especially important in areas linking residential areas and the central area, neighbourhood centres, public facilities, libraries.

### **Water Services, Wastewater Services, Flood Prevention and Water Quality**

The provision of infrastructure is a requirement to facilitate population growth and to reduce the potential impact on water quality and ultimately human health. Water conservation, protection of Groundwater and measures to reduce flood impacts are encouraged by the Planning Authority.

The Water Framework Directive and subsequent River Basin Management Plans are aimed at addressing all impacts to water quality and the Planning Authority will co-operate with other Planning Authorities and agencies in the management of water resources.

### **Waste Management**

Waste can have long term cumulative impacts on air and water quality. An adequate waste collection service is necessary to prevent animals using this waste as a food source, disrupting their normal feeding patterns and this can affect human health in the long term.

### **Mitigation**

The Planning Authority will continue to operate within the North East Region Waste Management Plan 2005-2010 and other relevant waste legislation, policy and licensing.

### **Utilities Infrastructure**

Energy supply networks are important for the economic development of Cavan Town and Environs, though they can impact on the landscape and townscape. The Planning Authority has included policies to encourage joint usage or co-location of utility facilities and services in order to minimise visual intrusion.

### **Telecom and Info. Technologies**

Mobile Phone Masts have a short term impact on the landscape and this can include cultural heritage. They can have a cumulative impact on scenic areas and tourism resources but are also important for economic development.

### **Mitigation**

The Planning Authority will continue to examine the cumulative effects of masts in the landscape.

## **Chapter 5 – Housing**

The Housing Chapter is based on recommendations from the Draft County Housing Strategy in order to ensure the provision of accommodation for all those who require it and who are unable to obtain it through their own means. All housing developments have an impact as they use non-renewable resources in their construction and contribute to waste and air emissions. However the policies and objectives are positive for the population of County Cavan.



## **Chapter 6 – Social Strategy and Community Facilities**

Much of this chapter pertains to the provision of infrastructure which benefits all sectors of the community promoting social inclusion, making provision for the elderly, persons with disabilities and special needs, the Travelling Community and ethnic minorities. Community facilities can positively impact on the townscapes of County Cavan. Open space and recreational areas enhance living environments.

Education and lifelong learning are an essential part of a growing economy and the availability and accessibility to such resources are encouraged and will be facilitated where possible. Access to Libraries, Museums, Art and Culture, Burial Grounds and Places of Public Worship, Fire Services, Childcare and Health Care Facilities all positively impact on the population, health and well-being of the citizens of County Cavan.

### **Mitigation**

The Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plan contains an added objective for ‘public open space’ on ‘biodiversity’ – ‘Biodiversity can be enhanced through the creation of green corridors and linking of open spaces to create potential habitats as well as providing a healthy environment for residents’.

## **Chapter 7 – Built Heritage & Archaeology**

The objectives and policies for the protection of the Built Heritage & Archaeology are generally positive in terms of population, townscape quality, conservation and protection of the existing built environment and maintaining the built environment. It provides for the retention of Protected Structures, other buildings, non-structural elements, vernacular architecture, shop fronts and industrial heritage. It also provides a potential Architectural Conservation Areas within Cavan Town and the necessary protection for archaeological heritage. It encourages a move to positive sensitive design which enhances living environments.

### **Mitigation**

The new Draft County Development Plan proposes Draft Architectural Conservation Areas for Cavan Town. A new Record of Protected Structures has also being prepared as part of the Draft Development Plan.

Masterplans have been proposed in some larger towns in order to create sustainable urban environments where there is phasing, infrastructure provision, community facilities, density and layout consideration, open spaces, landscaping and an overall development design.

The Urban Design Framework for Cavan Town was adopted in July, 2007. Good urban design can enhance the townscape of Cavan. The Masterplans which have been identified in the Cavan Town and Environs area have been strengthened through the addition of a biodiversity element where open spaces both public and private, shall consider networking of green areas to create greater space and consider the potential biological benefits and subsequent public health amenity - ‘Issues pertinent to the sustainable management and conservation of Biodiversity shall be considered in all Masterplans’.

