

# Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009–2015



**TPA**

November 2009

# CONTENTS

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<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page no.</b>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b>	
Cathaoirleach's Foreword	1-1
1.1 Background	1-1
1.2 Consultation Process	1-2
1.3 National, Regional and County Context	1-2
1.4 Big Picture Issues	1-6
1.5 Context: Bundoran Development Framework	1-7
1.5.1 Vision	1-7
1.5.2 Bundoran and Environs: Area Framework Strategy	1-7
1.5.3 Detailed Settlement Strategy: Vision and Objectives	1-8
1.5.4 Physical and Geographical Boundary	1-8
1.5.5 Bundoran Town Structure	1-9
1.5.6 Bundoran Environs Structure	1-9
1.5.7 Strategic Objectives	1-10
1.6 Spatial Land Use Plan Objectives	1-11
<b>Chapter 2 Policy Context</b>	
2.0 International, National, Regional and Local Context	2-1
2.1 International Level	2-1
2.2 National Level	2-1
2.2.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)	2-2
2.2.2 National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013	2-4
2.2.3 Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)	2-4
2.3 Cross-Border Level	2-5
2.4 Regional Level	2-6
2.4.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (2005)	2-6
2.5 Local Level	2-7
2.5.1 County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as Varied)	2-8
2.5.2 Retail Strategy for County Donegal 2006-2012	2-8
2.5.3 Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010	2-9
<b>Chapter 3 Enterprise, Employment and Tourism</b>	
3.1 Vision	3-1
3.2 Introduction	3-1
3.3 Context	3-1
3.4 Strategic Objectives	3-2
3.5 Enterprise and Employment - Policies and Objectives	3-3
3.5.1 Employment Location	3-3
3.5.2 Supply of Employment-Generating Lands	3-4
3.5.3 Tourism Resource	3-5
3.5.4 Marine Related Tourism/Employment	3-6
3.5.5 Eco-(Sustainable)Tourism	3-7

# CONTENTS

---

3.5.6	Development of Tourist Industry	3-9
3.5.7	Tourist Accommodation	3-11
3.5.8	Amusement Arcades	3-13
3.5.9	Retailing	3-13

## Chapter 4 Retailing and Town Centre

4.1	Vision	4-1
4.2	Context	4-1
4.3	Background	4-2
4.4	Analysis of current uses in the retailing/town centre area	4-3
4.5	Analysis and Evaluation	4-4
4.6	Health Check Review	4-5
4.6.1	Recent Developments	4-6
4.7	Strategic Retail Objective	4-7
4.8	Objectives and Policies	4-7
4.8.1	County Retail Strategy	4-7
4.8.2	Retail Proposals within the Town Centre	4-8
4.8.3	Town Centre Environment	4-10
4.8.4	General Retail Policies	4-11
4.8.5	Lands on the Seaward Side of the Town Centre	4-13
4.8.6	Amusement Arcades	4-13
4.9	Town Centre Development Management Standards	4-14
4.9.1	Shopfront Design	4-14
4.9.2	Advertisements/Hoardings	4-14
4.9.3	Access to upper floors/servicing arrangements	4-15
4.9.4	Plot Ratios	4-15
4.9.5	Site Coverage	4-16
4.9.6	Height	4-16
4.9.7	Overshadowing/Overlooking	4-16
4.9.8	Car Parking	4-16

## Chapter 5 Conservation and Heritage

5.1	Vision	5-1
5.2	Introduction	5-1
5.3	Overview	5-1
5.4	Context	5-2
5.5	Strategic Objectives	5-2
5.6	Our Natural Heritage – Policies	5-3
5.6.1	Protection of Nature Conservation Areas/Sites	5-4
5.6.2	Tree Protection Policy	5-5
5.6.3	Pedestrian Walkways	5-7
5.6.4	Landscape, Scenic Views and Prospects	5-7
5.6.5	Inland Waters including the River Bradogue	5-8
5.6.6	Protected Species	5-11
5.7	Our Built Heritage – Policies	5-12

# CONTENTS

---

5.7.1	Record of Protected Structures (RPS)	5-12
5.7.2	Archaeological Heritage	5-13
5.7.3	Architectural Heritage and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's)	5-16
5.7.4	Design Principles	5-18

## Chapter 6 The Coastal Area

6.1	Vision	6.1
6.2	Introduction	6-1
6.3	Coastal Zone Management	6-1
6.4	Coastal Amenity, The Seafront and Walking Routes	6-2
6.5	Scenic Views	6-4
6.6	Water Quality	6-4
6.7	Natural Heritage	6-5
6.8	The Coastline/Coastal Erosion Processes	6-6
6.9	Coastal Conservation Zone	6-6
6.10	Coastal Management Area	6-8
6.11	Marine Leisure Activities	6-8
6.12	Bundoran Pier	6-9
6.13	Golf Courses	6-10

## Chapter 7 Housing

7.1	Vision	7-1
7.2	Context	7-1
7.3	Background	7-2
7.4	Strategic Objective	7-2
7.5	Housing Strategy	7-3
7.6	Objectives and Policies	7-3
7.6.1	Zonings	7-3
7.6.2	Unserviced Settlement Areas	7-5
7.6.3	Housing Mix	7-8
7.6.4	Social and Affordable Housing	7-9
7.6.5	Elderly Persons and People with Disabilities	7-10
7.6.6	Countering Social Segregation	7-11
7.6.7	Traveller Accommodation	7-11
7.6.8	Housing Density	7-12
7.6.9	Design and Layout of New Housing Development	7-13
7.6.10	Open Space Provision	7-15
7.6.11	Accessibility	7-17
7.6.12	Large Scale Developments and Complementary Community Facilities	7-18

## Chapter 8 Community Services

8.1	Vision	8.1
8.2	Context	8-1

# CONTENTS

---

8.3	Strategy	8-1
8.4	Background	8-2
8.5	Policies and Objectives	8-2
8.5.1	Community Development	8-2
8.5.2	Education	8-5
8.5.3	Social Inclusion	8-7
	Traveller Accommodation	8-8
	Ethnic Minority Groups	8-8
	Childcare	8-9
	Elderly - Nursing Homes	8-10

## **Chapter 9 Recreation, Leisure and Amenity Open Space**

9.1	Vision	9-1
9.2	Introduction	9-1
9.3	Overview	9-1
9.4	Strategic Objectives	9-2
9.5	Policies and Objectives	9-3
9.5.1	Culture and Arts	9-3
9.5.2	Recreation and Sports Facilities	9-3
9.5.3	Parks, Public Amenity Areas and Shorefront	9-4

## **Chapter 10 Transportation and Infrastructure**

10.1	Vision	10-1
10.2	Introduction	10-1
10.3	Overview	10-1
10.4	National Development Plan 2007-2013	10-2
10.5	Transportation – Policies	10-3
10.5.1	Roads and Parking	10-3
10.5.2	Public Transport	10-5
10.5.3	Pedestrian and Cycle Route Network	10-7
10.5.4	Access to Backlands and Zoned Land by means of a Distributor Link Road	10-8
10.6	Infrastructure – Policies	10-10
10.6.1	Water Supply	10-10
10.6.2	Surface Water Drainage	10-11
10.6.3	Flooding	10-13
10.6.4	Surface Water Quality	10-15
10.6.5	Waste Water Treatment	10-16
10.6.6	Waste Management and Disposal	10-17
10.6.7	Telecommunications	10-18
10.6.8	Energy Supply and Energy Efficiency	10-20

## **Chapter 11 Opportunity Sites and Implementation of Plan**

11.1	Vision	11-1
11.2	Introduction	11-1

# CONTENTS

---

11.3	Opportunity Sites	11-1
11.3.1	East Gateway Opportunity Site	11-2
11.3.2	West Gateway Opportunity Site	11-2
11.3.3	Town Centre/Main Street Environmental Improvements	11-3
11.3.4	Harbour/Bundoran Pier	11-3
11.3.5	Civic Square/Market Place Area	11-3
11.3.6	Finner Camp Opportunity Site	11-3
11.3.7	NeighbourWood Schemes/Community Woodlands	11-3
11.3.8	Tullaghan and Rock Ross Unserviced Settlement Limits	11-3
11.4	Implementation and Finance	11-4
11.4.1	Introduction	11-4
11.4.2	Phasing	11-4
11.4.3	Development Contributions Scheme	11-5
11.4.4	Bonds	11-6
11.4.5	Additional Funding Sources	11-6
11.5	Planning Process	11-8
11.5.1	Introduction	11-8
11.5.2	Compliance with Permissions Granted and Enforcement	11-9

## Appendices

Appendix I	Land Use Zoning Objectives
Appendix II	Housing Strategy
Appendix III	Parking Standards
Appendix IV	Record of Protected Structures
Appendix V	Record of Monuments
Appendix VI	List of Designated Sites
Appendix VII	SEA Statement
Appendix VIII	Appropriate Assessment

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Cathaoirleach's Foreword

I welcome the newly Adopted Bundoran & Environs Development Plan as it represents a significant opportunity for the planned development of a newly defined plan area. This new plan now covers the administrative areas of both Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council which required the working together of the two administrations during the drafting and adoption process and for which I thank my counterparts in Donegal County Council.



The Plan is adopted at a challenging and significant time in respect of the downturn in the global economy and we hope that the Plan can provide both an impetus for new investment within the local economy generally and our vital and centrally important tourism economy. The physical Plan area has changed but we have also attempted to ensure that new land use opportunities are available for widening the Town's appeal and presenting policies and objectives preserving our important coastal resource.

As Cathaoirleach of the Town Council I welcome the involvement to date of interested parties, members of the general public and the hard work of the Council's Central Planning Unit staff ably supported by the appointed consultants Tom Phillips + Associates. It is important to stress that the involvement of the general public, all interested parties/bodies and the debate that has ensued within the Council Chamber has significantly assisted the process and made the Plan as a result more robust.

Cllr. Eamon Barrett  
29<sup>th</sup> October 2009

#### 1.1 Background

Donegal County Council and Bundoran Town Council commenced the preparatory process for the new Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Town and its Environs for the next six-year plan period i.e. 2009-2015.

# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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For the purposes of the implementation of this plan the two councils, Donegal County Council and Bundoran Town Council have combined and all references in this Development Plan to '*the Council*' refers to both local authorities.

The Plan was adopted by Donegal County Council on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2009 and by Bundoran Town Council on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2009. It becomes operational on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

## 1.2 Consultation Process

It is important to have the input off all 'stakeholders' from the beginning so that we can make sure that the final Plan reflects the wishes and concerns of local residents, representative bodies etc. – as well as incorporating government strategies and guidelines.

The Strategic Issues Papers, Development Plan Workshop and 2 no. publicly advertised open days promoted and initiated involvement in the plan process and assisted in the Draft Plan as prepared.

Further to the Draft plan being put on public display as of 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009 some 26 submissions were received from interested parties which informed the Material Alterations Stage of the Plan process. The Material Alterations were subsequently advertised and a further 11 submissions were received and considered by the Members of the Council who at a Special Meeting dated 29<sup>th</sup> October 2009 agreed to make the Plan as amended by the Material Alterations.

## 1.3 National, Regional and County Context

The Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 takes account of a number of national and regional strategies and guidelines, the two key documents being:

- i. The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, and the
- ii. Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region, 2004-2016.

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) sets out a strategy for balanced development all over Ireland. The NSS has identified Dublin as the engine of the national economy, while seeking to strengthen the drawing power of other areas. The focus of the NSS is to bring people, jobs and services closer together. It will mean a better quality of life for us all with less traffic, less commuting, better environmental care and easier access to services like health, education and leisure.



## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

---

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (RPGBR) as currently under Review set out a cohesive strategic long-term framework, which will assist in achieving the potential of the Region.

The Guidelines have identified the previously difficult and sensitive political situation in the north of Ireland as compounding the natural disadvantage of the Region. They cite persistent weaknesses in the regions infrastructure as resulting in the underperformance of the Region and its inability to compete for employment on a national or international scale.

Further to this, the RPGBR identify the fundamental objective behind the Strategy as being to build on and enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Region. It identifies key factors to this process as being the restructuring of economic and employment activity, and the achievement of scale and capacity. The political situation has since progressed and now presents significant trading and inter-regional advantages with Northern Ireland producing a 'new' found partner.

These and other guidelines will be referred to elsewhere in the text, but due to the brevity of this document not all relevant national and regional documents will be mentioned but are as contained with the bibliography. It is important to note that the Bundoran Plan is both supplementary and complementary to the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied), which in development plan and development management terms is the parent document to the Town & Environs Plan.

In addition, the Plan will take account of the Donegal County Strategy 2002-2012 - 'An Straitáis'. City and County Development Boards were created under the Local Government Acts 2001 and comprise representatives from the local authority, local development bodies, state agencies and the social partners. The shared vision of the County's and respective Town's growth and development are a pre-requisite for the co-ordinated delivery of plan policy, strategy and visions.

The County Development Board's 'Strategic Vision', is as follows:

*'For the community of Donegal, to work collectively for an inclusive and sustainable society, based on the following principles:*

- *a safe, healthy and just society;*
- *a successful economy and employment opportunities for all;*

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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- *where every member of society can reach their full potential;*
- *where our culture and languages play a central role;*
- *with optimum use of our natural resources;*
- *with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider community, locally, regionally and nationally;*
- *with due regard to the environment.'*

Planning in the Bundoran and Environs area is increasingly influenced by policies and perspectives of international, national and regional importance. However, the Community Enterprise Board provides an appropriate, consultative and 'bottom – up' approach to strategy compilation which cannot be over-emphasised in the plan policy process.

### **What makes a good development plan?**

Consistency with the DoEHLGs, Development Plan Guidelines, a Development Plan should:

- Create **a clear strategic framework** for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area over the duration of the plan, consistent with longer-term planning and sustainable development aims, including those set out in the National Spatial Strategy and any Regional Planning Guidelines in force.
- Set out **an over-arching vision for the development of the area** to which the plan relates.
- Give **spatial expression** to the economic, social and cultural aims of the County or City Development Strategy.
- Be **grounded in public and political consensus** around the plan's strategic framework.
- Provide **a clear framework for public and private sector investment** in infrastructure and in development in the area, having regard to both national and regional plans and policies.
- **Protect and enhance the amenities** of the area.
- Offer **clear guidance to developers** in framing development proposals and to the planning authority in assessing such proposals.
- **Establish a policy framework** within which more detailed plans (such as local area plans or plans for architectural conservation

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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areas) can be drawn up for specific parts of the planning authority's area.

- Be **capable of implementation and monitoring**.

Development plans should be user friendly, logical, internally consistent and up-to-date. To achieve these aims, the structure of a city, town or county development plan needs three main elements:

1. An early focus on the **strategic or 'big picture' planning issues** that an area faces, putting the city, town or county in question in the wider context as established by the NSS and Regional Planning Guidelines. This will be followed by **an integrated and coherent overall strategy** for the area. Elaboration of the overall strategy could be set out on a topic basis, under headings such as settlement, transport, housing, enterprise and employment etc.
2. The policies and objectives and other measures, (e.g. guidance notes, standards) necessary to **implement** the strategy, particularly in the operation of the day-to-day development management system,
3. Ensuring that the plan contains sufficient **detail** to explain where the strategy came from. This could be contained in appendices as appropriate to ensure that an over-emphasis on detail does not get in the way of a clear and succinct presentation of the central messages of the plan.

The Development Plan Guidelines recommend, as a minimum, that a Development Plan should contain the following:

- The national and regional planning **policy context**, and, where appropriate, the Northern Ireland and European policy contexts.
- **Population, housing and employment growth estimates**, education provision requirements, as well as an indication of the more important drivers for change into the future.
- The **overall strategy** for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- **Mandatory objectives** as set out in section 10(2) of the 2000 Act, including land use zoning, the provision of infrastructure, the Record of Protected Structures, urban renewal and the Seveso Directive.

# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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- Relevant discretionary objectives (listed in the First Schedule of the Act), under the headings of location and pattern of development, e.g. sustainable settlement and transport strategies, control of areas and structures, e.g. density and design issues (referring as appropriate to the Government's policies set out in *Action on Architecture 2002-2005*), community facilities e.g. healthcare, recreational and children's play facilities, environment and amenities e.g. landscape protection, infrastructure and transport e.g. reservations of land for road and rail.
- **Housing Strategy** under Part V of the Act (as amended by the Planning and Development [Amendment] Act 2002).
- **Retail Planning Strategy** (for county and city development plans).
- A **strategic environmental assessment** of the likely environmental effects of implementing the plan.

## 1.4 Big Picture Issues

The following Issues are identified as of importance to the content of the vision, strategy and plan framework for the Town and its Environs:

- The retention of Bundoran's status and as popularly known as Ireland's Premier Seaside Resort.
- The importance of the protection of the coastal zone as central to that status.
- Concerns with potential wastewater and infrastructural deficits and their respective impacts upon the coastal environment.
- The economic over-dependency on the tourist-related economy.
- The poor external image of the town at its extremes and the need for a visual face-lift within the core main street area.
- The low-density, sprawling nature of residential development to date.
- The over-emphasis on residential zoned lands to date without the complementary services and facilities.

# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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- The potential for higher density tourist related developments.
- The potential for Ministerial directions in respect of the perceived over-zoning.
- Potential linkages to surrounding town and County strategies and the respective inclusion of adjacent areas within the new plan boundaries.
- Effecting better control on development immediately outside the existing Plan boundary.

## 1.5 Context: Bundoran Development Framework

### 1.5.1 Vision

*'To provide a clear and coherent vision to guide the future development of Bundoran and Environs where currently significant areas of urban land are under-utilised and underdeveloped.'*

This Plan will be operational for the next 6 years. It will inform the Development Management process and inform strategic plan objectives for the delivery of decision making for the next plan cycle.

The principal plan goals and objectives are hoped to be realised from the implementation of Plan Policy and it is incumbent upon the local planning authority to promote certainty in the development process by the effective implementation of plan policy.

### 1.5.2 Bundoran and Environs: Area Framework Strategy

The principal area of change from the preceding plans for Bundoran is the realisation that the plan and its impacts often operate outside the limits of the previous Town Council boundary and decision making outside the plan boundary could and will have implications for the greater town and its area of influence.

The Plan has thus been reviewed in its context of the greater Bundoran and Environs area and seeks to encapsulate those areas or the “Environs” within Donegal County Council which are in planning management terms, both important and relevant to the town.

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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The change in the Plan area boundary seeks to ensure the proper and effective management of land uses in a sustainable and orderly manner.

The plan boundary encapsulates:

- (i) 'areas under strong urban pressure' which, may be either deemed premature for development or having special designations which could render the lands inappropriate for development, namely Special Areas of Conservation, High Amenity Areas etc. and,
- (ii) 'areas for consolidation' which are considered to fall within the appropriate development envelope over the plan period and which is further divided into 2 no. phases of growth and consolidation and which will envisage an identified logical and sequential approach to development, namely;
  - a. Phase I Area – 0-4 Year Plan Period, and
  - b. Phase II Area – 4-9 Year Period.

### 1.5.3 Detailed Settlement Strategy: Vision and Objectives

Bundoran as a settlement is considered a, 'key settlement for urban strengthening', within the context of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region and re-affirmed by the County Development Plan.

The vision for the town is to ensure a planned, phased and sustainable development context for the future consolidation and urban strengthening of the plan area. The importance of the Environs is to provide a surrounding physical and geographical context which can provide both an appropriate plan context and an effective and manageable geographical area.

### 1.5.4 Physical and Geographical Boundary

The Plan boundary encapsulates areas under strong urban pressure namely Tullaghan to the west and the Rock/Ross areas to the south and specific areas such as Finner Camp and the River Drowes Corridor with singular plan designations which would be afforded for example, either enhanced plan protection or opportunities depending on the lands context.

The enlarged plan area will allow for the co-ordinated consideration and development management of geographically proximate and

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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neighbouring land uses which are currently considered under differing plans, policies and objectives.

### 1.5.5 Bundoran Town Structure

The Plan identifies core and outer areas of the town to ensure the logical and sequential zoning and consequential development of the Town to ensure orderly planning and sustainable development.

The two phases of the Zoning Plan are proposed to ensure the appropriate timed delivery of land uses and to consolidate and effect development from the town centre outwards. Development opportunities presented in such a phased approach will ensure land owners propensity to use their plan zonings within the appropriate time period or issue intention to deliver such proposals through appropriate planning applications.

The two phased approach to the Town's development is identified in the following graphic.

Within the Town's development structure propose and identify local area plan objectives at;

- gateway locations on the western and eastern extremes associated with the interchange locations,
- an urban design framework for the core 'main street' area,
- an urban design framework for the 'seafront' area,
- an objective for the consideration of an appropriately located Marina/Harbour development,
- an identified urban design framework for the lands adjacent and within the confines and to the north (town-side) of the National Road (by-pass) corridor.

### 1.5.6 Bundoran Environs Structure

The associated Environs are identified for the realisation of appropriate significant designations such as proposed Coastal Management Zones, National Heritage Areas (pNHA) or candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and the lands consequent consideration against the context of the town's projected growth.

The identification of the Environs is a mechanism principally to identify the areas under a strong urban influence and which will come under potential pressure for development. Bringing the Environs within the influence of the planning management tool of the development plan will allow for improve co-ordination and effective control from a range of developments but namely

# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

pressure for residential developments and single houses in the identified rural environs.

**Figure 1.1 Context Map Indicating Bundoran Town and Surrounding Area**



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## 1.5.7 Strategic Objectives

Overarching strategic objectives are considered appropriate as follows:

1. To ensure an adequate supply of zoned and serviced lands to meet anticipated development needs.
2. To promote a more sustainable compact urban form, particularly encouraging higher residential densities and locating employment in the vicinity of strategic public transport corridors.
3. To develop and expand the existing centre and nodes, especially those that are proximate to the identified town core and are walkable i.e. to minimise car travel.
4. To promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking and reduce reliance on private car usage and reduce car parking demand.
5. To permit a wide range of land uses under each zoning objective (compatible with protecting existing amenities), to help reduce the need to travel and to reduce travel distance and time.



## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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6. To ensure a broad mix of zones throughout the Town to facilitate a balance of housing, jobs and facilities commensurate with a permanent resident population as well as the tourist orientated demands.
7. To conserve existing urban areas, buildings and features of high environmental quality.
8. To strictly control the further expansion of the outer urban areas into rural and high amenity areas by using all the land in the urban areas in a highly sustainable manner.
9. To ensure that construction design is of a high quality and appropriate to the scale and content of its surroundings.
10. To only allow the expansion of development in the urban/rural fringe in accordance with local plans based on sustainability principles.
11. To promote the re-use of urban derelict land and buildings for the better and effective use of these lands and buildings.
12. To ensure the protection of natural habitats, maritime environment, cultural heritage, ecological resources and quality landscapes and the promotion of biodiversity.
13. To promote cost effective provision of public services like roads, drainage, waste management facilities, lighting, public amenities and schools.
14. To minimise the consumption of non-renewable resources like soils, groundwater and agricultural land.
15. To ensure the provision of high quality public water supply and drainage systems.
16. To promote waste prevention, waste reduction, waste recycling and waste re-use and to limit waste disposal.
17. To promote social inclusion to ensure an improved quality of life for all contributing to the evolution of socially integrated communities in the identified urban area with the promotion of community health, childcare, educational and elderly care uses.

### 1.6 Spatial Land Use Plan Objectives

These have been presented graphically on the associated Land Use Zoning Map and incorporate the following:

1. Town and Environs Plan Boundaries
2. Two Phased 'Residential' areas for promoting consolidated, logical orderly and sequential development of zoned lands.
3. Gateway locations for enhanced approaches/exits on principal west and east exits/entries to town providing enhanced urban edges.

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

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4. Enhanced urban edge within the northern confines of the by-pass (N15) and to provide improved external edge but protecting 30 metre zone adjacent by-pass National Road corridor.
5. Town Centre improvement and urban design framework for 'main street' area.
6. Objective for town park/civic amenity space adjacent river mouth and sea front opposite tourist information office.
7. Proposed linear park objective associated with river corridor.
8. Proposed linked pedestrian walking routes throughout the town.
9. Proposed movement/roads corridors and associated permeability corridors.
10. Development Exclusion Zones in respect of Coastal Conservation Zone, dunes, pNHAs, cSACs, Amenity areas etc.
11. Preserve railway corridor lands.

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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### Chapter 2

#### Policy Context

#### 2.0 International, National, Regional and Local Context

Planning in the Bundoran and Environs area is increasingly influenced by policies and perspectives of international, national and regional importance.

#### 2.1 International Level

At the international level, the global consensus on the need to promote sustainable development is the most overriding element in terms of this new approach to planning, and as such will influence the various policies and objectives contained in this Development Plan. Further to this, the launching of the *Government's Guidelines Towards Sustainable Local Communities (Local Agenda 21)*; the development of a spatial vision under the *European Spatial Development Perspective*; together with the effects of structural and cohesion funding for transport, drainage and other infrastructure and services are all indications of the continuing impact of European affairs on planning in Bundoran.

#### 2.2 National Level

The *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007* states that a Development Plan shall, in so far as is practicable, be consistent with such national plans, policies or strategies as appropriate. Regard has been had in the preparation of the *Draft Bundoran and Environs Development Plan* to all relevant government policies, programmes and plans.

- Action on Architecture 2002-2005, April 2002;
- Architectural Heritage Protection/Guidelines for Planning Authorities, December 2001;
- Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, June 2001;
- Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities, February 2007;
- Development Plan Guidelines, June 2007;
- Flood Report (OPW) Sept 2008;
- Landscape and Landscape Assessment, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, June 2000;
- National Development Plan 2007-2013;
- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020;

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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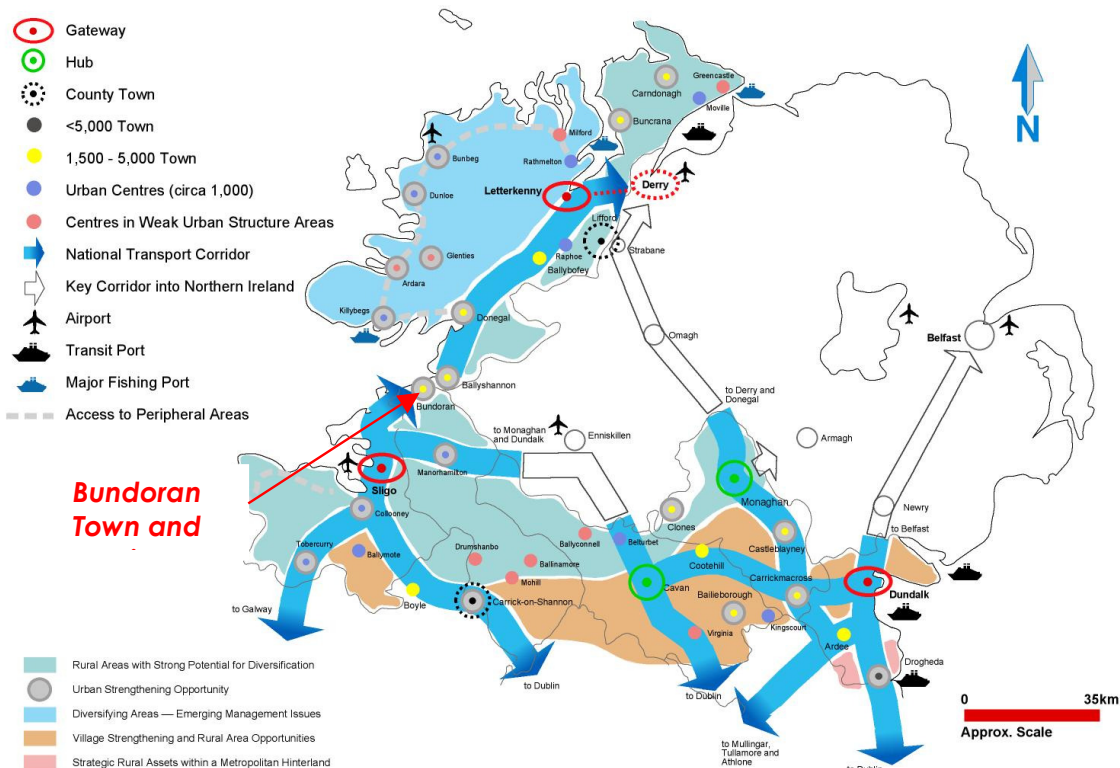
- Part V of the *Planning and Development Act 2000 to 2007*, Housing Supply, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, December 2000;
  - Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2007;
  - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Sustainable Communities, 2007;
  - Residential Density, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, September 1999;
  - Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005;
  - Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes: Shop Front Design, February 2004;
  - Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1997;
  - Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, February 2008;
  - Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structure, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, July 1996;
  - The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, September 2008<sup>1</sup>
  - The Provision of Schools and the Planning System - A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities – July 2008
  - Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, 2008;
- Details of the most significant of these policies are provided below.

### 2.2.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)

The *National Spatial Strategy* is a 20-year planning framework which seeks to deliver more balanced social, economic and physical development between regions. It seeks to positively influence the relationship between the location of people and the provision of resources to deliver a sustainable economy, high environmental standards and a good quality of life. The NSS is concerned with ensuring that the utilisation of the territory of the country, its land and marine resources is included in the broader national context. It is hoped that by adding a spatial aspect to social and economic planning, a broader understanding of the implications of sectoral policies may emerge.

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

**Figure 2.1 National Spatial Strategy Framework for the Border Region**



**Source: National Spatial Strategy, annotated by Tom Phillips + Associates**

Further to this, the *National Spatial Strategy* sets out a clear framework for dealing with spatial issues. It is envisaged that this will contribute to national competitiveness and a high quality environment. Additionally, it is hoped that the NSS will deliver more balanced regional development and hence will result in a reduction in disparities between and within regions. To achieve this, the strategy identifies a number of regional gateways and hubs.

Bundoran has been identified as a town which has “urban strengthening opportunities”, along with the towns of Ballyshannon, Donegal, Ballybofey, Buncrana and Carndonagh. The NSS recognises that these centres have built up important functions in a variety of areas including tourism, retailing and employment in a variety of enterprises. Further to this, the NSS highlights that the national transport framework will support the development of such functions in the future through enhanced accessibility. The NSS emphasises that matching these improvements through quality development, physical attractiveness and joint promotion and marketing will be vital to developing these functions in the future. In this context, the area of Bundoran and surrounding environs will play

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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a significant role, particularly through its buoyant tourism sector, in delivering economic benefits to the surrounding area.

### 2.2.2 National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013

The *National Development Plan (2007)* proposes investment of some €184 billion in five investment priorities of (1) economic infrastructure (2) enterprise, science and innovation (3) human capital (4) social infrastructure and (5) social inclusion. The *NDP 2007-2013* sets out a “Regional Development Strategy” that is based on the framework of the *NSS*. This involves promotion of investment in the nine gateway centres referred to in the *NSS*, including Letterkenny-Derry, complemented by development of the *NSS* hub and county towns and their rural hinterlands.

### 2.2.3 Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)

It is a policy of *Bundoran Town Council* that the principles of sustainable development will inform all objectives, policies, decisions and actions of the Town Council for the period of the Plan. It is recognised that sustainable development has an economic, social and cultural dimension as well as an environmental one, and that only the integration of these policies can guarantee the quality of life of this and future generations.

The most widely used and well known definition for sustainable development is that set out by the Brundtland Commission which defines it as

*‘development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’*

The key to this concept is the need to achieve a balance between human activity, development, and the protection of the environment. The principles of sustainable development necessitate that planning authorities influence the use of land and development in ways that:

- Minimise the environmental impact of development in terms of water quality, pollution and visual amenities;
- Minimise the negative environmental impact of development on surface water and groundwater in terms of water quality - coastal water quality in particular; quantity of runoff generated; and amenity degradation;

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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- Ensure equality of access to employment and other social infrastructure;
- Limit/minimise the use of energy, particularly in terms of transport;
- Make the best use of existing/proposed resources;
- Involve the local community in decision making on environmental issues.

The Development Plan, as the Council's principal policy statement on land use, represents a step towards achieving sustainability, and has been drawn-up to reflect the above objectives. It is recognised that sustainable development can only be achieved with joint public and private sector action, along with the acceptance and support of the wider community.

### 2.3 Cross-Border Level

County Donegal has an extensive boundary with Northern Ireland. More than 90% of the land boundary is in contact with the North. Whilst the boundary of the Bundoran and Environs Plan area does not have any physical contact with the North, the area is located a mere 10 miles from the region, and as a result, is extremely heavily influenced by the North, with approximately 80% of visitors to the area hailing from this region. It is therefore very important to recognise this fact in the strategic policy context of the Development Plan.

#### **The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 (RDSNI)**

The RDSNI has been prepared with a number of themes:

- The development of balanced and polycentric urban systems;
- The need to develop new urban-rural relationships;
- The promotion of integrated infrastructure;
- The sensible and sensitive use of natural resources, and the built and cultural heritage.

These themes recognise the relevance of co-ordinating spatial planning in cross-border areas. In particular, the RDSNI has an objective to develop the North-West centered on Derry City, and to strengthen the city as a hub for the entire North-West, including Donegal, with which Derry has many strong linkages. The RDSNI notes that areas of disadvantage exist on both sides of the border, highlighting the need to foster more economic growth across the

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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entire North-West. The strategy therefore encourages cross-border co-operation on a very broad basis.

### 2.4 Regional Level

At a regional level, planning and development in the Bundoran area is informed by the *Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2005*).

These were drawn up as a result of Section 21 of the *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007*, which empowered regional authorities, after consultation with planning authorities within its region or at the discretion of the minister, to make regional planning guidelines.

The area of Bundoran and Environs falls within the Border Regional Authority, which has jurisdiction over the six border counties of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth.

#### 2.4.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (2005)

The *Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs)* for this region were published in May 2005, are currently under review and set out the parameters for the implementation of the *National Spatial Strategy* at regional level. It is the objective of the *RPGs* to provide a cohesive strategic long term framework for the development of this region over the next 20 year period, and ensure that this policy framework be incorporated into policies for county and other development plans of the region.

The *RPGs* for the Border Region divides the region into 3 sub-regions. Bundoran, and the whole of County Donegal, falls into sub-region 1, with a hinterland which stretches into North Leitrim and Sligo and the North Western part of Northern Ireland incorporating the City of Derry, Limavady, Strabane and Omagh.

Whilst the settlement strategy for this Sub Region identifies the linked Gateway of Derry and Letterkenny as being the key settlement, the town of Bundoran is highlighted as a 'key settlement for urban strengthening', along with the towns of Carndonagh, Bunrana, Donegal Town, Ballyshannon, and Ballybofey/Stranorlar, as per the *National Spatial Strategy*.

The *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*, and the policies and objectives contained herein are fully informed by the *RPGs* for the Border Region.



## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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The Council, through this Development Plan, will work to implement the development framework set down in the *RPGs* for the border region in so far as this framework applies to the town of Bundoran, and, furthermore, to work in partnership with the Regional Authority, adjoining local authorities, public agencies, the private sector and community at large for the betterment of the region as a whole.

### 2.5 Local Level

At a more local level, this development plan incorporates the provision of the following:

- County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)
- Donegal County Strategy 2002-2012
- Retail Strategy for County Donegal 2006-2012
- Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010
- Bundoran Town Council Housing Strategy (2004)
- Waste Management Plan

The impact of these documents on future development plan policy will be dealt with more specifically in the relevant chapter headings, although details of some of the most significant of these policies are provided below.

The *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007* states that in making a Development Plan, a planning authority shall have regard to the development plans of adjoining planning authorities and shall co-ordinate the objectives in the plans of those authorities except where the planning authority considers it to be inappropriate or not feasible to do so. A planning authority must also take into account any significant likely effects the implementation of the plan may have on the area of any adjoining planning authority.

Having regard to this, the following Development Plans of adjoining local authorities both within and outside the county, have been considered in the preparation of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*:

- *Ballyshannon and Environs Local Area Plan 2009-2015*;
- *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)*;
- *Leitrim County Council Development Plan 2003-2009*; and
- *Sligo County Council Development Plan 2005-2011*.

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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### 2.5.1 County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)

The *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)*, sets out the policy framework for the future development of County Donegal in terms of housing, economic development, environment, built heritage, tourism, transport, the Gaeltacht, culture, sports and recreation, environmental services and protection.

In the strategic context, the *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)* emphasises that;

*'a strong urban structure at the sub-Gateway level is essential not only to consolidate the Letterkenny-Derry Gateway but also to ensure that a network exists to filter and funnel the benefits of the Gateway to all parts of the County.'*

The Development Plan has included the town of Bundoran as one of the 19 centres identified as capable of providing a strong urban structure at the sub-Gateway level, where its function is residential, retail, commercial, educational, public transport and community/religious.

The *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)* defines the area of Bundoran town by the insertion of control points that act as markers on the main approach roads to the town and as such differentiate between the rural area and the urban area.

### 2.5.2 Retail Strategy for County Donegal 2006-2012

The *Retail Strategy for County Donegal*, which is included as an appendix to the *County Development Plan*, sets out a retail strategy for the county, within which Bundoran is identified in the second hierarchy entitled 'Inter-Gateway/Strategic Transport Corridors.' Under the specific retail policies and proposals highlighted in the strategy, it is stated that;

*'it is the policy of the County Council to promote and encourage the provision of regional and county level functions at Bunrana, Donegal Town, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, **Bundoran/Ballyshannon** and Lifford.'*

One of the actions which will be taken to achieve this aim is to:

*'encourage an increase in higher order convenience/ comparison and retail warehousing floorspace of Bunrana, **Bundoran**, Ballyshannon, and Lifford to counteract expenditure*

## CHAPTER 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

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*leakage to Sligo in the south, Tyrone in the east and Derry in the north-east.'*

### **2.5.3 Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010**

*Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010* relates to the area of Bundoran Town Council. It sets out the local policy framework for the development of the Bundoran Town Council area by means of objectives, policies, proposals and zonings that relate to the full spectrum of development issues including housing, environment, roads and community. On final adoption, the policies of the *Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009-2015* will supersede the policies of the *Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010*.

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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### Chapter 3

#### Enterprise, Employment: and Tourism

##### 3.1 Vision

*'To strengthen the role of Bundoran in the county by ensuring the ongoing protection of the vitality and viability of the tourism function of the town that will be complimented by appropriate alternative land use provision for other employment generating developments making best use of key infrastructure in the form of access and services and resulting in sustainability and longevity for business and entrepreneurialship throughout the year.'*

##### 3.2 Introduction

This chapter sets out the policies and Development Management objectives relating to the fostering of existing employment and creation of economic growth in Bundoran and its environs for the period 2009-2015. The strategic vision of this Plan is to encourage the expansion of existing industries, to concentrate development into the town centre and to facilitate the growth of employment opportunities for the residents of the town, in a sustainable manner. The focus on sustainable employment creation will be based upon consolidating the strong job generation capacity of the tourist industry and harness the advantages of the tourist economy into related business opportunities coupled within the evolution of new non-tourism based industries within the plan area.

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

##### 3.3 Context

The framework for the delivery of the policies and objectives, listed below, is set in the context of national and regional plans, policies and strategies. At national level these include *The National Spatial*

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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*Strategy 2002-2020, Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland 1997 and the National Development Plan 2007-2013. The regional context is provided by the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region. At a county level the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied) has informed the policies and objectives contained in this chapter.*

### 3.4 Strategic Objectives

- SOE1:** To facilitate and support the growth of the economy of Bundoran and its environs in a sustainable manner whilst maintaining and enhancing environmental quality.
- SOE2:** To work in partnership with other government agencies and the private sector to promote the sustainable economic development of Bundoran and to provide employment opportunities for its inhabitants.
- SOE3:** To ensure that both jobs and homes are accessible locally thereby enhancing local employment opportunities, reducing the need to travel and encouraging energy efficient patterns of transport.
- SOE4:** To support and strengthen the town's role as a family orientated seaside resort, broadening the range of tourist facilities available, developing its tourism potential to complement the existing tourist resources to combat the seasonality of the tourism market and attract year-round visitors.
- SOE5:** To enhance the local economy through both inward and local investment to secure and enhance the town's role as a location for economic and employment growth, providing sufficient lands for future employment generating developments at locations that benefit from the strategic location along the Sligo/Letterkenny/ Derry Gateway corridors.
- SOE6:** To identify lands and specific opportunity sites whereby employment related land uses can consolidate and benefit from locational advantage whilst maintaining the environmental and scenic advantages of the town's coastal location.

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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### 3.5 Enterprise, Employment and Tourism - Policies and Objectives

#### 3.5.1 Employment Location

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

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OE-01:** To ensure the suitable location of development in accordance with the zoning objectives of this Plan.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET1:** Employment generating development should be located on suitably zoned industrial, commercial and town centre lands or opportunity sites as identified on the Land Use Zoning Map attached and as detailed in policy EE2 below. This shall enable the consolidation of existing employment developments and encourage future growth near transport nodal locations.

**Policy EET2:** Proposals for employment generating development on lands other than those zoned for such development will only be permitted where there are no other suitably zoned lands available and the proposed use does not conflict with other zoning objectives and policies within the plan.

**Policy EET3:** The Council will favourably consider small scale employment generating development near or within residential areas while having regard to residential amenities and traffic safety issues, only where the enterprise or service is of a scale that is appropriate to serve the local community and has a localised catchment with little associated traffic implications.

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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### 3.5.2 Supply of Employment-Generating Lands

While Bundoran is identified at county level as the premier holiday resort, it is not recognised as a location for inward investment or indigenous industrial growth. Bundoran's location at the southern end of Donegal means that it is more closely related to its neighbouring counties of Leitrim, Sligo and Fermanagh as it is to the wider County Donegal and thus experiences competition from within the county and also from adjoining counties.

The town has many positive attributes as a location for business and industrial development including its location, attractive environment, land availability and supply, a well educated and adaptable workforce and good communication links and infrastructure, including the newly completed bypass. However, there has been little development of this sector to date. Over-reliance on seasonal employment from the tourism sector means that economic activity within the town diminishes considerably during the winter months. There is a need to make provision for sustainable year-round employment.

It is vital that an adequate supply of employment-generating lands is zoned, not just with short term gains in mind but also with the long term goal of a balanced economy and environment.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

**OE-02:** To ensure that an adequate choice of sites is maintained within the plan area in order to provide for the needs of local firms and inward investment, having regard to the need to maintain an adequate stock of land for both immediate and long-term needs whilst also ensuring the protection of the environment into the future.

**OE-03:** To support the diversification of tourism and the local economic base to enable Bundoran to function as a 'self sufficient development centre' through the creation of more year-round employment opportunities that complement the existing economic base.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET4:** Proposals for employment generating uses will be favourably considered in the following locations:

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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- i. land zoned enterprise/employment,
- ii. land zoned mixed-use as part of the identified opportunity sites,
- iii. land with established employment generating uses,
- iv. land zoned Town Centre, and

having regard to the scale and nature of the use in respect of its impact upon neighbouring amenity, the provision and ability of the use to be linked directly to the water services network and that it does not impinge in any way upon the scenic qualities nor the natural environment of the Plan area.

**Policy EET5:** Proposals for the development of small scale/home based business e.g. crèche, office, shall be permitted within the town where:

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

### 3.5.3 Tourism Resource

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

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



## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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been the large-scale investment in holiday homes, largely fuelled by tax incentive based schemes.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OE-04:** To protect and enhance the attractiveness of the town and to diversify and extend the tourism sector to ensure sustained growth into the future.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET6:** Development proposals for tourism and/or employment and enterprise will be favourably considered where they maintain and improve the presentation standards of the built and natural environment, underpin the continued attractiveness of the town as a holiday destination and protect, enhance and develop the architectural, historical heritage, natural environment and general amenities of the town in accordance with the policies contained in the Conservation and Heritage Chapter of this plan.

### 3.5.4 Marine Related Tourism/Employment

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

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

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

**OE-05:** To explore opportunities for further enhancing Bundoran's attractiveness as a surfing destination as a

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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means of developing niche holiday markets as part of the town's overall tourism product and the potential for employment generating related industry.

- OE-06:** To explore the feasibility for extended harbour development for further enhancing the potential for all types of marine activities.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy EET7:** Development proposals which promote the marine resource (cliffs, coast and sea) as an important natural amenity and enhance access via improved pedestrian links and appropriately scaled development within the Seafront and Harbour areas will be favourably considered subject to other plan policies.

- Policy EET8:** Proposals for a new harbour development shall be located within the existing harbour area (the maximum extent of which, has been highlighted on the Land-use Zoning Map), in close proximity to the town centre and shall include proposals for upgrading the existing harbour wall.

- Policy EET9:** Proposals for development in the harbour area shall seek to prioritise the protection of the 'Peak' and the enhancement of the town's setting and coastline and shall assess the effect of the proposal on the marine/coastal environment.

### 3.5.5 Eco-(Sustainable)Tourism

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

Bundoran's role as a premier holiday resort must be strengthened and enhanced through the protection of its coastal setting, cliff walks and Blue Flag beach status and by capitalising on the other opportunities which exist locally in terms of its proximity to the Dartry

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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Mountains and Lough Melvin in the growing market for short break and activity holidays.

Rising oil prices and awareness of the associated 'carbon footprint' implications of flying to foreign holiday destinations can be harnessed to the advantage of the local indigenous tourism product.

Sustainable Tourism Ireland (STI) is an organisation which promotes the concept of sustainability within the tourism sector and espouses the following basic principles:

- ❖ Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
- ❖ Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.
- ❖ Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OE-07:** To explore opportunities for further enhancing Bundoran's attractiveness as a sustainable tourism location as a means of developing niche holiday markets as part of the town's overall tourism product whilst conserving and protecting the existing natural environment for the purposes of sustainable tourism.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET10:** Development proposals for the tourist industry including all forms of accommodation will be encouraged to promote the principles of sustainable tourism to promote and protect the natural environment as a tourist and amenity resource.

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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### 3.5.6 Development of Tourist Industry

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

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

There are a number of key locations within the plan area that may be suitable for such a facility or indeed a new flagship tourist development. Three such sites have been identified. Notwithstanding the existing uses on these sites, such sites are considered appropriate due to their strategic location; their ability to consolidate the existing built form and their contribution to the long-term development of the town. The sites are identified on the Land-use Zoning Map and include an existing caravan park on Station Road, an existing caravan park adjoining Astoria Road and the West End car park, which lies well below the level of the public road. These sites have the potential to create new central landmark attractions to compliment the existing tourist base.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OE-08:** To explore opportunities for the development of an all-weather facility for both the resident and tourist populations in Bundoran. This type of development could serve as a flagship development for the town.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET11:** Proposals for year-round and all-weather facilities will be encouraged where they are accessible to both the tourist and resident population and are of a high architectural standard with quality landscaping.

**Policy EET12:** Where proposals for all weather visitor facilities are proposed on lands other than those identified in this plan, and which would be considered acceptable to

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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the Council, the general requirements as set out in policy EE13 shall apply.

**Policy EET13:** Development proposals for indoor and all-weather tourist facilities will be considered favourably on any one of the identified key tourism strategic sites on the Land Use Zoning Map subject to the submission of a comprehensive proposal that shall include:

- (a) A design strategy (incorporating three dimensional perspectives) demonstrating a design concept that provides for a high level of architectural and environmental quality that will embrace the strategic location, enhance the townscape and *contribute to the visual amenity of the town.*
- (b) A design concept that enables the effective use of the internal area of the site while providing quality of design and informal open spaces where appropriate. Strong pedestrian and cycle links shall also be provided to link the town centre and other tourist amenities.
- (c) A building of high architectural quality with building scale and height consistent with adjacent buildings in the area. Particular attention must also be given to the design, mass, and scale of rear/side elevations.
- (d) A detailed landscaping scheme to provide adequate screening, enclosure and to enhance the integration of the development into the townscape. Hard and soft landscaping proposals that take cognisance of views and prospects. Provision of unobtrusive and landscaped car and coach parking located within the site to adequately cater for anticipated number of patrons or as by indicated by the Council. Where adequate parking cannot be provided on site a contribution towards the provision of public car parking shall be provided.

**OE-09:** To promote and diversify Bundoran's tourism potential by;

- i. the attraction and encouragement of festivals and events
- ii. developing and promoting the town as a conference venue, and

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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- iii. to promote the varied activities available in Bundoran.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET14:** To support and promote the development of the tourism sector in conjunction with the Tourism Officer, North West Tourism, Erne Enterprise, local business and community interests, and other organisations.

### 3.5.7 Tourist Accommodation

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

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

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OE-10:** To promote the development of sustainable and high-quality tourist accommodation in the plan area.
- OE-11:** To limit the extent of caravan and camping sites in the town centre.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy EET15:** Proposals for holiday accommodation, including touring caravan and camping sites and tourist visitor

## CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

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attractions will, in principle, be supported, given their function as part of the tourism infrastructure.

**Policy EET16:** No new caravan parks shall be permitted to locate within the defined town centre. Extensions to existing caravan parks within the town centre shall be permitted subject to natural screening of the extended area of both the established park and the proposed expansion.

**Policy EET17:** Proposals for caravan parks shall only be considered where they can clearly demonstrate that:

- (a) *The design of the scheme incorporates existing trees, hedgerows, stonewalls and physical features such as rivers and streams, and;*
- (b) A comprehensive design strategy of the entire site including proposed pedestrian and cycle linkages with proposed and existing amenity areas, adjoining walkways and the existing local footpath network, and;
- (c) The scheme shall be comprehensively landscaped using indigenous plants, which are suitable to the coastal environment of Bundoran. Landscaping reduces the visual impact of caravan parks and adds to the local environment for visitors and residents, and;
- (d) *Open spaces are enhanced within new and existing caravan parks to improve the quality of the sites and maintain the attractiveness of the caravan parks for future use.*

**Policy EET18:** Proposals for visitor accommodation will only be considered where they can clearly demonstrate:

- (a) That the proposal does not give rise to adverse visual impacts, or negative impacts to traffic safety, environmental or residential amenity, and;
- (b) Adequate landscaping measures to integrate the site into its setting, and;
- (c) The proposal does not prejudice local amenities, and;
- (d) Design and layout makes use of natural geographical features to minimise visual impact.

**Policy EET19:** A scheme for the effective management of the property shall be submitted to the planning authority at planning application stage.

## **CHAPTER 3 – ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM**

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### **3.5.8 Amusement Arcades**

The Council recognises the role that amusement arcades play in providing employment and in acting as an attraction for the area. The numerous arcades along Main Street indicate the importance of this type of attraction. Policies in respect of amusement arcades are contained within the Retailing and Town Centre Chapter.

### **3.5.9 Retailing**

Bundoran is predominantly a seasonal tourist town, with a noticeable turnover in independent retailers that set up mainly to serve the tourists, which continues to impact on the viability and vitality of the town at off-peak periods.

The most recent Retail Strategy has identified Bundoran as a Tier 2 Centre along with Ballyshannon, Ballybofey-Stranorlar, and Donegal Town and possesses the seventh largest retail centre in the County, in terms of retail floorspace representing a decrease from the previous retail study. Plan Policies and Objectives in respect of retail proposals and tourism retail proposals are contained within the Retailing and Town Centre Chapter.



# CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

## Chapter 4

### Retailing and Town Centre

#### 4.1 Vision

*'To support the future vitality and viability of the town centre retail core of Bundoran and to facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the retail industry of the future in a sustainable manner that will ensure the protection of and contribution to the vitality and viability of the retail core.'*

#### 4.2 Context

This chapter sets out the strategy for retail development in Bundoran Town Centre over the lifetime of this Development Plan 2009-2015. Retail development within the town is set in the context of national and local policy including the following:

- Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005;
- Donegal County Retail Strategy 2006-2012.

**Figure 5.1 Retail Hierarchy - Donegal Retail Strategy 2006-2012**



Source: County Donegal Retail Strategy 2006-2012

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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Of particular significance for the purpose of this plan, is the retail hierarchy, as outlined in the County Retail Strategy (see Figure 4.2 above), in which Bundoran is identified in the second hierarchy entitled 'Inter-Gateway/Strategic Transport Corridors.'

The Strategy specifically refers to the role of Inter-Gateway/Strategic Transport Corridor centres as the main centres on the N15/N13 between the main gateways of the northwest (Letterkenny/Derry and Sligo). The strategy indicates that these centres (including Bundoran) can accommodate a level of county/regionally focused retailing (e.g. warehousing) as well as retaining important retail functions for their urban and rural catchment populations (these may include large convenience and medium sized comparison retailers where appropriate).

### 4.3 Background

The town centre area of Bundoran has experienced significant changes over the period of the previous plan, with the completion of the National Primary Route N15 by-pass, which has removed a considerable amount of through flow traffic from the town.

The retail sector of the town has also received a significant boost with the opening of a new retail park on Station Road, the arrival of a *Lidl* discount foodstore to the town, and a new town centre development on previous backlands adjacent to the town's civic offices. These new developments have, in effect, created a secondary retail dimension to the town, with shops specifically geared towards the provision of convenience goods. It is anticipated that these new developments will provide an impetus for locals to do their weekly shopping within the town, thereby reducing leakage out of the town to a degree. Notwithstanding this, a large percentage of the inhabitants of Bundoran continue to travel to larger towns in the vicinity for shopping purposes, with the nearest Tesco's serving the area located in Sligo. In effect there is inherent leakage not only from the Town but the County in respect of the convenience and comparison shopping offer.

Despite these new developments, Bundoran's town centre remains synonymous with the traditional retail core of the town – which is focused on the town's Main Street and which can be classified as the towns "primary retail core". It is observed that this area of the town is geared primarily for the tourist market, with land uses being dominated by lower order comparison goods shops, amusement arcades, and pubs/restaurants. It is also noted that there is no continuity between the architectural styles and facades of these

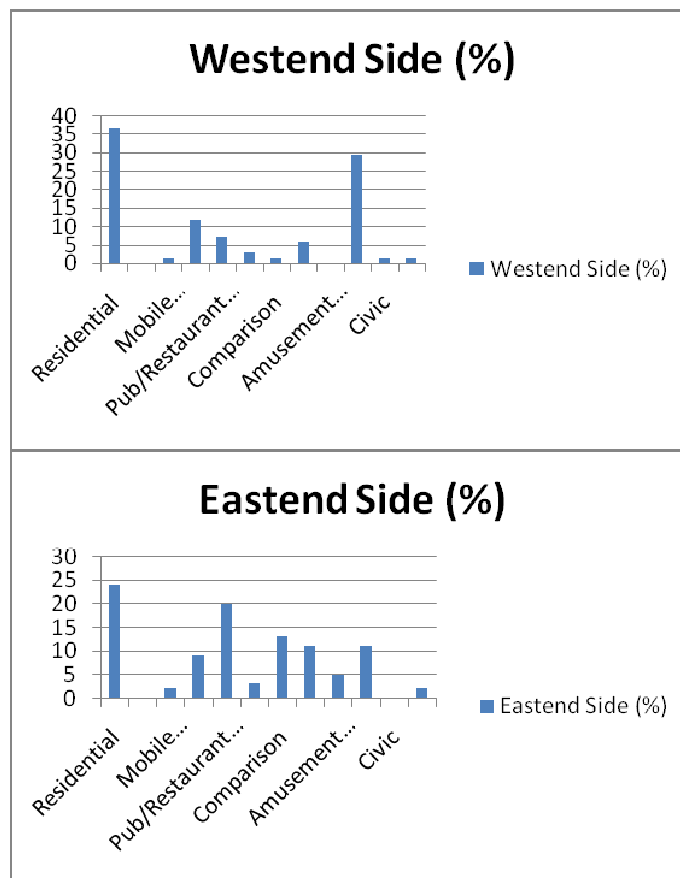
## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

units, with a significant percentage of buildings vacant and/or in a state of disrepair. This does not reflect well on the outward impression of the town, which presents a visual image of the area to visitors and investors.

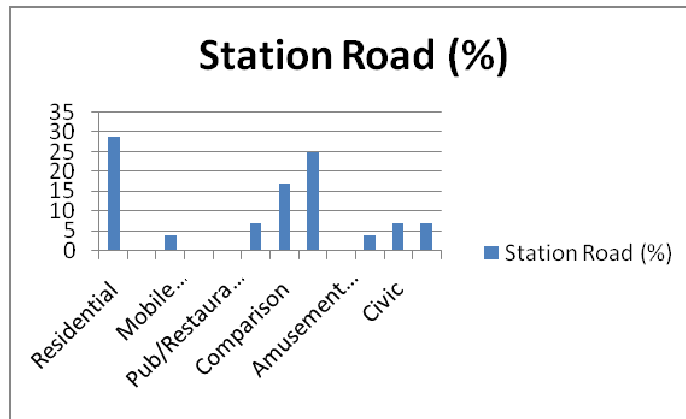
### 4.4 Analysis of current uses in the retailing/town centre area

An analysis of existing land uses within the area identified as falling within the town centre boundary on the land use zoning map examined the levels of retail activity and other uses in each street within the overall zone.

The graphs below show a percentage representation of the various land uses along each street and provide a picture of the various roles of each street within the town centre zone and therein assist in specifying with more precision the area that is the true retailing town centre.



## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE



### 4.5. Analysis and Evaluation

The above analysis demonstrates the existing function of each street within the town centre boundary, which are summarised as follows:

- Westend: A small variety of mixed uses. The main land use type however is characterised by residential/vacant buildings. The high percentage of residential units indicates that whilst this area is included within the town centre boundary, it cannot be classified as the retail core of the town. The high vacancy rate indicates a further decline in the town centre function.
- Eastend: This area provides a relatively high level of mixed land uses, with residential and pub/restaurant/fastfood uses providing the dominant type of land use in the area. The area is also characterised by a relatively high percentage of comparison units, non-retail service units, and amusement arcades, which indicates that the Eastend acts as the 'retail core' of the town. Despite this, vacancy levels remain quite significant, a factor which poses a threat to the 'vitality and viability' of the town centre function.
- Station Road: The determining factor in this area of the town is the recently opened retail park, which provides a number of comparison and non-retail service units<sup>1</sup>.

As the graphs indicate, the 'Eastend' shows the greatest representation of town centre uses in the form of retail and service

<sup>1</sup> Non-retail service units include hairdressers, estate agents, bookmakers, banks etc.

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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units. Despite this, residential units occupy the largest proportion of land in this area, with a number of buildings classified as vacant.

Given the lack of town centre uses in the Westend side of the town, and the recent expansion of the retail sector to the south-east of the town along Station Road, it is considered appropriate that the town boundary is confined to reflect a more accurate representation of the emerging patterns of retail development within the town (see Zoning and Objectives Map). Having regard to this, the boundary of the town centre has been revised to **exclude** the Westend side of the town and promote the consolidation of the Eastend and Station Road areas. Given the existing land use types and recent patterns of development, this boundary is considered appropriate in being able to provide for the needs of the overall plan area and beyond.

Further to this, and as mentioned previously, it is noted that Bundoran is evolving in such a manner that it is possible to identify two separate retail cores in the town:

1. The 'Primary Retail Core' of the town. This area encompasses the traditional retail core of the town along the Eastends' Main Street, and provides shops and services geared specifically towards the tourist.
2. The 'Secondary Retail Core' of the town. This encompasses the backland area along Station Road, which has witnessed considerable development in recent years, and provides retail activities geared specifically towards providing for the needs of the local inhabitants of the town.

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

### 4.6 Health Check Review

The following has been extracted from pages 14 and 15 of the *County Donegal Retail Strategy 2006-2012*:

*'Because of Bundorans' impressive natural setting because of its location on the Atlantic coast near Ben Bulbin and the Dartry Mountain Range, the economy is primarily based on tourism with limited activity in other sectors. If Bundoran is to*

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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grow economically it is necessary for expansion into the other sectors such as retail. The town has a limited retail provision with 28% of the retail outlets vacant during the winter, which shows how much the town relies on the tourism sector. The Development Plan recognises the need to diversify and strengthen the economic and therefore the vitality of the town centre to ensure the future stability and growth of the resident community.

There is a need to encourage the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail development within the town centre. The majority of derelict buildings are located in the West End area and close to the seafront. There is also the possibility of regenerating brownfield sites, of which there are many within the town centre. A wide variety of retail and businesses in the town will increase the town's competitiveness against the larger centres of Sligo, Letterkenny and Derry.

One of the main policies of the Development Plan is to **promote the development of the defined town centre** as the primary location for retail, tourist, business, cultural and other uses. In order to promote this the Development Plan has recognised the need for a Masterplan for the area and also a Masterplan for the Seafront. The Town Centre Quarter Masterplan is located adjacent and south of the town centre and shall facilitate the creation of a vibrant and diverse new town centre quarter which enhances and contributes to the vitality and vibrancy of the overall defined town centre.'

### 4.6.1 Recent Developments

Since the publication of the *County Donegal Retail Strategy*, there has been a significant amount of development on the zoned backland in the vicinity of the new Civic Offices and cinema at Station Road. This has resulted in the opening of a new *Lidl* discount foodstore and the completion of the *Bundoran Retail Park*, which has attracted 9 no. retail units to the area, both of which have served to modernise and strengthen the retail base in Bundoran.

#### **Dependence on Tourism**

Despite this recent expansion of the retail sector, the economy of the town remains heavily dependent on tourism. The policies outlined in the current Development Plan to diversify the economy into other sectors have been unsuccessful. Instead, recent policies geared at diversifying the tourist sector have proved to be more successful for the economy of the town. This has seen increased

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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revenue being generated on an annual basis from the marketing of the town as a popular surfing and horse-riding destination.

### **Vacancy/Dereliction Rates**

Vacancy rates in the area of the town centre zoning as defined on the Land Use Zoning Map, and appear to be quite substantial. In the same trend as that which was identified in the *County Retail Strategy*, the majority of derelict buildings remain located in the West End area and close to the seafront.

### **Floorspace**

In the *Retail Strategy*, Bundoran has been identified as a *Tier 3 Centre* and fifth in importance throughout the overall County in terms of quantum of retail floorspace.

#### **4.7 Strategic Retail Objective**

This analysis and evaluation of the retail sector in Bundoran has informed the approach to the retailing and town centre strategy, which consists of the following 'strategic' retailing objectives;

**SR-01** To protect and enhance the role of the town centre area as the primary location for retailing activity, with particular emphasis on maintaining its existing vitality and viability and enhancing the physical quality of the town centre environment.

#### **4.8 Objectives and Policies**

When formulating the various policies for the retailing sector and the town centre in Bundoran, particular regard has been given to the existing policies contained in the *Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010* and the identified 'Primary Retail Area' and 'Secondary Retail Area'. It is considered that many of the policies for retailing and the town centre area contained in the previous plan remain applicable to the current plan, and as a result, have been included accordingly.

##### **4.8.1 County Retail Strategy**

Regard has also been had to the specific policies contained in the *County Retail Strategy 2006-2012* which are applicable to Bundoran. These are as follows:

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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- **Policy RS4: Inter-Gateway Centres**  
It is the policy of the Council to promote and encourage the provision of regional and county level retail functions at Buncrana, Donegal Town, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and **Bundoran/Ballyshannon** and Lifford.
- **Policy RS8: Innovation in the County's Retail Offer**  
It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate innovation in the County's retail offer and attraction.
- **Policy RS9: Re-Use and Regeneration of Derelict Land and Buildings**  
It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings in both main and smaller centres.
- **Policy RS10: Retailing in Tourism**  
It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate the development of retailing within the tourism sector.
- **Policy RS11: Enhancement of Towns and Villages**  
It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate the enhancement and environmental improvement of the County's towns and villages.

### 4.8.2 Retail Proposals within the Town Centre

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

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- ORTC-01:** The Plan recognises the importance in preserving the vitality and viability of the two separate retail cores in the town:
1. The 'Primary Retail Core' in the main street which is focused towards providing for the needs of the tourist;
  2. The 'Secondary Retail Core' which is focused on more convenience and comparison requirements of the day to day needs of the local community.



## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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**ORTC-02:** It is necessary to ensure that the cumulative effect of new development emphasises a compact town-centre pattern to support both resident and tourist populations throughout the year.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

### **Retail uses within the 'Primary Retail Core'**

**Policy PRT1:** Promote the development of land uses which are geared specifically towards meeting the needs of the tourist, i.e. shop (Class 1)<sup>2</sup> units, restaurants, cultural uses. Applications for these uses will be considered favorably subject to meeting the following criteria:

1. Adequate servicing in terms of infrastructure, access, car parking.
2. Appropriate linkages both vehicular and pedestrian to the wider town centre area.
3. Appropriate and high quality architectural design that responds to the need to create a high quality urban environment and will not detract from the town's streetscape.

The provision of non retail uses or classes of development outside of Classes 1 and 2 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2008 - Classes of Use* are considered to detrimentally impact upon the activity and ability to 'comparison shop' on foot and such breakages in the retail frontage should be discouraged as reducing the vitality of the retail area.

### **Retail uses within the 'Secondary Retail Core'**

**Policy SRT1:** Promote the development of a multiplicity and mix of land use types in these areas particularly retail, residential, office and service. Proposals for such development will be subject to the following:

1. Appropriate mix of uses dependant on the location and surrounding established uses.
2. Appropriate scale and massing in the context of surrounding properties.
3. High quality of architectural design that responds to the creation of a quality urban environment

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<sup>2</sup> Class 1: Use as a shop Under Schedule 2, Part 4 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2008*

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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and that may include the provision of public/civic space.

4. Appropriate vehicular and pedestrian linkages with Upper and Lower Main Street and/or with the most conveniently located public car parking provision.
5. Adequate provision of infrastructure and services.

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

### 4.8.3 Town Centre Environment

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

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

- ORTC-03:** To enhance the town's attractiveness as a shopping environment through the delivery of a programme of environmental streetscape and shopfront improvements and the promotion of a high standard of architectural design and finishes for new development to provide a consolidated high quality town centre environment.