## **Chapter 8 – Natural Heritage**

The Natural Heritage Chapter contains objectives and policies for the conservation, protection and management of the County’s natural heritage which are generally positive for the protection of designated areas, for specific handling of non-native invasive species, population and human health, landscape, townscape, water quality, flooding and air quality. Development in the Cavan Town and Environs area will be considered subject to site assessment and technical considerations; though the cumulative impact on natural heritage must be assessed and considered. Public open spaces especially green spaces are important for the absorption of water as well as aesthetic benefits, health benefits and as habitats for flora and fauna. A 10-20m buffer has been added along rivers as an ‘amenity’ area in the Cavan Town and Environs area in order to protect the river corridor (based on recommendations of Fisheries Board). The Masterplan areas in the Cavan Town and Environs area will provide for adequate provision of amenity including the retention of mature trees where possible, community facilities and employment opportunities in order to reduce unsustainable travel patterns.

## **Chapter 9 – Development Management**

This chapter provides policies and objectives to support the zoning of lands for specific uses. The insertion of specific phasing of lands linked to the Core Strategy, which is consistent with the NSS and RGP Guidelines with regard to population projections and provide a safeguard against the unco-ordinated development of lands on the periphery of

the Environs area, which would lead to the uneconomic provision of services etc. It is considered that the Specific Objectives and the Land use zoning objectives are informed by and underpinned by the sectoral policies and objectives contained in the plan which are robust and have been framed in the context of environmental 'check and balances'.

## **7.0 Monitoring**

### **Purpose of Monitoring**

The primary purpose of monitoring is to cross-check significant environmental effects which arise during the implementation stage against those predicted during the plan preparation stage. Existing monitoring arrangements may be used if appropriate, to avoid duplication of monitoring. In this regard, the monitoring measures outlined below are based on the Draft County Development Plan.

### **7.1 Monitoring Arrangements and Methods**

The DoEHLG SEA Guidelines (2004) recommend that the arrangements and methods chosen should be those which are best fitted in each case to checking whether the assumptions made in the Environmental Report correspond with the environmental effects arising from implementation of the plan, and to identifying at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects.

New research activity is not required, existing sources of information can be used. Where gaps in environmental information are identified during the preparation of the environmental report, monitoring measures over the period of the plan can be geared towards addressing such gaps, where practicable.

Monitoring will be based around the 'Environmental Objectives'. A number of Objectives, Indicators and Targets are set below. They will allow measures of trends and progress over time. Many targets will be incorporated with existing targets under European and National legislation (e.g. Phosphorus Regulations). Monitoring proposals must concentrate on likely significant environmental effects, which have been identified in the Environmental Report and the measures identified as necessary to prevent, reduce, or offset any significant adverse effects.

Monitoring at an early stage may identify unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The Statutory Manager's Report on Progress in achieving objectives of Development Plan takes place 2-years after the adoption of the County Plan and 'shall include information in relation to the progress on, and the results of monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the development plan'.

If an objective or policy is having a significant adverse impact, a variation may be considered during the lifetime of the Development Plan.

The planning authority proposes the following monitoring examples:

### **7.2. Monitoring Programme for the Draft Cavan Town and Environs Development Plans**

#### **Responsibilities**

Cavan County Council and Cavan Town Council will be responsible for monitoring the Draft County Town and Environs Development Plans.

#### **Frequency of Reporting**

Two years after the Development Plans are adopted, the Manager must prepare a report on 'Progress in achieving objectives in the Development Plans'. This will include the results of monitoring and a further report will be made available every two years thereafter. It is expected that these reports will be issued to the designated Environmental Authorities and made available on the County Council and Town Council website.

### **Gaps in Environmental Information**

The preparation of the Environmental Report identified a number of gaps in relation to the follow environmental data.

- Information is largely paper based with exceptions of designated areas in digitised format (GIS)
- Deficiency of information on buildings at risk
- No designated Architectural Conservations Areas (ACAs) (The Planning Authority proposes to prepare Draft ACAs during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan)
- Undiscovered sites of cultural heritage
- Absence of Flood Risk Assessment for the County and for Cavan Town & Environs
- Lack of Cavan-centred environmental information – e.g. Air Quality monitoring, current information relates to a more Regional level and cannot be exptropolated at local level for Cavan town.