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy RTC1:** Retail proposals to refurbish, redevelop and re-use existing vacant, derelict and rundown buildings to regenerate the town centre will be encouraged in association with the protection of buildings of importance in cultural and architectural heritage.

**Policy RTC2:** Development proposals in the identified town centre area will be expected to contribute to the environmental improvement of the streetscape via the necessary upgrading of the public highway (roads and footpaths) and the delivery of complementary street furniture to a standard which will ensure they are not a public safety issue and to make the town fully accessible for the disabled.

**Policy RTC3:** Development proposals for the development of the town centre will be encouraged where they accord with a planned programme of works including:

- i. the provision of street furniture;
- ii. the greening of the town centre by means of protection of existing trees, green spaces together with new planting to augment and complement biodiversity and streetscape;
- iii. the provision of appropriately located bus and taxi waiting facilities are provided throughout the town;
- iv. the delivery of a pedestrian dominated environment and additional/revised traffic management measures to improve circulation within the town centre area for pedestrians; and
- v. the provision of public art.

### 4.8.4 General Retail Policies

The proposed development of retail facilities in Bundoran Town & Environs will be assessed in accordance with accepted policies and principles contained within the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2006 (DoEHLG)* and the *Donegal County Retail Strategy 2006-2012*.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**ORTC-04:** To ensure that the cumulative effect of new development emphasises a compact town-centre

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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pattern to support both resident and tourist populations throughout the year. The vision is to develop a vibrant town centre, which breaches the seasonal constraints of the tourist industry.

The following policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy RTC4:** It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the DoEHLG Retail Planning Guidelines and the Donegal County Council Retail Strategy in considering proposals for retail development and will consider the following:

- i. Promote the development of the defined town centre as identified on the Land Use Zoning Map, as the primary location for retail, tourist, business, cultural and other uses.
- ii. In exceptional circumstances, consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes.
- iii. Only after having assessed the size, availability, accessibility and feasibility of developing sites and premises, firstly within the town centre and secondly within the edge of centre should alternative out of centre sites be considered.
- iv. Retail warehouses will generally not be permitted within the town centre. These developments may be located on the edge of town centres, but more generally, out of centre locations will be favoured. Edge of centre sites, are primarily suited for the expansion of high street retail floor space and other town centre uses as opposed larger scale and car intensive retail parks.
- v. Proposals for development shall demonstrate and contribute to the enhancement of existing pedestrian and vehicular linkages within the town centre.

**Policy RTC5:** Proposals for tourism related retail proposals will be positively considered where they are not detrimental to the Town or County's retail strategy.

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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**Policy RTC6** Proposals for retail floorspace outside the designated town centre area will be restricted to complimentary scaled retail associated with residential zoned lands or the identified opportunity sites at gateway locations on the eastern and western extremes of the town.

### 4.8.5 Lands on the Seaward Side of the Town Centre

**Policy RTC7:** No new freestanding developments will be considered. Only established development proposals, which extend in a northerly direction, not vertically and not in an east west direction and/or are directly associated with the host structure, will be considered. Proposals must be sympathetic to their surroundings and of a scale and character to that of their immediate environment.

### 4.8.6 Amusement Arcades

The Council recognises the role that amusement arcades play in providing employment and in acting as an attraction for the area. The numerous arcades along the Main Street indicate the importance of this type of attraction.

The Council will, however, monitor the existing provision of amusement arcades and the consideration of new proposals for amusement arcades will take place in consultation with the Council. Account must be taken of the need to retain the vitality and viability of the town centre, along with the other policies in the plan, which relate to the town centre's amenity and noise pollution.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**ORTC-05:** It is an objective of the plan to ensure that amusement arcades exist to provide vitality and viability respectful of residential amenity and physical built amenity.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy RTC8:** Proposals for amusement arcades will be considered within the 'Town Centre' zone; provided that their development:

- (a) is not located within or adjoining premises consisting of residential accommodation, schools or churches;

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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- (b) is not contributing to the over concentration of arcades in a given area causing excessive noise, litter and anti-social hours of operation; and
- (c) contributes to the enhancement of streetscape and vitality and viability of the area.

### 4.9 Town Centre Development Management Standards

The Council will encourage, and monitor any work which is carried out in the 'Primary Retail Core' area and the 'Secondary Retail Core' area through adherence to the following Development Management standards:

#### 4.9.1 Shopfront Design

The Council will expect a high standard of design in proposals for all new shopfronts. Regard should be given to the following:

- The shopfront should respect the building's elevation and architectural details. Particularly, period shopfronts on protected structures and in conservation areas should be retained.
- The design should take into account adjacent shopfronts where they make a positive contribution to the streetscape.
- Where a shopfront involves two or more units the shopfront should correspondingly be divided with separate fascias and columns used to divide the separate units.
- Entrances should be fully accessible to all such as people with mobility difficulties, older people and carers with young children in pushchairs.
- Solid roller shutters detract from the overall appearance of a building and will not normally be acceptable.
- Where possible, shutter boxes should be recessed behind the fascia. Chain link internal shutters behind glass are preferable to opaque external ones.

#### 4.9.2 Advertisements/Hoardings

Advertisements form an integral part of most shop fronts and commercial areas. However the proliferation of insensitive displays of advertisements can seriously detract from the visual quality of the

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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area and have implications for public safety. The following guidelines will apply:

- All advertisements should be of a size, design, scale and degree of illumination which is compatible with the surrounding area.
- Advertisements above fascia level will normally be refused and only one projecting sign per unit will be allowed at fascia level.
- Planning permission will not be granted if it would result in a proliferation of advertisements and signs or adversely affect the amenities of the area or if the advert would adversely affect the safety or free flow of traffic, including pedestrian traffic.
- Where finger posts or other similar small scale signs are permitted on public roads and footpaths, these shall be subject to licence under section 254 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007.
- Free standing advertisements or advertisement hoardings will be discouraged.

### 4.9.3 Access to upper floors/servicing arrangements

New shopfronts, alteration and extensions should maintain or improve separate access to upper floors, preferably leading directly to the street.

Extensions to premises will be resisted if this would result in an unacceptable loss of existing or potential access, parking or servicing facilities to the unit or any other unit on site.

### 4.9.4 Plot Ratios

Plot ratio is defined as the gross floor area of buildings on a site divided by the gross site area and is used to depict the intensity of use on a given site. The maximum plot ratio normally permitted is 2.0. Development to maximum plot ratio (or above) will be accepted only where it conforms to other criteria such as height, site coverage, necessary open space, refuse storage facilities, protection of the amenities of adjoining premises, etc.

## CHAPTER 4 – RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRE

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### 4.9.5 Site Coverage

Site coverage is defined as the footprint of any built development on any given site. Site coverage shall not exceed 80%. A particular standard of site coverage may be accepted only where it is consistent with other factors such as necessary open space, car-parking provision, protection of amenities of adjoining premises, etc.

### 4.9.6 Height

The height of a building should respect the height of adjoining structures on either side. Normally buildings in excess of 4 storeys in height will be resisted.

### 4.9.7 Overshadowing/Overlooking

Where 3 or 4 storey buildings are proposed adjoining or adjacent to existing lower buildings, the planning authority will require that the developer submit daylight and shadow projection diagrams and demonstrate that the adjoining properties will not be unduly affected by the proposed development. Windows/balconies of new building should avoid overlooking of adjoining property, particularly residential property.

### 4.9.8 Car Parking

Car parking shall be provided in accordance with the Table 6 of the County Development Plan and Appendix III of this Plan. In certain circumstances, the planning authority may accept a financial contribution in lieu of the provision of car parking.



# CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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## Chapter 5

### Conservation and Heritage

#### 5.1 Vision

*'Protect and enhance the quality of the natural and built environments as an asset to promoting tourism, engendering civic pride and enhancing the image of Bundoran as a place to live, visit, work and recreate. The quality of the natural and built environment has a significant impact on quality of life and potential for attracting investment and can also make a substantial contribution towards sustainable development.'*

#### 5.2 Introduction

This chapter sets out policies in relation to conservation of Bundoran's natural and built heritage which seek to identify, manage and protect the sensitive and sustainable use of Bundoran's natural and built resources for use by visitors and local residents. The principles of sustainable development encompass the protection and conservation of our heritage. Many aspects of heritage are non-renewable resources and once destroyed are lost forever. As the current custodians of this heritage we have a duty to continue this role of guardianship and ensure that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy their inheritance.

#### 5.3 Overview

The natural and built heritage exists in two forms: (a) in terms of the environment, it relates to biodiversity, wildlife habitats flora and fauna and (b) in terms of the built heritage, it relates to urban form and the material heritage that is apparent to us. The area of the Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 consists of many resources in terms of the natural and built heritage, in the form of special designations (SAC's, NHA's), foreshore, beaches, cliffs, the Bradogue River, archaeological monuments and protected structures. These provide opportunities for a variety of tourism and recreational activities while historic buildings and archaeological remains and other local features contribute to the rich diversity of heritage and local identity of the town.

The plan needs to respond to these key resources and ensure methods of protection and enhancement whilst also be used as a

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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tool to raise awareness and acknowledgement of the importance of the built and natural heritage. The protection and enhancement of these resources is important for the following reasons:

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

The policies set out in this section will seek to identify, manage and protect the sensitive use of Bundoran's natural and built resources for use by visitors and local residents. These policies should be read in conjunction with other sections of this plan and with the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied).

### 5.4 Context

The government has signed and ratified a number of international conventions in relation to heritage and thereby agrees to abide by the principles contained within these conventions. These conventions have aided the formulation of national legislation to address our heritage, obligations and responsibilities. The principle national legislation, in relation to the built environment, is the National Monuments Act 1930 to 2004 and Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000. In relation to natural heritage the principal national legislation is the Wildlife Act 1976, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and Part XIII of the Planning and Development Act 2000. In addition, the European Communities (Natural Heritage) Regulations 1997 give effect to the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Bundoran Town Council must comply with this legislation.

### 5.5 Strategic Objectives

**SCH-01:** The natural and built environment, particularly those elements that are non-renewable and most valuable, need to be properly protected, managed and enhanced;

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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- SCH02:** The conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, natural heritage, landscape and the built environment should be promoted as important elements of the long term economic growth and development of the town;
- SCH-03:** The protection of Bundoran's physical heritage (including archaeology and historic buildings) is a tangible representation of the towns past and is a sound basis for economic growth and regeneration;
- SCH-04:** The 'polluter pays' principle and the 'precautionary approach' principle are important elements of any planning policies that deal with environmental and heritage matters;
- SCH-05** The long term economic, social and environmental well-being of Bundoran requires water and air quality to be of the highest possible standard.
- SCH-06** To encourage and promote access to and understanding of the natural heritage of Bundoran and its environs.

### 5.6 Our Natural Heritage – Policies

Our natural heritage includes the variety of life we see around us every day, often referred to as biodiversity, its physical or geological foundation, and the landscapes which form our surroundings. Biodiversity includes everything from trees to weeds, from mammals to birds, from coast to countryside. Biodiversity provides us with many benefits which we need such as fertile soils, food and clean water. It is also an important part of the landscapes in which we live and which give each local area its sense of place. Protecting and enhancing our biodiversity and landscapes is vital for the health, well-being and quality of life of communities throughout Bundoran.

There are also important places which reveal to us our geological heritage. These include fossil sites and sites which show examples of particular rock types and formations. It is important that these are protected and enhanced as part of our natural heritage.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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This section of the plan details specific policies in relation the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage of Bundoran and its environs.

### 5.6.1 Protection of Nature Conservation Areas/Sites

To ensure the protection of current or future designated nature conservation sites including Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), Special Protection Areas (SPA's) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's) and any new proposed candidate SAC's, SPA's and NHA's over the period of the plan.

Designation of SAC's, NHA, and SPA's are the function and authority of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and are not within the remit of the Councils. However, the protection of these areas is a joint responsibility of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and local authorities wherein the key role of the local authority is to ensure the actual implementation of relevant protections through plan objectives and policies.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OCH-01:** To require an appropriate environmental assessment in respect of any proposed development (whether inside or outside a designated natural heritage site) likely to have an impact on a designated natural heritage site or those sites proposed to be designated.
- OCH-02:** To ensure that environmental assessments in relation to designated natural heritage sites (or those sites proposed to be designated) are carried out by appropriate professionals.
- OCH-03:** To provide guidance to developers in relation to proposed developments which are likely to affect designated natural heritage site (or those sites proposed to be designated).

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy CH1:** To protect natural heritage sites designated in National and European legislation, and in other relevant International Conventions, Agreements and Processes. This includes sites proposed to be

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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designated or designated as: Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Nature Reserves, and Refuges for Flora or Fauna.

**Policy CH2:** To fully and appropriately assess all proposed developments (whether inside or outside designated natural heritage sites) which are likely to impact on designated natural heritage sites or those sites proposed to be designated (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

**Policy CH3:** To consult with the Prescribed Bodies, and appropriate Government agencies, when considering undertaking, approving or authorising developments which are likely to affect designated natural heritage sites (or those sites proposed to be designated).

**Policy CH4:** To ensure that, when considering development affecting designated natural heritage sites or those sites proposed to be designated, permission will only be granted, in accordance with the relevant legislation.

**Policy CH5:** To support and co-operate with statutory authorities and others in support of measures taken to manage designated nature conservation sites in order to achieve their conservation objectives.

### 5.6.2 Tree Protection Policy

The Council recognise the value of individual and groups of trees in terms of the contribution of these features to the character and biodiversity of the town. Integration of existing trees into development proposals is beneficial in terms of developing a natural and organic layout and contributes to the character of the development and associated sense of place and therefore the implementation of this policy has added value and is not viewed as a constraint.

Donegal Forestry promotes the greening of our environment by the planting of trees and promotes both the “community woodland” and “neighbourhood” initiatives. The “NeighbourWood Scheme” represents an excellent opportunity for local authorities, community groups, environmental non-government organisations (NGOs) and private woodland owners to provide communities with their own

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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woodland amenity. Such initiatives will contribute greatly to the development of sustainable liveable and enjoyable environments for communities

Community woodlands can greatly improve the local landscape and environment; provide a wide variety of recreational and education activities for all ages, play a major role in promoting air quality and in carbon sequestration; provide a buffer to integrate mixed development and land uses; and help to create an attractive green landscape, which encourages inward investment, employment and tourism.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCH-04:** To identify specific locations within the Town and the Environs for the creation of 'neighbourwood' or 'community forest' schemes and in particular on the edges of the town to enhance the external image of the Town from the National Road N15 Bypass

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH6:** To ensure the survival of individual trees and/or groups of trees throughout the plan area that, are in sound condition and subsequently to require integration into layouts for new development proposals.

**Policy CH7:** Development proposals which negatively impact upon established trees or tree groupings will be discouraged unless accompanied with a tree survey and landscape plan undertaken by a competent professional (arborist or similar) justifying the necessary removal and suitable replacement with semi-mature native species.

**Policy CH8:** Where appropriate development proposals will be encouraged to promote new woodlands, seek the extension of existing woodlands based on a planned planting and management scheme. The use of native species will be favoured to the maximum possible extent.

**Policy CH9:** To protect existing woodlands, trees, hedgerows and stone walls which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development.

During the plan period it will be the objective of the Council to undertake the following initiative:

- (1) To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts to be made on habitats and biodiversity including woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

It is noted that Donegal's Heritage Forum commissioned a County Hedgerow Survey, which was completed in 2009.

### 5.6.3 Pedestrian Walkways

It is the policy of the Council to continue to protect existing pedestrian walkways (marked on the land use zoning map) and to reserve the route of proposed walkways (as marked on the objectives and Land Use Zoning Map).

A number of existing pedestrian walkways exist within the Plan area at present. The plan proposes a number of extensions to the existing network of walks that create a coordinated and planned route that best integrates land uses and links services and amenities.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH10:** Development proposals will be considered on their ability to protect the amenity value of existing and proposed walkways and therein development that would intrude so as to cause a negative affect on the amenity value of any existing or proposed walkway shall not be permitted.

**Policy CH11:** Development proposals on lands on which a walkway is proposed to be reserved, will be required to incorporate the proposed walkways within the overall development proposal to appropriate standards as required by the relevant authority.

### 5.6.4 Landscape, Scenic Views and Prospects

Preserving the character of the marine landscape including seaward views and prospects, the impressive open (designed and natural) landscape of the golf course and other places and

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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features of natural beauty that contribute to Bundoran's 'sense of place' are key issues for the plan. The Council recognises that there are a number of scenic views throughout the town that contribute to the character and unique setting of Bundoran. Such views and prospects identified on the Land Use Zoning Map.

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

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OCH-05:** To require that any necessary assessments, including visual impact assessments, are made when undertaking, authorising or approving development.
- OCH-06** To provide guidance for developers and the general public in relation to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geological heritage and to undertake an ecological audit of the town and its environs. The onus shall be on the developer to comply fully with legislation and Council policy.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy CH12:** To protect from inappropriate development the views identified on the Land Use Zoning Map and to restrict development on major ridgelines.
- Policy CH13:** To ensure that proposals for development protect and enhance biodiversity, wherever possible, by minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats and by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate, which ensure that biodiversity and landscape character is enhanced.

### 5.6.5 Inland Waters including the River Bradogue

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



## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

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

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

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OCH-07:** To develop a public walkway along the Bradogue River as lands adjoining its banks are developed.
  
- OCH-08** To consult all prescribed and relevant bodies prior to undertaking, approving or authorising any works or development which may impact on rivers, streams and watercourses, and to take full account of the Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites issued by the North West Regional Fisheries Board.
  
- OCH-09:** To restrict development within the floodplain and ensure that flood alleviation works protect and enhance natural heritage and landscape to the greatest extent possible while alleviating flooding and require an environmental assessment of all proposed flood alleviation works.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

**OCH-10:** To require that all proposed development will comply with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive ensuring runoff from a developed area will not result in deterioration of downstream watercourses or habitats, and that pollution generated by a development is treated within the development area prior to discharge to local watercourses, minimise the number of additional piped discharge points to streams, rivers and coastal waters and control through licensing all discharges of trade effluents to waters.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH14:** Development proposals affecting or proximate to rivers, streams and other watercourses will wherever possible, seek to maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitat for fauna and flora and to act as an ecological corridor and will need to ensure that good ecological and chemical status is maintained in all inland waters in the plan area.

**Policy CH15:** Development proposals adjacent to the Bradogue River will ensure the retention of a 10 metre strip from bank edge on which new development will not be permitted. The reservation strip shall be required to be set aside from the development and incorporated as residual open space and will form an ecological corridor, floodplain buffer and provide for an amenity walking route.

**Policy CH16:** Development proposals adjacent to the Bradogue River shall demonstrate that they would not be detrimental to the integrity of the river as a natural, heritage, amenity and recreational corridor and be of a high architectural standard and orientated to face onto the river.

**Policy CH17:** To protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of river and stream corridors and valleys to maintain them free from inappropriate development, and to provide for public access where feasible and appropriate and to ensure that, wherever possible, local rivers, streams and watercourses provide amenity and recreational benefits for the local community.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

**Policy CH18:** Any new development proposals will be required to provide sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in accordance with best current practice and ensure that proposed developments do not adversely affect groundwater resources.

**Policy CH19:** Development proposals requiring flood alleviation works will ensure the natural heritage and landscape character of rivers, streams and watercourses are protected and enhanced to the greatest extent possible.

### 5.6.6 Protected Species

Certain plant, animal and bird species are protected by law. They include 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. The planning process should seek to protect and enhance species protected by law and their habitats. Very often this can be done by minimising adverse impacts – for example, by requiring that development takes place outside the breeding season. In other cases, it may be appropriate in consultation with the National Parks & Wildlife Service to seek to ensure that individual members of a species survive by providing alternative roosts in the case of bats, for example. In exceptional circumstances, it may also be appropriate to seek to have an alternative area(s) of habitat provided.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCH-11:** To provide guidance to developers and others in relation to species protected by law and their protection and management in the context of development and to undertake surveys, as appropriate, to establish the location of protected flora and fauna in Bundoran and its environs.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH20:** To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on plant, animal or bird species protected by law.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

**Policy CH21:** To consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and take account of any licensing requirements, when undertaking, approving or authorising development which is likely to affect plant, animal or bird species protected by law.

### 5.7 Our Built Heritage - Policies

This refers to all built features in the environment including buildings and other structures such as bridges, wells, pumps, archaeological sites and field boundary walls.

#### 5.7.1 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

The Council recognise that the best method to ensure the long-term survival of a historic building is to secure a constant use for the building. As a result, the Council will encourage the sustainable re-use of protected structures as long as the development is appropriate in terms of design, layout, scale, materials and finish.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCH-12:** That alteration, extension and restoration should be carried out employing a contemporary architectural philosophy working in tandem with conservation principles, understanding the characteristics and importance of simplicity, restraint, proportion and the quality of materials in relation to protected structures and to nurture the understanding of protection relating not only to the structure in question but to the context, setting and curtilage as a whole.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH22:** To protect buildings on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and their setting and curtilage, and to ensure that development proposals do not threaten the special interest for which the structure is protected.

**Policy CH23:** To identify future additions to the RPS and undertake to make any such additions under the provisions of Section 55 of the *Planning & Development Act 2000*, as amended.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

**Policy CH24:** That all proposals for development to protected structures and/or within the context, setting and curtilage of a protected structure shall be referred to the Conservation Officer for consideration and to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and other relevant prescribed bodies.

### 5.7.2 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of the impact of past human settlement and activity on the landscape and this helps explain how communities, societies and cultures developed. Physical remains of earthworks and structures may have survived above ground, but generally archaeological features are located underneath the ground's surface. The landscape therefore contains archaeological features, sites and artefacts that have been identified and those that have yet to be discovered. It is noted that a significant amount of archaeological potential has been established in the Bundoran area due to the significant finds made during the construction of the N15 Bundoran/Ballyshannon bypass. Further to this, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 makes it mandatory that objectives for the conservation and protection of archaeological sites be included in a Development Plan.

The Archaeological Heritage is protected by the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 and is comprised of:

- Archaeological and architectural monuments and sites included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 2004.
- Major sites of archaeological importance in State ownership or guardianship.
- National Monuments which are the subject of preservation orders.
- Zones of archaeological potential in historic towns.
- The underwater archaeological heritage, including historic wrecks.
- All previously unknown and unrecorded archaeological sites that become known through ground disturbance or the discovery of sites underwater (including subsurface elements

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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with no visible surface remains); potential sites located in the vicinity of large complexes of sites or monuments, present or former wetlands, unenclosed land, rivers or lakes, or the inter-tidal zone.

Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). This means that these structures are protected by both the National Monuments Acts and the *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007*.

The following Objective and relevant actions have been identified by the Council:

- OCH-13:** To ensure that our archaeological past is appropriately considered recognised and recorded in the development process the following measures will be undertaken:
- i. when an unrecorded archaeological object or site is discovered, any works that threaten the object or site are immediately suspended and that the appropriate government agency is informed.
  - ii. To seek archaeological impact assessments as part of the planning submission when proposed development could affect a Recorded Monument, a Zone of Archaeological Potential, or their settings.
  - iii. To ensure that all significant development proposals affecting sites specified in the Record of Monuments and Places or Zones of Archaeological Potential are referred to the Prescribed Bodies (as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000) and to have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Prescribed Bodies in relation to undertaking, approving or authorising development.
  - iv. To ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist monitors site works when permission is granted for works on or close to an archaeological site or feature.
  - v. To make the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) available to the public via the Council's website.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy CH25:** It is the policy of the DoEHLG that proposed developments may due to their location, size, or nature have implications for the archaeological heritage should be subject to archaeological assessment. Such developments include those that are located at or close to archaeological monuments or site, those that are extensive in terms of area (1/2 hectare or more) or length (1 kilometre or more) and developments that require an Environmental Impact Statement. The archaeological heritage includes National Monuments in the care of the State, archaeological heritage potential in Historic Towns; the underwater archaeological heritage, including Historic Wrecks; unknown and unrecorded archaeological sites (including subsurface elements with no visible surface remains); potential sites located in the vicinity of large complexes or site or monuments, present or former wetlands, unenclosed land, rivers or lakes, or the inter-tidal zone.
- Policy CH26:** Development proposals within the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential will not be permitted to detract from the setting of the feature and will be sited and designed appropriately and where remains exist their preservation in-situ will be favoured.
- Policy CH27:** To protect historical burial grounds and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.
- Policy CH28:** To encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the Town's archaeological heritage and facilitate and enhance public access to, and understanding of, the archaeological heritage and to provide for the dissemination of information and advice on the archaeological heritage to prospective developers and the general public. The onus shall be on the developer to comply fully with legislation and Council policy.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

---

### 5.7.3 Architectural Heritage and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's)

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

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

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

The 2004-2010 Bundoran Development Plan designated the nine terraced houses that comprise Bayview Terrace as a Architecture Conservation Area. This area is still considered to be of special architectural and townscape value, and accordingly under the provisions of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 2000, the terrace has been designated as an 'Architectural Conservation Area' (ACA). The boundaries of the Architectural Conservation Areas is defined on the Land Use Zoning Map.



## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCH-14:** To actively promote the town through the re-use of buildings of architectural merit and the preservation of interesting architectural features and antiquities thereby strengthening their presence in the evolving streetscape. The preservation and reuse of such buildings will contribute to the diversity and character of this streetscape and will allow the town to evolve whilst retaining, refurbishing and re-using the historic building stock.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH29:** Development proposals must protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Bundoran and its Environs and in particular conserve and enhance the character and appearance of Bayview Architectural Conservation Area and structures contained (or proposed to be contained) within the Record of Protected Structures. Development proposals for any of the proposed protected structures on the Record (RPS) shall be required to demonstrate that measures have been included to protect, conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the structure(s).

**Policy CH30:** Proposals for development on lands adjacent to the Bayview Architectural Conservation Area shall only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will not materially affect the character or integrity of the area.

**Policy CH31:** Development, modifications, alterations, or extensions affecting a protected structure, adjoining structure or structure within an ACA will be sited and designed appropriately, and will not be detrimental to the character of the structure or to its setting or the general character of the ACA.

**Policy CH32:** Development proposals to encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures, their setting and historic buildings will be welcomed. Restoration proposals for protected structures must comply with conservation guidelines as set down by the DoEHLG in Architectural

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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Heritage Protections – Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

**Policy CH33:** Development proposals for Protected Structures must be accompanied by a supporting document detailing the conservation approach taken including, where relevant, details on the retention of original features such as windows, doors, renders, roof coverings and where additions are necessary it should detail efforts to ensure these are sympathetic to the original features of the structure.

Whilst it remains the role of the local authority to better inform the public, developers, public bodies, groups and associations with regard to Protected Structures, ACA's, conservation grant schemes and architectural heritage, there is equally an onus on owners/occupiers to be aware of the importance of such measures and the impacts, requirements and constraints place on them as a result of such designations.

### 5.7.4 Design Principles

The Council will expect the highest quality architectural solutions where a proposed development is either high profile or would be considered to have a high impact within the townscape or urban environment, or along main roads or within main street frontages within the town and at locations that would attract large visitor numbers.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CH34:** That all new development shall be designed to respond adequately to its location. Proposals must meet the following criteria;

- i. developments shall appropriately address their location within the townscape or landscape;
- ii. developments shall be carefully placed on the site particularly in relation to character, amenity and energy conservation;
- iii. developments shall be of appropriate size and form in relation to existing buildings, landform and skyline;
- iv. developments shall be of appropriate density, layout and orientation in relation to character, amenity, privacy of neighbouring properties and energy conservation; and

## CHAPTER 5 – CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

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- v. developments shall incorporate a sensitive use of materials and colours in relation to the setting and environmental impact.

**Policy CH35:** Innovative, experimental design solutions will be encouraged but may not be suitable in every situation. In certain circumstances the Council may request written design statements explaining various aspects of design solution, e.g. explaining why a particular approach has been taken, and expect applications to include plans and elevations/perspectives/photomontages showing the proposed development in its wider relationship with adjacent buildings, surrounding properties, landscape and site features.

## Chapter 6

### The Coastal Area

#### 6.1 Vision

*'Protect and enhance the coastline and the sea waters to confirm the importance of Bundoran's coastal resource and its blue flag status to ensure its tourism and economic success as a premier coastal resort.'*

#### 6.2 Introduction

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

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

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

#### 6.3 Coastal Zone Management

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

Sustainable development in coastal areas is best achieved through a process of *Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)*. *Integrated Coastal Zone Management* is the management of human activities and natural processes at work in coastal areas and aims to promote a partnership approach to planning and management in the coastal zone involving all stakeholders. It is the objective of the Council to support the principle of *Integrated Coastal Zone Management* and to co-operate with the *Coastal Zone Management Division* of the *Department of Communications,*

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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*Energy and Natural Resources*, as required. It is also the objective of the Council to promote the development of Integrated Coastal Zone Management initiatives in Bundoran in partnership with the local community, environmental groups, user organisations and other statutory authorities.

The areas in which development and its management are to effect the coastline are in respect of the following; built activity and its physical proximity, protection of the coastline in terms of views and prospects, establishment and maintenance of walking routes , water quality issues, biodiversity, leisure activities (marine and land based) long term effects on the coastline.

There are also external factors that will affect decision making processes in forward planning namely climate change, sea level rise and change in frequency and severity of storms for example.

### 6.4 Coastal Amenity, The Seafront and Walking Routes

The coastal amenities of Bundoran include the beaches, surfing, swimming, scenic views, coastal walks, public open spaces, the seafront promenade, golf course, hotel and Bundoran Pier.

The *Seafront Improvement Programme* is an initiative, which seeks to enhance the physical relationship and the strong spatial connection between the natural coastline and the urban setting of the town and to provide an attractive visual and functional link between the two. In this regard the continued environmental improvement works along the seafront as part of the *Seafront Improvement Programme* and coastal walking routes will promote the enhanced attractiveness and accessibility of the area.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

**OCA-01:** It is the objective of the Council to ensure the continued promotion and development of the coastal amenity value of the area and the provision of an attractive seafront area, while protecting and enhancing the natural heritage and landscape character of the coast.

**OCA-02:** It is the objective of the Council to protect the Blue Flag Status of the beach in Bundoran and to ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality in association with a beach management plan. It is recognised that these amenities will have an

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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important factor on the ever growing surfing community and related businesses in the area.

**OCA-03:** It is an objective of the Council to identify and monitor coastal areas at Bundoran that may be at risk of serious coastal erosion or storm damage and that may be mitigated by artificial or natural coastal protection structures.

**OCA-04:** It is the objective of the Council to optimise the Pier facility in respect of ensuring public access and gain from Bundoran Pier and to ensure that all coastal protection works in the vicinity of the Pier are complementary to both the built environment of the coastal area and the natural amenity of the rocky shoreline and in this regard care should be taken to ensure that any works do not impact negatively on the hydrodynamics of the area i.e. the surf which is one of the main attractors to the area.

**OCA-05:** It is the objective of the Council to ensure that the Golf Course lands at the Great Northern Hotel are managed appropriately due to the high amenity 'open space' value of these lands for Bundoran.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA01:** The seafront area and coastal walkways shall be protected and enhanced as important tourism, recreational and amenity resources for Bundoran.

**Policy CA02:** Proposals for development located along the seafront shall only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- i. would contribute positively to the character and visual amenity of the seafront area,
- ii. would not interfere with the integrity of the Seafront Improvement Programme; and
- iii. would ensure the provision of linkages to adjoining amenities and urban areas.

**Policy CA03:** To facilitate and upgrade pedestrian linkages between the Cliff Walk and the Rougey Walk recognise and support the economic, social and environmental benefits of coastal walking routes and to ensure that all improvements to coastal walking

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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routes will be sensitive to the visual amenity and natural environment of the Coastal Conservation Zone.

**Policy CA04:** To require that in the case of any tourism/leisure developments in the coastal area, dedicated public access arrangements to the coastline, suitably landscaped, are provided, unless it can be demonstrated that this would be impractical or damaging to the natural heritage.

### 6.5 Scenic Views

It is the objective of the Council to ensure a high quality of visual amenity in Bundoran town and its environs. *The Planning and Development Act 2000* requires that development plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty. The locations of the designated scenic views are shown on the *Land Use Zoning Map*.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA05:** All new development will be designed to contribute positively to the visual amenity of the area and in this respect the Council shall ensure that the protected views of the *Land Use Zoning Map* are not adversely affected by the provision of new structures or coastal features and will include important landward views as protected views from designated points within the *Land Use Zoning Map*

**Policy CA06:** The Council shall ensure that new development does not detract from or interfere or adversely affect the character of the townscape and will actively promote the enhancement of the attractiveness of visually prominent structures or coastal features.

### 6.6 Water Quality

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

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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status of waters and achieving at least 'good status' in relation to all waters by 2015.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

- Policy CA07:** The Council will have full regard to the objectives of the Water Framework Directive for coastal and freshwater areas and will refuse any development proposal that would have an adverse effect on water quality in the area or that would threaten the Blue Flag Status of the beach and will;
- i. ensure the enhanced protection and improvement of water quality by reducing/phasing out coastal discharges and piped emissions to sea,
  - ii. ensure the provision of appropriate wastewater treatment facilities for Bundoran Town, and
  - iii. ensure that diffuse sources of water pollution, which pose a risk to water quality in the area, are identified and that mitigation measures are required where feasible.

### 6.7 Natural Heritage

The natural environment and coastal setting of Bundoran represents an important resource to the community of Bundoran, which will be carefully managed and protected from the adverse effects of insensitive or harmful forms of development.

*The natural heritage of Bundoran includes the rocky shoreline, cliffs, sand beaches, stony beaches, seaweed beds, rock pools and the Bradogue River. These natural habitats are recognised as important elements of the natural heritage value of the area and shall be protected. In addition it is the objective of the local authority to promote an understanding of the local wildlife and natural heritage of Bundoran Town and Environs.*

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA08:** The Council will seek to maintain, restore or improve the quality of the natural heritage of the coastline around Bundoran.

**Policy CA09:** The Council will seek to ensure that any coastal improvement works, defence plans and projects will



## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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ensure the protection and enhancement of the local ecology of the coastline at Bundoran, including the rocky shoreline habitat, cliffs and beaches.

**Policy CA10:** The Council will, where appropriate, promote and encourage biodiversity in respect of local flora and fauna on lands within the Coastal Conservation Zone and Coastal Management Area and the Bradogue River and provide for interpretation boards at designated locations to facilitate an understanding of the local flora and fauna and other features of interest.

### 6.8 The Coastline/Coastal Erosion Processes

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

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA11:** To ensure that the County's natural coastal defences, such as beaches, grassy headlands and rocky shoreline are not compromised by inappropriate works or development. The Council will consult the 'Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources' regarding any proposals for development that may have an impact on coastal erosion.

**Policy CA12:** The Council will assist in the monitoring of coastal processes to ensure that soil movement, water flow, coastal, river and airborne sand drift is appropriately identified and investigate the feasibility of coastal protection measures where necessary on a case by case basis in association with the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources where necessary. In association, the Council will seek to initiate the preparation of a Beach Management Plan in order to ensure the sustainable management and conservation of the beach resource.

### 6.9 Coastal Conservation Zone

The *Coastal Conservation Zone* is identified on the *Land Use Zoning Map* and extends to all areas seaward of the coastal walking routes in addition to other coastal lands designated for the purposes of the

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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*Coastal Conservation Zone as identified on the Land Use Zoning Map.*

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

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA13:** It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the character, setting, and natural heritage of the Coastal Conservation Zone in order to ensure its existing and future amenity and recreational value. In recognition of the area's scenic value and vulnerability to development pressure, this area will be maintained free of further residential and commercial development as an important local amenity area.

**Policy CA14:** The Council will require any development proposal for extensions or alterations to existing structures within the Coastal Conservation Zone to display the highest standards of design and siting, to provide sufficient information to show how the proposal will impact upon the area, and will include proposals for appropriate amelioration.

**Policy CA15:** Environmental improvement works, which seek to enhance access to and use of the area such as lighting, signage, seating, shelters and surfacing will be of a high quality and will be sensitive to the natural and visual amenity of the coastal area.

**Policy CA16:** The integrity of the beach and its Blue Flag status shall be protected and enhanced and the direct and indirect effects of proposed developments in the town on this natural amenity shall be assessed.

**Policy CA17:** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that no development will be permitted on lands on or adjacent to Tullan strand (the sand-dunes) or adjoining Department of Defence lands.

**Policy CA18:** Bundoran Town Council will promote and encourage biodiversity on lands in public ownership where this

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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does not conflict with other existing or proposed recreational uses in respect of such lands.

**Policy CA19:** The Council will ensure that piped emissions to sea or land drainage systems in the vicinity of the Coastal Walks are removed or ameliorated such that they do not adversely affect the visual or environmental quality of the coastal walking route.

### 6.10 Coastal Management Area

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

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA20:** Development proposals which negatively impact upon the foreshore areas, natural wildlife habitats, the visual and amenity value of beaches (blue flag status) and the rocky shoreline will not be considered favourably considering the environmentally sensitive nature of these areas.

**Policy CA21:** Development proposals which enhance access will be favourably considered where they protect beaches and coastal areas from motor vehicles in the interest of public safety, quality of amenity and environmental integrity including the promotion of a Beach Management Plan for the conservation of local beaches and sand-dunes at Bundoran.

### 6.11 Marine Leisure Activities

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

These activities and the infrastructure associated with the operation of such activities can interfere with the sensitive character and enjoyment of the coastal zone in terms of noise pollution and public safety and raise particular concerns for the use of coastal amenities

## CHAPTER 6 – THE COASTAL AREA

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by other members of the public and damage to the natural heritage amenities of the area.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA22:** To encourage the development of marinas, jetties and harbour facilities for maritime leisure developments where the siting of such installations and their supporting infrastructure will not detract from the visual amenity and environmental quality and stability of an area, or public access to beaches, or detrimentally affect the surf and/or breakwater at the 'Peak'.

**Policy CA23:** To require that planning applications for water based leisure activities will be accompanied by a management plan indicating projected number of users, hours of operation, seasons of operation and an undertaking to protect the natural environment in the form of a risk assessment with appropriate amelioration measures in the areas of flora, fauna, hydrology, geology and soils and including the following considerations:

- i. to reserve the right to impose conditions relating to hours of operation and noise levels in respect of marinas, jetties and other maritime leisure developments, and
- ii. to require any associated buildings, jetties and hard standing areas to be kept to a minimum and to be sited as unobtrusively as possible making best use of topography and existing buildings for this purpose.

### 6.12 Bundoran Pier

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

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA24:** Development proposals which affect the use of the Pier facility for the Bundoran Lifeboat Station will be refused. Notwithstanding this the promotion of the pier for land-to-sea users including commercial vessels

and small recreational watercraft will be promoted and enhanced and public accessibility in association with the promotion of public safety at the waterfront area of Bundoran Pier and the surrounding area will be maintained to act as the principal land to sea access point. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Harbour policies and objectives contained within this plan.

### 6.13 Golf Courses

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

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy CA25:** To ensure that future development and or expansion of the golf course at Bundoran respects the landscape character and that any development works and hard standing associated with the golf course, shall be kept to a minimum and shall be sited as unobtrusively as possible making best use of topography and existing buildings. Any development proposals in this respect shall:

- i. be accompanied by a detailed landscaping plan, detailing information relating to any changes in ground levels associated with the development,
- ii. be accompanied by a Visual Impact Statement and an Environmental Management Plan, and
- iii. promote enhanced bio-diversity on coastal lands adjoining the golf course.

# CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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## Chapter 7

### Housing

#### 7.1 Vision

*'To provide for a wide range of housing types to meet the diverse needs of resident and tourist populations, ensuring that developments are conveniently located to all necessary services and are within walking distance of shops, employment, education, leisure, community facilities and amenities.'*

#### 7.2 Context

This chapter sets out the strategy for residential development in Bundoran over the lifetime of this Development Plan 2009-2015. Residential development within the town is set in the context of national and local policy including the following:

- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Area (2005);
- Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoELG, 1999);
- Planning Guidelines on Childcare Facilities (DoELG, 2001);
- Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (DoELG, 1997);
- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoELG, December 2001);
- The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (November 2002); and
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, - A Guide for Planning Authorities December 2008.
- Urban Design Manual Parts 1 and 2, DoEHLG, December 2008

The preparation of a Housing Strategy is a requirement under the *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, Part V* specifically *Part II* of the *Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002*. The Housing Strategy is contained in Appendix II, and effectively serves as the backbone to the Development Plan as it must:

- Estimate the existing and likely future need for housing in the area, and ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is made available to meet such needs;
- Provide that as a general policy a specific percentage (not exceeding 15% in accordance with the County Development

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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Plan Housing Strategy 2006-2012) of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for those in need of social or affordable housing in the area;

- Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to meet the needs of different categories of households; and
- Counteract undue segregation between persons of different social background.

### 7.3 Background

The spatial approach to the provision of land for permanent resident and holiday accommodation will take account of population change and movement within the town and will also seek to consolidate and strengthen the urban form. The identification of such land will take into consideration the sequential release of land having regard to the availability of infrastructure and services; locations where development can integrate with employment, commercial, retail and community services and adopt an environmentally sensitive approach within the existing built up area of the town. The objective of this approach is to ensure that new developments create attractive, high quality living environments responsive to both their immediate surroundings and the wider functions of the town.

There is sufficient zoned residential land inherited from the 2004-2010 Development Plan to cater for growth during the Plan period and beyond. Based on current population projections, the remaining amount of zoned land is sufficient to cater for growth well beyond 2021 and would be sufficient to allow the town to more than double its size in the long term (based on a density of 25 dwellings/units per hectare) accommodating a population of 3,500.

### 7.4 Strategic Objective

It is the objective of the Planning Authority to ensure that there is sufficient housing development taking place in the plan area to meet the needs of the community at an affordable price and that the development within the plan area only takes place at a rate that is commensurate with that need, accords with the settlement policy of the plan area, and the available level of supporting social and physical infrastructure.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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### 7.5 Housing Strategy

In accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007*, The Council produced a *Housing Strategy* (see Appendix II) to address the housing needs of the existing and future population of Bundoran to 2015. This document should be read in conjunction with the County Housing Strategy contained within the *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)*.

### 7.6 Objectives and Policies

#### 7.6.1 Zonings

Lands zoned for 'Residential' development have been identified to promote a phased approach towards residential growth in the town. These are lands that are readily serviceable and which fall within the waste water catchment area.

The purpose of this approach is to achieve a balanced and consolidated approach to residential development and thereby strengthen the urban form of the town, to ensure the optimum use of existing infrastructure by enabling the Council to identify long-term infrastructure requirements within and beyond the plan period and to provide a housing land bank for both general and more specialised housing needs. Lands identified as appropriate for residential development are also identified to be considered in a phased manner related to the development of waste water infrastructure and a logical and sequential approach for development consolidating development opportunities most proximate to the town, in the first instance.

Lands previously identified as residential reserve have been removed from the plan to allow a logical and sequential pattern of development in a logical and consolidated manner.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-01:** Promote residential development in the plan area in a sequentially, orderly, and sustainable manner.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy H1:** New housing development shall be accommodated through the zoning of land for 'Residential – Phase 1' and 'Residential - Phase 2' development. The



## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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location of zoned Residential Phases 1 & 2 is set out on the Land-Use Zoning Map.

**Policy H2:** Lands zoned 'Residential Phase 1' shall be comprehensively developed<sup>3</sup> prior to the development of lands zoned 'Residential Phase 2'. Planning applications for residential development of Phase 2 lands will be deemed premature within the plan period 2009-2015 unless accompanied by a reasoned justification including a detailed sequential test confirming unavailability of Residential Phase 1 lands and conforming to Policy H3, below.

**Policy H3:** Proposals for residential development located within 'Residential Phase 2' shall only be permitted where:

- The lands zoned for Residential Phase 1 have been exhausted, and
- The lands zoned for Residential Phase 1 development are overtly constrained by ownership, and
- The proposed development would contribute to the consolidation of surrounding residential neighbourhood, strengthen the urban form of the town and provide local facilities, services and improved links to the existing town centre, and
- The development allows for the suitable connection to the waste water treatment system with adequate capacity.

**Policy H4:** No residential development will be permitted on lands liable to flooding [www.floodmaps.ie](http://www.floodmaps.ie). Sites considered to be at risk from flooding will necessarily require the submission of a detailed flood risk assessment.

**Policy H5:** Proposals for single dwellings on lands zoned Residential shall only be permitted where it can be reasonably demonstrated that:

- The location and layout of the dwelling would not compromise the ability of the land to facilitate the provision of comprehensive residential development, and
- The proposed development would not prejudice access or result in ransom strips.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Comprehensively Developed' in this case refers to land which has been built upon.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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- Policy H6:** The loss of single or multiple residential units within the town centre area will not normally be permitted unless it can be appropriately justified against a beneficial 'community' gain.
- Policy H7:** In addition to residential proposals within zoned lands complementary scaled facilities will be considered and encouraged, namely crèche facilities, play facilities, small convenience store(s).
- Policy H8:** The naming of residential estates and streets shall be named and numbered by the developer in accordance with the Donegal Placenames Committee.

### 7.6.2 Unserviced Settlement Areas

Within the plan boundaries the areas of Tullaghan and Rock/Ross have historically provided areas outside of the principal urban centre of Bundoran for residential development. Whilst it is the central objective of the plan to provide a focus for consolidated residential development within the urban centre to assist in the sustainable and orderly development of the plan area, flexibility for infill and or single site residential development in a more rural setting of the 'unserviced settlement areas', identified as 'Established Development' on the Land Use Zoning Map.

The overall Settlement Strategy is based on the principles of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) and hence the majority of new housing development would, in the first instance be directed towards the urban centre of Bundoran. This would be in accordance with the Council's objective of encouraging development in towns and serviced villages with the capacity to absorb further development.

There is at the same time pressure to develop individual houses outside the serviced and unserviced towns and villages of Donegal. Where development is proposed outside the identified settlement hierarchy and in more isolated rural locations (i.e. one off rural houses) there are specific criteria for which to determine the need for individual residential development. These criteria relate to the individual's ability to express a specific local need for developing at such locations.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

---

The function and objective of the unserviced settlement is twofold, firstly to sustain the existing rural facilities i.e. school, shop etc. in a sustainable manner and secondly to cater for the demand from the one-off houses that do not meet the local need criteria or do not wish to be located within the larger towns and villages under the settlement hierarchy.

### The Purpose of Unserviced Settlements

Unserviced settlements are **not** appropriate for large-scale residential schemes and any such schemes, which would be considered unsustainable commuter-based developments, should be directed towards Bundoran in the first instance which has a defined residential zoning and suitable infrastructure to support such developments.

The over-riding concern is that these unserviced settlements do not become targets for multiple unit (volume) house builders. A side effect of volume house building is the opportunities to strengthen local communities by providing housing for local families are diminished. It must be remembered that unserviced settlements are identified to provide for those households currently living or working in other locations or more urban areas who want to build in the countryside but do not currently meet local need requirements whilst helping to sustain the existing communities and the locally available facilities.

### Development Limits

Development limits have been identified within the unserviced settlements to ensure that any development does not become too dispersed or lead to unsustainable ribbon development. The 'development limits' will not affect those households who display the local need criteria from building outside these limits.

The development limits have been identified on the basis of the suitability and capacity for new residential development within which development for single houses or in exceptional circumstances small schemes will be allowed. The limits placed settlements establish the defined area within which development will be considered acceptable. They will provide opportunities to provide infill development and could allow some limited backland development but only where there are no detrimental effects upon the amenities of existing residents or the visual amenities of the settlement.

The impact of the number of new houses in a location without proper services i.e. water and waste is a serious planning

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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consideration and it needs to be further emphasised that the risks to public health and the danger of pollution will be major considerations in any new planned development. So even though areas or sites may be within the defined development limits this does not automatically qualify them for planning permission because the detailed considerations of water supply and drainage capacity of the ground along with the amenity and design considerations will need to be fully considered and addressed.

These development limits have been selected and designated on the basis that they provide an adequate and appropriate supply of development sites within the plan timescale to allow the settlements to grow in accordance with the services that are available.

The following policies will need to be applied to all new development within the unserved settlements to ensure certainty and consistency and in the interests of orderly planning and sustainable development.

**Policy H9:** Any proposed development within the unserved settlements will be judged on their appropriateness and whether they would be more suitably located in the higher order settlements within the County's overall 'settlement strategy'.

It must be remembered that the function of the unserved settlements is to sustain the existing rural facilities, i.e. shop, post office, church school etc.

**Policy H10:** Outside the designated development limits development will normally be restricted to that required for the purposes of agriculture or that required to meet the social and economic needs of the local community. Development appropriate for the enjoyment of the scenic and natural environmental qualities and character of the countryside and other developments having a rural character may also be acceptable.

To guide and control new development, Development Limits have been defined. In general terms development is acceptable within these limits but outside them, in order to maintain the character of the countryside, development will be strictly controlled. In effect only those types of development, which draw on the character of the countryside itself, its beauty, culture, history and wildlife will normally be permitted. The limits will not preclude the development

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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of local need housing outside of these limits as defined within the County Development Plan.

**Policy H11:** Development, which will adversely affect the setting of the settlement, will not be permitted. Where development is likely to form the edge of a settlement, an integral and substantial landscaping scheme incorporating peripheral planting will normally be required.

The interface between the settlement and the countryside is sensitive and requires careful treatment. Any new development should protect and enhance the setting of the settlement and landscaping proposals can ensure the integration of new development into the settlement, screen views, and provide shelter and enclosure.

**Policy H12:** Within the designated development limits development will be permitted where it involves infilling, conversion, single site housing development, the use of derelict or underused land or premises and where the development meets all of the following criteria:

1. It will not result in the loss of land of recreation or amenity value;
2. It will not have an adverse effect on areas or buildings of historic or architectural importance, or sites of nature conservation value or archaeological importance;
3. It will provide an acceptable residential environment;
4. It will not be on a site where there is an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of residents through contamination, pollution or risk of pollution;
5. It will not damage the character and amenity of existing residential areas;
6. It will not create unacceptable problems; and
7. It will not result in the loss of or damage to spaces identified as being of importance.

### 7.6.3 Housing Mix

The *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007* require that the Development Plan takes account of the need to ensure that a

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of different categories of households – apartments, duplexes, terraces, semi-detached, detached, retirement complexes, special needs housing should all be considered as possible elements of a housing mix, thus ensuring a resultant mix of population.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-02:** To encourage a wide variety of housing types in all new residential development.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy H13:** The Council will require that residential schemes in excess of 0.1 hectare or in excess of 4 no. dwellings will incorporate a reasonable mix of housing types and sizes in order to match housing type supply to demographic trends. In particular the provision of increased numbers of units for one or two persons, starter homes, affordable housing and units designed or capable of easy adaption for housing for people with disabilities, sheltered housing for the elderly, and the provision of special needs housing will be encouraged.

### 7.6.4 Social and Affordable Housing

Proposals for residential development on lands zoned residential and for mixed use purposes shall be required to comply with the policies set out in the 'Housing Strategy' at Appendix II so as to make adequate provision for social and affordable housing under Part V of the Act (as amended by the Planning & Development [Amendment] Act 2002).

It will be the objective of the Council to rehabilitate/refurbish their own housing stock where necessary and encourage and facilitate similar

rehabilitation of private housing.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-03:** To reserve 15% of land zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses for the provision of social and affordable housing.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

---

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy H14:** The Council will require as a condition of a grant of permission that the applicant or any other person with an interest in the land to which a relevant application relates, enter into an agreement with the Planning Authority concerning the development for housing on land and this agreement shall provide for the provision of social/affordable housing as set out in the above objective.

The Council will monitor the need for such agreements on an annual basis, having regard to annual progress in procuring social and affordable housing to meet the housing waiting list for such housing.

Where an agreement under Section 96(2) forms a condition of a grant of planning permission, the Council will have regard to the location and scale of the proposal in assessing which form of transfer should be considered.

### 7.6.5 Elderly Persons and People with Disabilities

The Council recognises the importance of providing houses for the elderly and people with special needs in their areas of choice. In this regard, in any proposals for social housing schemes consideration will be given to the requirements of the elderly and special needs applicants in the area.

The Council is working in partnership with various voluntary sector groups and associations to facilitate further identification of needs and provision of housing for those with disabilities.

The concept of 'Lifetime Adaptable Housing' will be applied to all new housing, so that all new housing is easily adaptable without undue expense and works to the original house design.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-04:** The Council will provide a mixture of house types (one, two, three bedroom) in suitable locations to meet the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly and changing family situations.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy H15:** Residential developments will provide a mixture of house types (one, two, three bedroom) in suitable locations to meet the needs of the disabled and elderly. Agreements under Section 96(2) may allow for both to be provided or suitably offset as a contribution to social and affordable housing.

### 7.6.6 Countering Social Segregation

In the National Anti Poverty Strategy (NAPS), access to housing is one of the key elements for fighting social exclusion and marginalisation and thereby assisting in the fight against poverty.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-05:** Recognise the aims of NAPS and in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sectors and through their function as a housing authority remain committed to the development of a sustainable housing policy, which will counter social exclusion and marginalisation.

### 7.6.7 Traveller Accommodation

The demand for traveller accommodation in County Donegal was examined in the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2015.

It is recognised that the travelling community have specific housing requirements. The Council will seek to provide suitable accommodation in order to remove the need for unauthorised, unsanitary, unsuitable and roadside encampments that have an impact on the amenities of adjoining properties and developments. Accordingly, the Council will seek to continue to identify suitable locations for the provision of traveller accommodation in consultation with Travellers, Travellers Organisations, Local Traveller Consultative Committee, Public Representatives, the wider community and other statutory bodies in order to implement the *Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2015* and any subsequent updates, as prepared by Donegal County Council.



## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-O6:** Provide suitable accommodation for members of the travelling community.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy H16:** The Council will continue to assess the need to provide accommodation for the travelling community and will seek to identify suitable locations throughout the plan area for the provision of group housing and permanent/temporary halting site accommodation to meet this demand in accordance with the *Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2015*.

**Policy H17:** It is a policy of the Council to implement the *Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2015* and more specifically, policies contained within Section 7 of that document.

### 7.6.8 Housing Density

The Council will have regard to the *Residential Density Guidelines (1999)* issued by the DoEHLG, and more recently, *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities, May 2009 (DoEHLG)*. The stated densities shall be applicable to all land zoned for residential development unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances why an alternative approach is required having regard to the character of the site, the surrounding area or the intrinsic character of individual neighbourhoods.

**OH-07:** Densities that will be applied will seek to encourage the better use of urban lands and encourage more sustainable forms of residential development.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy H18:** Proposals for new housing development must demonstrate that they achieve the greatest efficiency in the use of land appropriate to its context and encourage a sustainable pattern of development while ensuring the highest quality residential environment.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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- Policy H19:** A mixed density approach shall be pursued to new residential development that will have regard to the location, context and its contribution to the enhancement of the town form and to ensure the efficient use of energy and transport within the plan area.
- Policy H20:** Centrally located sites may allow densities of 30-40+ dwellings per hectare whilst edge of centre sites will allow a density range of 20-35 dwellings per hectare. A higher density approach will be adopted within the central area and will be assessed on the context and location of the proposed development, the quality of the proposed design and the density of neighbouring developments. High or excessive densities proposed within the central area shall not be permitted where it would detract from or be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area or the residential amenity of adjoining properties.

### 7.6.9 Design and Layout of New Housing Development

A central function of land-use planning is to ensure that new residential development presents a high quality living environment for its residents, both in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units and in terms of the overall layout and appearance of the scheme.

Standardised design and layouts of new residential developments with little or no appreciation of its location or townscape will be discouraged. In an attempt to provide visually distinct and attractive residential environments with enhanced movement between each area and the town, the Council will require new residential developments to demonstrate a design concept that considers the development in its totality having regard to design, layout and movement.

New residential developments will be considered against the 12 criteria contained within the 'Urban Design Manual' A Best Practice Guide.

Developments should recognise the 'neighbourhood concept' of development seeking to establish shared surface environments and reducing the dominance of the private car and reflecting the 'home zone' concept. Sustainability is an important theme which permeates every aspect of society. With regards to housing,

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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sustainability involves the construction of homes that are structurally sound, energy efficient, environmentally friendly and adaptable over time to changing household needs. The Council will look more favourably on applications that espouse these basic principles.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OH-08:** Promote a high quality of design and layout in new residential development.
- OH-09:** Encourage appreciation of the built and the natural form, landscape features, and existing movement patterns with and between other areas of the town.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy H21:** Proposals for residential developments on previously undeveloped (Greenfield) sites shall include a neighbourhood design strategy that seeks to create an attractive high quality residential environment that is based on the positive characteristics of the surrounding area and shall:
- i. Consider all aspects of the development in totality ensuring integration and compatibility between structures, public amenity spaces and internal access;
  - ii. Respect the character, topography and context of the location in terms of layout, scale, mass and design of buildings and provision of landscaping and open space;
  - iii. Identify archaeological, built and landscape features and seek, where appropriate, to protect and incorporate them in a sympathetic manner within the overall layout;
  - iv. Make adequate provision for public and private landscaped amenity areas linked to and with amenity areas of adjoining developments;
  - v. Incorporate a high architectural design standard incorporating a variety of house types that reflect the traditional vernacular style;
  - vi. Make provision for local neighbourhood facilities;
  - vii. Adequate provision shall be made for the communal storage space of fuel and refuse;

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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- viii. Ensure a layout that maximises the use of the landscape characteristics including local features and vistas and maximises passive solar gain;
- ix. Provide for the orientation of amenity areas to provide maximum informal surveillance and avoid the location of amenity areas to the rear of properties;
- x. Present an attractive elevation to adjacent (existing and proposed) roads and avoiding blank flank walls; and
- xi. Avoid the overlooking of private rear garden spaces.

**Policy H22:** Tourist or visitor accommodation shall be visually distinct from permanent housing (whilst allowing for the criteria listed in H18 above) and shall primarily be designed in clusters, around shared spaces, including car parking and green areas. Housing shall not be overtly suburban in character and quality of design will be the main criteria on which housing accommodations be assessed.

**Policy H23:** Apartment developments should comply with the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities September 2007 (DoEHLG) and shall include:

- i. Communal refuse storage spaces;
- ii. Safe and secure internal/external drying areas that are conveniently integrated;
- iii. Accessible and are inconspicuous from adjoining public roads;
- iv. A suitably screened location for a bring bank centre, if appropriate;
- v. Private balconies, roof terraces or winter gardens for all apartments above ground floor level.

### 7.6.10 Open Space Provision

Open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. It provides passive as well as active amenity and can have important ecological and environmental aspects. The provision of open space to serve new residential developments should be on a hierarchical basis varying in size from large regional parks to small children's play areas and passive recreation spaces close to peoples' homes.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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Public Open Space Standards will be divided between qualitative and quantitative. Regard should be had to the 'Residential Density Guidelines' (DoEHLG, 1999) and *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, May 2009 (DoEHLG)*.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OH-10:** All new residential schemes will be designed to make a positive contribution to its locality.
- OH-11:** All new residential developments will include high quality public amenity spaces that are responsive to its built/natural environment.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy H24:** Quality will take precedence over quantity in open space provision and details of the proposed landscaping, hard and soft, of these spaces should be provided with planning applications.

- Policy H25:** The provision of open space shall:
- i. Be conveniently located within the development and designed as an integral part of the overall layout;
  - ii. Have a south facing aspect where feasible and must be overlooked by buildings;
  - iii. Be of high quality design and finish providing for a multi function of uses through the use of soft and hard landscaping techniques including equipped formal play areas, informal greens, paved and planted amenity areas;
  - iv. Provide adequate lighting, signage and highly accessible linkages with the surrounding public footpath network and other designated amenity walkways;
  - v. Open spaces should be suitably drained to ensure that the open space can be used in all but exceptional weather conditions.

**Policy H26:** New residential developments shall submit a detailed landscaping scheme indicating:

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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- i. Species, variety, number and location of trees, shrubs and other features to be provided;
- ii. Proposals to retain and incorporate existing trees, hedgerows and stonewalls within the development; and
- iii. Programme of implementation of the scheme.

### 7.6.11 Accessibility

Greater pedestrian and cyclist accessibility will be encouraged in order to enhance movement and interaction between each neighbourhood, the central area and the seafront while providing more sustainable forms of movement throughout the town. Emergency vehicle access secondary to the primary entrance to the development will be required in order to ensure the accessibility of emergency vehicles to the development in the event that the primary access becomes obstructed.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-12:** Sustainable methods of transport and alternative methods to the private car will be promoted throughout the plan area.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy H27:** In addition to the primary access, new residential developments shall provide direct pedestrian and cycle linkages through the development interconnecting with central amenity areas, adjoining developments and any complementary neighbourhood facilities.

**Policy H28:** Internal road layouts shall reflect considerations of road safety avoiding long straight stretches, adopting curves and bends with unobstructed sight lines, and where appropriate, the use of traffic calming measures adjacent to amenity areas, schools and community facilities.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING

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### 7.6.12 Large Scale Developments and Complementary Community Facilities

The provision of local complementary facilities within residential developments are recognized as providing increased vitality, a sense of community and balance the social and economic sustainability of a development. All new residential development shall be part of communities either existing or newly formed.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OH-13:** All residential development must be part of an existing or planned community based on the neighbourhood concept.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy H29:** Residential proposals will be measured against the Development Guidelines and Technical Standards contained within the *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012* (as varied) and should provide appropriately scaled and located complementary neighbourhood facilities which should integrate into the development to build community and reduce the need to travel.

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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### Chapter 8

#### Community Services

##### 8.1 Vision

*'To plan for a vital, viable, socially inclusive community and create a town with a shared identity built on the achievement of the goals outlined in the County Development Board Strategy 2002-2012 and the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012(as varied).'*

##### 8.2 Context

This section sets out detailed development objectives for the provision of social infrastructure including childcare facilities, healthcare, education, nursing homes, community buildings, sports facilities, traveller accommodation, older person's residents, and amenity schemes. Community development within the town is set in the context of national and local policy including the following:

- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020;
- National Anti-Poverty Strategy;
- Local Agenda 21;
- National Children's Strategy;
- Donegal County Development Board Strategy 2002-2012;
- County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied).

##### 8.3 Strategy

One of the mandatory objectives to be contained in Development Plans outlined in the *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007* is the objective to ensure the integration of the planning and sustainable development in the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the town and its population.

Many of the goals relating to social, economic and cultural development in the County Development Board Strategy and the County Development Plan are goals that the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015* also strive to achieve. These plans shall operate parallel to one another with the County Development Board Strategy providing the social, economic and cultural vision, the County Development Plan providing the context for local policies and objectives, while the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan* will provide for the proper planning and



## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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sustainable development to the town and surrounding environs. The *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015* represents a symbiotic relationship between the three policy documents, all working together in order to plan and create viable and sustainable communities.

### 8.4 Background

It is generally acknowledged that the range of facilities offered in any community is a measure of a town's vitality and viability. The community in Bundoran is in effect ever changing with permanent residents interspersed with a tourist and related business community operating on a seasonal basis which has real implications for the services available to the permanent community. On occasion, the new school hall provides a venue for the amalgamation of community services.

### 8.5 Policies and Objectives

#### 8.5.1 Community Development

##### County Development Board Strategy

An Straitéis, the County Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development was prepared to shape and guide public policy in County Donegal between 2002 –2012. It provides the overall framework, within which, all development and the delivery of public services in the County will occur. The Strategy is an Integrated Strategy covering Economic, Social and Cultural matters. It seeks to ensure that a co-ordinated approach is adopted by all sectors in the County with a view towards making the best use of resources and adding substantial value to the efforts of each of these sectors individually and working collectively wherever possible.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-01:** Support the County Development Board Strategy 2002-2012 and the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied) in order to reach a shared vision for the long-term social, economic and cultural development of Bundoran.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD1:** It is Council policy to facilitate the achievement of the goals as set out in the *County Development Board*

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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*Strategy* in relation to social development including community and local development, education, family support, health, rural communities, safety, security and policing, social inclusion and substance abuse.

**Policy CD2:** It is Council policy to facilitate the achievement of the goals as set out in the *County Development Board Strategy* in relation to economic development including enterprise, living space, physical infrastructure, tourism, training and transportation.

**Policy CD3:** It is Council policy to facilitate the achievement of the goals as set out in the *County Development Board Strategy* in relation to amenity, the arts, conservation and heritage, culture, marine, coast and sports, recreation and leisure.

### **Safer Living Environment/Designing out Crime**

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-02:** Facilitate the achievement of a safe environment for residents and visitors to the town.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD4:** Any new development should promote the concepts of 'designing out crime' and ensuring 'passive surveillance' in newly planned areas through high quality urban design, addressing public spaces with active frontages, delivering measures such as 'living above the shop' which can create 24 hour communities by encouraging supervised people centered activities in any new development.

In addition and where necessary to supplement the positive policy response to new development it may be necessary to improve the use of targeted lighting and CCTV cameras in liaison with An Garda Síochána.

### **Community Facilities**

Community facilities contribute to quality of life and help to develop a sense of community. Community facilities are normally defined as any resource, usually in the form of a building or structure

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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(but may also be a pitch or court), which is used by a variety of 'not for profit' voluntary organisations usually to advance their interests in community, culture, sports or other similar group activities.

Community facilities should be multi-functional and not used exclusively by any one 'not for profit' group to create more effective use of land and resources and improve viability. Such facilities best co-exist with other services of a more commercial nature.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OCD-03:** To promote the provision of community facilities at appropriate locations within the plan area and identify and reserve land for the purposes of providing or extending community facilities where a demonstrated need exists.
- OCD-04** To identify a centrally located civic space or 'town square', to provide for community focus, gatherings and an attractive location for community, arts and cultural events.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy CD5:** To encourage developments either stand alone or mixed use, which provide and include a community emphasis and which promote access by all members of the community appropriately located whilst ensuring that such proposals do not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of an unacceptable increase in traffic, noise and/or loss of privacy.
- Policy CD6:** Any new commercial development shall be considered favourably where it is judged to make appropriate and proportionate provision for community infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the town and its environs.

### Health Facilities

The North Western Health Board is the primary body responsible for the delivery of health and personal social services to the people in Bundoran, although a number of public and voluntary agencies share the responsibility for providing healthcare facilities. A modern

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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health care system forms an important backbone to all communities.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-05:** To ensure that a good quality, accessible health care system is provided in the local community.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD7:** Proposals for medical and/or healthcare development will be encouraged where:

- i. the scale and design of any new building enhances the character of the existing area;
- ii. the facility will be accessible by foot and public transport; and
- iii. the facility is accessible to people with disabilities.

The use of residential properties will only be considered where the privacy and amenity of adjacent occupiers can be preserved and the proposal does not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of an increase in traffic, car parking or noise. The full conversion of semi-detached or terraced type dwellings will not be permitted.

**Policy CD8:** Where new housing development is proposed, consideration should be given to the need to provide or extend the provision of complementary healthcare facilities.

**Policy CD9:** Proposals for 'primary healthcare' facilities in association with the HSE's programme of delivery and distribution will be considered favourably.

### 8.5.2 Education

Education has an important role to play in developing sustainable and balanced communities and encouraging families to live in the town. Bundoran currently has 1 no. primary school and 1 no. secondary school. There are no third level education facilities provided in the town. In order to continue to meet the need for primary and secondary school provision wherever practicable, the Council will continue to liaise with school authorities and the Department of Education and Science.

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Planning authorities have an increased role in the planned delivery of educational facilities since the publication of the joint Departmental (DES & DoEHLG) guidelines entitled, *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System - A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities – July 2008*, which state:

*'The provision of any new schools (both primary and post-primary) should be driven by and emerge from an integrated approach between the planning functions of planning authorities and the Department of Education and Science'.*

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-06:** To ensure that every opportunity is provided to educate the inhabitants of the Plan area.

The following Policy have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD10:** Developments providing for the educational needs and requirements of the Town and Environs population will be positively encouraged including the provision of primary, secondary and new institutions for tertiary education.

The encouragement and development of opportunities for the provision of third level facilities within the town will be advised through the liaison with FAS and the Department of Education and Science and other education providers. The town's function as a destination tourism resort provides the opportunity to focus third level education on the local resource and the investigation of an educational facility based on the tourism sector.

### **Community Use of School Facilities**

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

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-07:** Promote the dual use of educational facilities for the beneficial use of the wider community.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD11:** Developments for educational facilities should ensure the potential for dual-use or multiplicity of use of their inherent facilities, namely sporting fields, courts or open spaces.

**Policy CD12:** Encourage, support and develop opportunities to open up schools to wider community use, where there are no unacceptable amenity, environmental or traffic safety problems.

**Policy CD13:** Where possible, ensure that educational facilities are clustered together, as per the DoEHLG guidelines.

### 8.5.3 Social Inclusion

There are several groups considered to have specific planning and design needs. These include children/young people, women, people who are ill or with disabilities, travellers, members of ethnic minority groups and older people.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

**OCD-08:** Recognise the need for people with special needs to enjoy a decent living environment in the County and to support the local communities, the health authorities and other bodies involved in the provision of facilities for people with special needs.

**OCD-09:** Tackle social exclusion, inequality, disadvantage and poverty in the local community throughout the town by promoting equality, involving the full integration into society of women, elderly, people with disabilities, the travelling Community and ethnic minority groups.

**OCD-10:** To recognise the diversity of needs in making policies and procedures truly representative to all.

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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### Traveller Accommodation

The Council recognises the importance which the travelling community plays in the local community, and respects their rights to appropriate accommodation at suitable locations throughout the plan area either through the provision of group housing and permanent/temporary halting facility accommodation to meet the identified need.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

- OCD-11:** Implement the *Travellers Accommodation Programme* as to be updated in 2009 and;
- i. Provide 1 no. traveller housing scheme within the town;
  - ii. Identify and provide a traveller halting site within the boundaries of the Plan area.

Proposals to identify a site for the travelling community shall be considered in the light of the following criteria:

- o the suitability of land for mixed residential, business and storage use;
- o suitability of access to the site and satisfactory provision of turning and servicing areas;
- o the satisfactory provision and linkage to the Town's water services on site;
- o the availability for the provision of landscaping, planting and designation of an amenity area within the site compatible with the existing and proposed uses in the area, particularly in relation to environmental amenity.

### Ethnic Minority Groups

There is a growing population from ethnic minority groups in the County. The large young population in ethnic minority communities means that access to facilities such as shops, schools, community facilities and childcare is particularly important. In planning for the needs of these communities, cultural sensitivity will be required.

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-12:** Adopt an approach of 'cultural sensitivity' when dealing with the planning needs of ethnic minority groups.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD14:** Development proposals for the cultural and community needs of Bundoran's diverse community will be encouraged where they are respectful of the established and adopted planning and development management standards of the Town & Environs Plan and the County Development Plan.

### Childcare

It is recognised that the increased female participation in the labour force coupled with social change have resulted in a major increase in the demand for childcare. The provision of childcare facilities is now seen as being of the utmost necessity for economic and social well being. In addition, the *National Anti-Poverty Strategy* identifies childcare provision as a means of alleviating poverty and social exclusion. Thus, national policy with regard to childcare is to increase the number of places available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community. 'Childcare' is taken to mean full day care and sessional facilities and services for pre-school and school-going children out of school hours. Accordingly, the Council will seek to facilitate the provision of crèche and playgroup facilities in appropriate locations and may require their provision in large residential, commercial and retail developments.

An analysis of the provision of existing childcare facilities in Bundoran has found that they are not running at their full capacity. The Planning Authority will have regard to this factor when they are assessing planning applications which require a crèche as an integral part of their development, as per the Departments publication, *Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (June 2001).

The planning authority will have regard to the provision of a safe environment for children and visitors at drop off and pick up points at childcare facilities and the suitability of the location and premises for the provision of adequate outdoor space and play areas.



## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-13:** Implement the *Childcare Facility Guidelines (DoEHLG 2001)* which advocates a more pro-active role by the planning authority in the promotion of increased childcare provision while at the same time protecting amenities.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD15:** Encourage, support and facilitate proposals for childcare facilities where they are in an appropriate location in accordance with national policy and in accordance with the provision of the *County Childcare Strategy 2006* and the *Housing Strategy incorporated in this Plan*.

**Policy CD16:** Ensure that childcare facilities are accommodated in appropriate premises, suitably located and with sufficient outdoor/indoor open space in accordance with the *Childcare (Pre-School) Services Regulations 1996* (as amended).

**Policy CD17:** To consider childcare facilities where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- i. They are sited in town or neighbourhood centres, residential areas, in industrial and enterprise areas and in the vicinity of schools and other educational establishments and adjacent to transport corridors;
- ii. Facilities will not detract from the amenity and character of the surrounding area;
- iii. Adequate provision can be made for open space, off street parking and drop of and collection points; and
- iv. Facilities will be available on a year-round basis.

### Elderly

#### Nursing Homes

The demand for nursing homes and more often now coupled with independent living accommodation has grown over the last number of decades. Advances in the field of medicine as well as improved nutrition and quality of life have increased average life

## CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

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expectancy. As this trend continues so too will the demand for nursing and care facilities for the elderly.

Each local community must plan to provide a range of supports and services to enable its older people to maintain an optimum level of health, dignity and independence at all times. The Council is not a provider of residential care and nursing homes, nor is it responsible for the provision of health and social services. However, the Council is the Local Planning Authority with responsibility for regulation of the development and use of land in the public interest to meet the requirements for development. The Council also has an important and significant role as a housing provider in the provision of housing for the elderly in what are traditionally termed OPDs (older persons dwellings).

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OCD-14:** To cater for the accommodation needs of older people through the continued provision of appropriate housing, including sheltered housing in accordance with the Housing Strategy.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy CD18:** To encourage proposals for the development of elderly residential care suitably integrated into the plan area providing for pedestrian access to services and facilities by means of good design of a safe and barrier-free environment, which is easily negotiable by older people;

# CHAPTER 9 – RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACE

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## Chapter 9

### Recreation, Leisure and Amenity Open Space

#### 9.1 Vision

*'To seek to enhance leisure, amenity and recreational provision within the plan area in line with the implementation of new developments so as to place the leisure, amenity and recreational requirements of existing and new population at the core of new development proposals and as a result to create improved quality of life through the planning process.'*

#### 9.2 Introduction

The benefits of a comprehensive recreation, leisure and amenity open space strategy are of vital importance in fostering a healthy, happy and prosperous people. Recreational spaces and places contribute to the physical and physiological health and well-being of people by creating attractive surroundings and opportunities for active or passive leisure pursuits.

This chapter sets out the Councils policies and proposals to enhance the quality of life in the Bundoran and Environs Plan area through provision of amenities and facilities for use by all the population.

#### 9.3 Overview

Bundoran benefits from its location on the Atlantic Ocean and also its proximity to the Ben Bulbin and the Dartry Mountains. There are a diverse range of cultural and social facilities including surfing, swimming (Blue Flag beach status), hill walking, golf, pitch and putt, horse riding, camping, watersports, angling and cycling. Many of these amenities, in reality, cater principally for tourists for only a portion of the year.

There is only one playing field, which is owned by the local GAA club. It is generally used for club and school activities only. Opposite the pitch is the Bundoran Adventure centre. There is a public pitch and putt course located near the new civic offices. In addition there is a golf course adjacent to the Great Northern Hotel and another pitch and putt to the south west of the town

## CHAPTER 9 – RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACE

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bounding the by-pass. In addition, Waterworld is an excellent recreational and tourist related water-based facility.

There is a recognised need for the provision of additional public sport, leisure and recreational facilities within the area, particularly for facilities on a year-round basis. The Council will seek to protect existing sports and community facilities within the plan area and will promote the development of a community centre, which would facilitate the local community on a year-round basis.

There is a need for additional public open space in Bundoran. While the seafront and coast represents a significant recreational resource for the town with associated coastal walks to be enhanced there is no public park/play area for residents and visitors.

It shall be an objective of the plan to harness and protect the existing natural amenity areas to provide quality amenity areas for the population of Bundoran, protect them from unsuitable developments and utilise them as a tourism resource for the town and its environs. These areas are zoned and identified as Recreation and Amenity Open Spaces on the Land Use Zoning Map.

Bundoran has an excellent coastal walkway throughout the plan area which extends to Tullan Strand. It shall be an objective of the plan to improve this amenity and further develop and extend the walkway where possible.

### 9.4 Strategic Objectives

**SRL-01** To ensure the provision of adequate public and private open space in Bundoran and its Environs to meet the current and future arts, leisure, recreational and amenity open space and passive and active recreation needs of the community.

**SRL-02** To ensure the protection and maintenance of amenity areas including structural open space, the coastal zone and associated views and prospects and provision of civic open space for arts and cultural events.

## CHAPTER 9 – RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACE

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### 9.5 Policies and Objectives

#### 9.5.1 Culture and Arts

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

**ORL-01:** To create greater awareness of the Arts in Bundoran and its Environs and to ensure that all people may have access to them.

**ORL-02:** To promote and encourage strengthening of the role of the library particularly through the development of Information Technology provision and creating a focal point in the local community.

**ORL-03:** To protect, encourage and enhance arts and cultural facilities within the Plan area.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy RLA1:** Proposals for the development of cultural and arts related facilities will be actively encouraged though purpose built facilities or the re-use or re-development of existing vacant buildings.

**Policy RLA2:** Proposals for development including indoor and/or outdoor performance areas and auditoria in association with civic spaces will be positively encouraged.

#### 9.5.2 Recreation and Sports Facilities

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy RLA3:** To require developers to make appropriate provision for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals. Such provision should include direct provision on or off site to enable appropriate alternative provision to be made.

**Policy RLA4:** To support and promote the development of new recreation and sports facilities where they fulfil a positive role in the community and:

## CHAPTER 9 – RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACE

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- i. are easily accessible by all and conveniently located;
- ii. provide adequate access and parking;
- iii. contribute positively to the community;
- iv. do not detract from the amenities/character of the area nor residential amenities, and
- v. be available on a year-round basis<sup>4</sup>.

**Policy RLA5:** Development proposals for the change of use of a recreation, leisure or open space facility will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate;

- i. that there is insufficient local demand for the existing facility, and
- ii. an alternative replacement facility of equal or greater community benefit is to be provided for the respective area.

**Policy RLA6:** The development of facilities for and associated with water based leisure activities will be positively encouraged provided such development is consistent with the amenity and informal recreational value of the water body.

### 9.5.3 Parks, Public Amenity Areas and Shorefront

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**ORL-04:** To support the promotion and protection of the shorefront and the coastal fringe as a recreational and amenity area as identified on Land Use Zoning Map.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy RLA7:** Developments will not be permitted where they negatively impact upon the provision of the existing and proposed network of open spaces, amenity areas and associated footpath and coastal path network. Conversely shorefront proposals which enhance upgrade and support

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<sup>4</sup> Provided they are appropriately managed.

## CHAPTER 9 – RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACE

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the shorefront as a coastal resource and amenity will be positively encouraged.

**Policy RLA8:** New coastal development will be assessed in terms of its long term visual impact and will be assessed to ensure that it would not detract from the visual sensitivity of the shorefront or impact upon established long range important views.

**Policy RLA9:** Development proposals will be positively encouraged where they support the provision of qualitative recreation and amenity open space areas which can be linked to neighbouring developments to create a linked open space network afforded appropriate surveillance and overlooking.

**Policy RLA10:** Development proposals for Harbour Area will be encouraged to support the development of boating and other water based activities in the harbour area and to advance the tourism potential for the area.

# CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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## Chapter 10

### Transportation and Infrastructure

#### 10.1 Vision

*'To promote high quality sustainable development where land uses and transportation modes and methods integrate to ensure an effective and efficient movement system for people, services and goods in Bundoran and its environs and to achieve the best use of existing infrastructure together with prioritisation of key infrastructural projects that will support the framework for development that is set out in this plan and place Bundoran in a good position to respond to its role as a key settlement for urban strengthening along a national transport corridor.'*

#### 10.2 Introduction

This chapter sets out policies in relation to transportation and infrastructural matters in Bundoran. Transport and infrastructure are important quality of life factors. A sustainable, safe and effective transport network together with water and wastewater collection and treatment, solid waste management, power and telecommunications constitute vital elements of this infrastructure.

#### 10.3 Overview

The policies set out in this section will seek to facilitate the further development of transport and infrastructural services in Bundoran. These policies should be read in conjunction with other sections of the plan.

A high quality infrastructure is essential for the sustainable future development of Bundoran and its environs in terms of access to and free-flow of traffic (vehicular, pedestrian, cycle) throughout the settlement for both residents and visitors and attracting inward investment and new developments, and in provision of adequate water supply and wastewater disposal.

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



## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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

The nearest large commercial port is located at Killybegs, some 58km away. Killybegs is a natural deepwater harbour with a minimum of 12 meters of water at all times, a new €50 million pier was completed in 2004. The harbour is home to many of the largest Irish-registered fishing trawlers, but it handles many other types of shipping as well. These include passenger cruise liners and mixed specialist cargoes. Further to this, Killybegs is also emerging as a major hub for the offshore oil and gas industries.

The future development and expansion of Bundoran is dependent on high quality infrastructure and ease of access to ports, labour, major urban settlements and skill markets. It shall be an objective of the plan to support and provide for an improved roads infrastructure within Bundoran and improved connectivity to Sligo Town building on its role as a support settlement to Sligo's Gateway status.

The existing local road network within Bundoran is of varying quality particularly in more peripheral areas. It shall be an objective of the plan to improve the quality of the roads infrastructure and in particular the provision of footpaths and cycle paths to allow for greater movement, flow and linkages within the town and to improve the visual quality of the local environment.

### 10.4 National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 specifically provides investment of €17.6 billion in a Road Sub-Programme which, of particular relevance to this plan, will include (a) improvement of road links between the main National Spatial Strategy Gateways (b) ongoing development of the Atlantic Corridor from Letterkenny through Sligo, Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford (c) continued upgrading of road links to Northern Ireland (d) targeted improvements of a number of key national secondary routes (e) improvement and maintenance of the non-national roads network and (f) investment in strategic non- national roads which will complement the national roads investment.

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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### 10.5 Transportation - Policies

The availability of good transportation is of great importance to all aspects of modern life and has a vital part to play in shaping future development and the environment. The accessibility of homes and jobs, of services and public facilities, and of opportunities for recreation and leisure, are key factors affecting the quality of life of every individual. Close integration of transportation and land use is vital in order to ensure the provision of the most effective links, the minimisation of the demand for travel, and the most efficient use of resources.

Although it is directly responsible for the development of only some transportation modes, the Council will continue to provide those elements of the transportation system which are within its remit and to facilitate the development of those elements provided by others.

The Council is strongly committed to the promotion of sustainable means of travel including public transport, walking and cycling, and the encouragement of modal change from private car use to these means.

In accordance with Policy TC 3 within the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied) there is an objective to support the reintroduction of Rail Infrastructure in the County and with specific regard to the Sligo to Letterkenny (via Bundoran/Ballyshannon) to Derry line. Particular to the Bundoran plan are the requirements to safeguard the intact routes of the old railway network and associated structures within the County in order to facilitate their re-integration into the transport network (or to facilitate their use as cycling or walking routes) in the medium to long term. It is the Council's intention to carry out a preliminary feasibility study into the provision of a commuter rail linking Sligo, Letterkenny and Derry.

#### 10.5.1 Roads and Parking

While the Council is committed to the promotion of sustainable means of travel including public transport, walking and cycling, and the encouragement of modal change from private car use to these means, it is recognised that the roads infrastructure will remain an important component of the national, regional and local transportation network, catering for the movement of buses and goods vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as private cars.

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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Bundoran is situated along the strategic N15 National Primary Route linking Donegal with Leitrim and Sligo. The town has developed in a linear form along a main axis route parallel to the coast and therefore experiences substantial traffic throughout the year. With the town's population swelling to over 15,000 during the peak tourist season, Bundoran's congested streets create problems for the transport network for the town.

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

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OT-01:** To prepare and implement a Traffic Management Plan for Bundoran and its environs which caters for all aspects of traffic and transportation and implement a programme of local measures to improve road safety as resources allow including traffic calming measures and the pedestrianisation of streets as appropriate.
- OT-02:** To implement car-parking standards for new developments to comply with County Development Plan Standards and as set out in Appendix III.
- OT-03:** To introduce pedestrian priority measures along Atlantic Way, Main Street and other locations as appropriate and in conjunction with the introduction of a one-way system within the town centre.
- OT-04:** The implementation of a clear and concise directional road signing system for Bundoran and a review speed limits in the plan area in conjunction with the National Roads Authority and all relevant agencies for safety reasons.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy T1:** Development proposals will be considered against the need to promote road safety as a high priority and implement local measures to improve road safety including traffic calming, signage, signalisation, pedestrianisation, street lighting, coordinate a review of street furniture in conjunction with a scheme of

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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environmental improvements as resources allow and implement a programme of road construction and improvement works closely integrated with existing and planned land uses as resources allow.

- Policy T2:** Development proposals will be considered against the need to balance the requirement for an appropriate level of off-street parking facilities against factors of accessibility to means of transport as alternatives to the private car applying at particular development locations, in the overall interest of sustainable land use practice.
- Policy T3:** Development proposals will be considered against the competing needs of the car user and the visual amenities of the Main Street to promote the control of on-street parking in the interests of the viability, vitality and amenity of town and district centres.
- Policy T4:** Development proposals which develop linkages with other modes of transport will be positively considered in order to facilitate the provision of an integrated transport system.
- Policy T5:** That where new development is proposed that results in a loss of car or cycle parking provision and does not allow for the development of linkages as above (Policy T4) then the minimum standard for the use of the land as set out in Appendix III shall be provided on the site or provided by way of a development levy to compensate for a shortfall.
- Policy T6:** It is the Planning Authority's policy to protect the carrying capacity of the Town Bypass (N15) by restricting new access to same in accordance with the policy provisions contained in Section 2.3.5 of the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied).

### 10.5.2 Public Transport

The promotion of public transport as an alternative to the private car is a major thrust of Government policy as expressed in various policy statements including the National Spatial Strategy and Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland and the Residential Density Guidelines. Continued reliance on the private

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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car to provide for the increasing demands for the movement of people is clearly unsustainable, in terms of efficiency, environmental quality and use of resources. The provision of public transport has the capacity to provide access to work for those who do not have, or wish to have, a private car.

Compact and consolidated development as proposed by this Plan will ensure the opportunity for the integration of land uses and the opportunity to walk to services and employment locations within the town and seeking to reduce the need for the private car. However, it is recognised that not all services will be obtainable within walking distance and to provide for the possibility of attracting public transport in the form of local bus routes it is appropriate to build at residential densities which can sustain such modes of transport (not less than 35 units per hectare) and to obtain a critical mass required to justify public transport.

Public transport within and between Bundoran and other destinations is quite limited, with two daily services between Dublin and Bundoran, three between Sligo and Bundoran and four between Donegal Town and Bundoran. The bus service between Bundoran and Ballyshannon is quite frequent with approximately nine connections daily. There are no longer any rail connections from Bundoran but a bus link to Sligo mainline station exists.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OT-05:** To safeguard the intact routes of the old railway network and associated structures within the County in order to facilitate their re-integration into the transport network (or to facilitate their use as cycling or walking routes) in the medium to long term and/or to facilitate the development of a rail link alongside the outer edge of the N15 Bundoran/Ballyshannon Bypass whereby any such works would not impinge upon the future upgrade of the N15 National Road.
- OT-06:** To require mobility management plans and transport impact assessments for proposed trip intensive developments.
- OT-07:** To ensure as far as is practicable that health, community and educational facilities are easily accessible by alternative means of transport to the private car.

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy T7:** Development proposals will be assessed against the opportunities to enhance the connectivity to alternative modes of transport to the private car and the Council will actively seek to utilise the development contribution scheme to secure contributions from developers towards the upgrading of public transport, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.

**Policy T8:** Development proposals will be considered to ensure that new developments are laid out so as to facilitate the provision of local bus and taxi services.

### 10.5.3 Pedestrian and Cycle Route Network

The Council recognises cycling and walking to be healthy, safe, ecologically sound and socially inclusive forms of movement. The increased provision of cycle lanes and safer facilities for pedestrian is identified as a key action in the Government's sustainability development strategy, 'Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland'. In carrying out all its work, the Council will bear in mind the need to maintain safe convenient and pleasant routes for pedestrians and cyclists in all parts of the town. The Council is conscious that the design and other needs of pedestrians and cyclists are different. In providing for pedestrians, the Council will design for and ensure accessibility for the mobility impaired in keeping with the Barcelona Declaration.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OT-08:** To require planning applications to demonstrate the development proposal's accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists and to require the provision of secure cycle parking facilities convenient to points of pedestrian access at new developments including office blocks, apartment developments, shopping centres, public transport interchanges, community facilities and to promote the provision of such facilities at other appropriate locations.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy T9:** Development proposals which promote walking and cycling by linking into the existing network and

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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facilitating the extension of a network of safe cycle routes and footpaths on new and existing roads and on routes reserved exclusively for pedestrians and cyclists will be favourably considered.

**Policy T10:** Development proposals will be required to facilitate good pedestrian and cycle access facilities through new developments, promote the provision of secure cycle parking facilities, protect existing cycle routes and footpaths from inappropriate development and to prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists in proximity to public transport nodes.

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

The backland pattern of permanent residential development and holiday accommodation in Bundoran has continued to be developed (through the life of the 2004-2010 Development Plan) along its traditional linear structure through the town and beyond the Town Council boundary. While this creates a visual impression of a substantially developed town as viewed along the town's main artery, it has resulted in substantial parcels of more centrally located, zoned backlands remaining undeveloped. These undeveloped backlands, located to the south of the town lie in close proximity to the town centre and local services with a substantial portion falling within the existing wastewater catchment area.

This development plan boundary has been extended to ensure the proper planning and development of the town and its environs. Through the consolidated approach and expansion of the central area advocated through this plan, new development is being channelled towards backland areas located adjacent to the south of the town centre between Station Road and the route of the newly built by-pass. At present, accessibility to this area is constrained and the by-pass, which does not facilitate direct access to this area. There are however, a number of individual opportunities to gain access to this land from the existing and proposed road network. This includes access from Station Road adjacent to the cineplex, Church Road adjacent to the south of the church and the by-pass link that will be provided from Drumacrin Road.

Collectively, these three options provide not only an opportunity to create new access to the zoned backlands but also to enhance

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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

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

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

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

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy T11:** Development will be regulated in the suggested 'phased' manner and within the by-pass in order to consolidate development within the town in a sustainable manner.

**Policy T12:** To safeguard the route for the development of a distributor link road as identified on the Land-use Zoning Map to provide access to new development lands within the by-pass. Proposals that would interfere with or obstruct the detailed route of the distributor road and any associated link roads shall not be permitted.



## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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- Policy T13:** In the absence of a detailed design scheme, the Council shall consider the construction of the roadway by private developers as the land is developed. The roadway shall follow the route of the indicative road as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Map.
- Policy T14:** Applications for development of lands affected by proposed indicative alignments will be required to demonstrate how they facilitate permeability and linkages between neighbouring landholdings. Developments which prejudice such linkages will be necessarily refused as contrary to the proper and orderly planning of the plan area.
- Policy T15:** All new development within the wider area south of the town will be required to provide contributions for the provision of the distributor link, in accordance with the adopted Development Contributions Scheme.
- Policy T16:** All development proposals, which are adjacent to the N15 by-pass route shall include noise and vibration mitigation measures. Said proposals shall be submitted in consultation and to the satisfaction of Donegal County Council National Road Design Office.

### 10.6 Infrastructure – Policies

Infrastructure typically refers to the assets that support an economy, such as roads, water supply, wastewater, stormwater, power supply, flood management, recreational, and other assets. The investment in these assets is made with the intention that dividends will accrue through increased productivity, improved living conditions and greater prosperity. These various elements may collectively be termed civil infrastructure, municipal infrastructure, or simply public works, although they may be developed and operated as private-sector or government enterprises.

#### 10.6.1 Water Supply

The availability of a drinking water supply is essential for public health and the economic growth of the town and its environs. The need to balance the growing demand for water with the needs of the environment and those of existing users is crucial. Population growth, increasing pressures for new development across and

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

---

changing trends in water use are leading to increased demand for water. Thus, the Council must seek to ensure the prudent use of water resources while making adequate provision for future sustainable development.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OI-01:** To promote, through education, the sustainable and prudent use of water in all households and businesses.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy I1:** To continue the development and upgrading of the water supply system to ensure that an adequate supply of drinking water for domestic, commercial, industrial and other uses, is available for the sustainable development of the town and its environs.

**Policy I2:** To continue the upgrading and rehabilitation of water main systems and protect and develop, in a sustainable manner, the existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the town and its environs and to control development in a manner consistent with the proper management of these resources.

### 10.6.2 Surface Water Drainage

Development within Bundoran has also led to an increase in surface water and the need for adequate disposal methods to prevent flooding and contamination of ground water and the beach environment. The issue was highlighted by a recent report undertaken by Kirk McClure Morton, which indicated the problem associated with water quality and sediment transport affecting Bundoran beach from surface water outflow from the Single Street area of the town.

In order to manage the effect of development on the aquatic environment throughout Bundoran but particularly where surface water out-falls affect the beach, the Council will require all proposed developments to demonstrate that the proposed surface water outfall is sufficient to accommodate the proposed development and would not result in adverse effects on the beach or coastal environment. Furthermore, the Council is keen to encourage the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) for appropriate developments for dealing with surface water run off. SUDS are alternative engineered solutions for the drainage and

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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management of surface water run-off returning excessive surface water to the natural water cycle with minimal adverse impact on people and the environment. This is undertaken by management of surface water on-site or as close to source as possible, treating it naturally and slowly releasing good quality surface water to the watercourse or ground water.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OI-02:** To investigate and to address the problems associated with surface water drainage in Bundoran and its environs.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy I3:** Where it is considered that the existing surface water infrastructure may be unable to accommodate the additional discharge generated by the proposed development, the submission of surface water design calculations shall be required to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and suitable outfall.

**Policy I4:** Development proposals to promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) as an alternative to surface water run off from the site to existing drainage systems, water-courses or the coastal environment will be encouraged.

**Policy I5:** To pursue a managed risk approach guided by the precautionary principle. In the context of an application for planning permission on lands which are subject to flooding the Council may request supporting information to substantiate the adequacy of design / mitigation proposals for development at risk, or likely to cause risk elsewhere. Information requested may include:

- An indication of location, route and destination of culverts, channels and storage areas to accommodate surface water discharge.
- Surface water calculations.
- A programme of maintenance for the upkeep of storm water drainage and flood storage areas from the proposed site to the proposed outfall.

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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### 10.6.3 Flooding

The objective of the Council is to prevent development in floodplains which would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding and that the conveyance of rivers to carry floodwaters is not compromised by development. Given the varying predictions about climate changes and rising sea levels due to global warming, this issue must now be given serious consideration and will have implications for ground-water levels and storm drainage requirements for the future.

There are records of flood events in the areas of Finner Road / Single Street and alongside low-lying lands in the vicinity of the bypass. Accordingly it is particularly important to protect these vulnerable areas and their associated catchment areas from development which could potentially increase any flood risk. It is recommended that development proposals within areas identified as 'Liable To Floods', will require the independent 'Flood Risk Assessment'.

This Development Plan incorporates a wider area than previous developments plans for Bundoran. In the interests of proper planning it will be necessary to complete an audit of the plan area's flood risk potential.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OI-09:** To prepare a study of flood plains in the plan area and develop and implement flood attenuation policies where appropriate.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy I11:** To restrict new development that would unacceptably increase the risk of flooding of existing developments and lands and control development in the natural floodplains of all rivers and streams.

**Policy I12:** To prohibit development on or adjacent to floodplains where such development may have a negative impact on flood control, access for channel maintenance or future flood control works or might contribute to environmental degradation were flooding to occur.

**Policy I13:** That developments should only be permitted, provided they incorporate adequate measures to

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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cope with drainage, incorporate safety measures and emergency response facilities. Hard surface areas (car parks etc.) should be constructed in permeable or semi-permeable materials.

**Policy I14:** That development must, so far as is reasonably practicable, incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff, e.g. hard surface areas and investigate rainwater harvesting methods.

This Development Plan incorporates a wider area than previous developments plans for Bundoran. In the interests of proper planning it will be necessary to complete an audit of the plan area's flood risk potential.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OI-03:** To prepare a study of flood plains in the plan area and develop and implement flood attenuation policies where appropriate.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy I6:** To restrict new development that would unacceptably increase the risk of flooding of existing developments and lands and control development in the natural floodplains of all rivers and streams.

**Policy I7:** To prohibit development on or adjacent to floodplains where such development may have a negative impact on flood control, access for channel maintenance or future flood control works or where it might contribute to environmental degradation, were flooding to occur.

**Policy I8:** That developments should only be permitted, provided they incorporate adequate measures to cope with drainage, incorporate safety measures and emergency response facilities. Hard surface areas (car parks etc.) should be constructed in permeable or semi-permeable materials.

**Policy I9:** That development must, so far as is reasonably practicable, incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff, e.g. hard

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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surface areas and investigate rainwater harvesting methods.

### 10.6.4 Surface Water Quality

The Council is responsible for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and groundwater in the plan area.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OI-04:** To establish a working group in association with adjoining local authorities, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources to oversee the preparation of a water quality public education programme.
- OI-05:** To evaluate all watercourses in the plan area for rehabilitation potential, particularly in conjunction with sustainable drainage measures.
- OI-06:** To develop groundwater protection schemes in line with the recommendations contained within the DoEHLG/GSI/EPA publication 'Groundwater Protection Schemes, 1999' or any revised or replacement publication.
- OI-07:** To minimise the impact on ground water of discharges from septic tanks, proprietary effluent treatment systems and percolation areas by ensuring that they are located and constructed in accordance with the recommendations of the Environmental Protection Agency.
- OI-08:** To reduce the number and frequency of overflows from the foul and combined sewer networks.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy I10:** Development proposals will be expected to maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of our waters by preparing and implementing Water Quality Management Plans for protection of ground, surface, coastal and estuarine waters as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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**Policy I11:** To protect, maintain, improve and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses and rivers in the plan area, and promote access, walkways and other recreational uses of their associated public open spaces, subject to a defined strategy of nature conservation and flood protection.

**Policy I12** Development proposals will be expected to establish, where feasible, riparian corridors, free from development, along all significant watercourses in the plan area, restrict where feasible, the use of culverts on watercourses in the plan area and to seek the continued improvement of water quality, bathing facilities and other recreational opportunities in the coastal, estuarine and surface waters in the plan area.

### 10.6.5 Waste Water Treatment

Development over the last decade in Bundoran has placed a strain on the existing wastewater infrastructure. The proposed new wastewater treatment works at Magheracar incorporating primary, secondary and tertiary treatment of sewage will cater for a future design population equivalent of 15,000. This should effectively prevent the discharge of wastewater to the sea and further enhance the quality of the coastal environment.

Until such time as the waste water treatment facility is operational, there will be a need to adopt a precautionary approach to potential ground water pollution and contamination of local river systems and the coastal environment in accordance with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) regulations.

The following Objective has been identified by the Council:

**OI-09:** To secure the provision of new wastewater treatment works at Magheracar incorporating the primary, secondary and tertiary treatment of sewage.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

**Policy I13:** Development proposals will be expected to link to the existing waste water network and on-site treatment of wastewater shall only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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the development would not result in adverse impacts on ground water sources, local river systems or the coastal environment.

**Policy I14:** Development proposals will be expected to necessarily contribute to the upgrading or provision of sewerage facilities where such services have facilitated or will facilitate development.

### 10.6.6 Waste Management and Disposal

The Waste Management Act 1996 and Waste Management (Planning) Regulations 1997 require local authorities to prepare detailed plans on the management of waste. It shall be the objective of the Council to prepare such a plan.

The primary objective of this plan will be to radically alter the approach to waste and level of waste produced. In line with both European and National legislative guidelines, it is based on the priority of prevention and minimisation of waste, maximising recycling and minimising landfill bulk through thermal treatment. In addition to this, the overriding principles of the Plan will be those of polluter pays, proximity principle, the precautionary principle and the principle of shared responsibility.

In line with the principles of sustainable development, it is the intention of the Council to continue to promote a waste prevention and minimisation programme to target all aspects of waste in the plan area, focusing on both commercial and domestic waste producers. It is considered that raising the awareness of citizens and businesses with regard to their responsibility as generators is essential.

The Council will promote an increase in the amount of waste reused and recycled. However, it is accepted that in the short term, disposal of waste to landfill will remain as the primary method of disposal.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

**OI-10:** To identify suitable sites for additional Civic Amenity Sites and neighbourhood recycling facilities to cater for the projected increase in waste for recycling over the timescale of this development plan, extend the household collection of recyclable materials and promote home composting.



## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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- OI-11:** To require that planning applications for development be accompanied by a Waste Management Plan. The Plan, as a minimum, shall include a provision for the management of all construction and demolition waste arising on site, shall make provision for the recovery or disposal of this waste to authorised facilities by authorised collectors. Where appropriate, the use of excavated material from development sites is to be re-used on the proposal, for landscaping, land restoration or for preparation for development.

### 10.6.7 Telecommunications

Modern Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), including the provision of broadband telecommunication infrastructure, are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and the national economy. They contribute to quality of life in two ways. Firstly, access to fast, reliable and cost effective communications counteracts the effects of geographic remoteness and can increase social inclusion, economic competitiveness and employment opportunities. Secondly, modern telecommunications can also contribute to sustainable goals by reducing the need to travel, for example by home-working, tele-conferencing, distance learning and e-commerce. The technology therefore, has the capability to change traditional land-use patterns and urban - rural relationships.

The advantages of a high quality ICT infrastructure must however be balanced against the need to safeguard the rural and urban environment, particularly in sensitive areas. Visual impact must therefore be kept to a minimum with detailed consideration given to the siting and external appearance of the apparatus and to the scope for utilising landscaping measures effectively.

The following Objectives have been identified by the Council:

- OI-12:** To encourage coverage and capacity of broadband services, cable and mobile phone network infrastructure, while striving to reduce the number of telecommunications structures, by ensuring that ComReg's Code of Practice on Site Sharing is implemented and reciprocal national roaming is entered into.

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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- OI-13:** To encourage wider access to the information and communication technology (ICT) hardware linked to the Internet.
- (a) To actively promote e-inclusion in Bundoran and its environs through the planning process and by supporting strategies to encourage and enable lower income households to avail of modern broadband infrastructure.
  - (b) To seek to have appropriate modern information technology incorporated into the overall design and layout of all new developments, where feasible.

The following Policies have been identified by the Council:

- Policy I15:** When considering planning applications for telecommunications antennae and support structures the Council will have due consideration to published Government Guidelines on Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures 1996.

The Council may attach conditions to the grant of planning permission for telecommunications antennae and support structures regarding the satisfactory restoration of the site upon decommissioning.

The Council will favourably consider applications, which will facilitate the development of the North West Broadband Arc Project or similar projects.

Each application relating to telecommunication antennae and support structures shall be assessed with respect to:

- Siting and Design
- Public Health and Safety
- Visual Amenity (including measures which provide for the screening of proposed structure)
- Residential Amenity
- Compliance with relevant legislation
- Proximity of structure to residential areas, schools, hospitals or nearby settlements
- Potential for co-location of antennae or clustering of structures

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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- Potential adverse impacts on archaeological sites, geological sites, protected structures and monuments

**Policy I16:** Proposals to promote and facilitate the continuous development of a high quality ICT infrastructure network will be positively encouraged (for example broadband ICT) whilst taking account of the need to protect the countryside and urban environment and as such proposals for the erection of new telecommunication facilities masts, antennae or ancillary equipment for telecommunication purposes shall consider clustering and co-location of masts, antennae or ancillary equipment, except within a residential area.

### 10.6.8 Energy Supply and Energy Efficiency

The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is recognised as a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment to the area. It is the policy of the Planning Authority to support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks in the region. Modern societies consume huge amounts of energy - to heat homes and offices, fuel transport systems, power industry and generate electricity. Ireland is no exception; and as our economy grows, so does our demand for energy. Ireland has experienced remarkable levels of growth in energy consumption in the last 20 years. Significant growth is anticipated into the future therefore those involved in the energy industry face the major task of increasing generation resources in line with energy demand.

Renewable sources of energy offer sustainable alternatives to our dependency on fossil fuels, a means of reducing harmful greenhouse emissions and opportunities to reduce our reliance on imported fuels. Renewable energy will play an increasingly prominent role in the energy sector in the future. Ireland is richly endowed with renewable energy resources. They offer a real alternative for our energy needs. Several renewable energy technologies are now commercially viable and capable of supplying clean, economical heat and power. However, it may also have adverse social and environmental impacts that will require to be taken into account.

All new development will be required to have regard to energy efficiency, materials recovery and environmentally responsible

## CHAPTER 10 – TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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design. The demand for and environmental cost of energy is high, and one of the aims of this Plan is to encourage both the conservation and the efficient use of energy. At the strategic level, the settlement policies of this Plan locate new development within or adjacent to existing settlements, minimising the distance between homes, jobs and local services, and thus reducing the need to travel and associated energy consumption. At the local level, the design and layout of new developments can have an important effect on energy consumption and developers will be encouraged to maximise energy efficiency by design.

The following Policy has been identified by the Council:

**Policy I17:** To support the maintenance and upgrade of the electricity network in order that a qualitative and constant power supply is available for homes and in particular the under grounding of all power lines within the plan area.

## Chapter 11

### Opportunity Sites and Implementation of Plan

#### 11.1 Vision

*'To provide a Development Framework, the aim of which is to provide a clear and coherent vision to guide the future development of Bundoran and its Environs where currently significant areas of urban land are under-utilised and underdeveloped.'*

#### 11.2 Introduction

The Bundoran and Environs Plan 2009-2015 identifies a number of Opportunity Sites as indicated on the Objectives Map and as detailed here.

The principal significant sites which afford the status Opportunity Sites, as listed below, represent strategic development opportunities to advance the development potential of Bundoran under the key underlying theme of a sequential and phased approach as advised in the Development Strategy in Chapter 1.

- ❖ East Gateway Opportunity Site
- ❖ West Gateway Opportunity Site
- ❖ Harbour/Bundoran Pier
- ❖ Town Centre/Main Street Environmental Improvements
- ❖ Civic Square/Market Place Area
- ❖ Finner Camp Opportunity Site
- ❖ NeighbourWood Schemes/Community Woodlands
- ❖ Tullaghan and Rock Ross Unserviced Settlement Limits

#### 11.3 Opportunity Sites

The Opportunity Sites identified on the Land Use Zoning Map and within this Chapter offer unique development opportunities by

reason of their strategic location, scale and nature. They provide an opportunity to promote the sustainable redevelopment of these undeveloped, vacant and serviced sites, for a variety of compatible mixed-use redevelopment proposals, e.g. enterprise and employment, office, community, residential, cultural, and compatible retail uses. In all cases, the development proposal shall make a positive contribution to the space, having regard to the quality and character of the predominant streetscape and locality.

The planning frameworks set out for each 'Opportunity Site' on the following pages shall form a guide to the type of development that may be appropriate at each location. Proposed uses that are appropriate in terms of mix of use and compatible with the wider area whilst recognising features of importance that are specific to the site will be favourably considered. It is the policy of the Council to promote/facilitate development on such lands to maximise their dominant strategic Gateway locations/entrance to the town. Developments should actively address road frontages and the entrance to the town and should demark these significant locations by appropriately scaled and designed developments which make a significant and positive contribution to the town. No direct access from opportunity sites onto the bypass will be permitted. Any specific proposal that is not referred to in the planning frameworks shall be considered on their own merits subject to the constraints identified in the planning frameworks and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### **11.3.1 East Gateway Opportunity Site**

The 'East Gateway Opportunity Site' will facilitate mixed use employment and enterprise type development. Such development will be architecturally designed to increase the visual amenity of this prime site which heralds the entrance to the town from the remainder of the county.

### **11.3.2 West Gateway Opportunity Site**

The 'West Gateway Opportunity Site' will also facilitate mixed use employment and enterprise type development. Again, such development will be architecturally designed to increase the visual amenity of this prime site which heralds the entrance to the town from the Leitrim/Sligo area.

### 11.3.3 Town Centre/Main Street Environmental Improvements

Environmental Improvement works on the Town Centre and Main Street will be carried out to enhance the town's attractiveness as a holiday/ shopping destination. Such works will be carried out via the necessary upgrading of the public highway (roads and footpaths) and the delivery of complementary street furniture to a standard which will ensure they are not a public safety issue and to make the town fully accessible for the disabled.

### 11.3.4 Harbour/Bundoran Pier

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

### 11.3.5 Civic Square/Market Place Area

This area is considered as providing a significant opportunity for the provision of a Civic Square or Market Place in conjunction with the development of a building of community, civic or commercial function.

### 11.3.6 Finner Camp Opportunity Site

This inclusion of this Special Objective will ensure that should the *Department of Defence* relinquish their ownership of this site in the future, the Council will have the authority to ensure that it is appropriately developed in accordance with the proper and sustainable planning and development of the surrounding area.

### 11.3.7 NeighbourWood Schemes/Community Woodlands

Such schemes represent an excellent opportunity for the local authority to contribute greatly to the development of sustainable, liveable and enjoyable environments for the local community.

### 11.3.8 Tullaghan and Rock Ross Unserviced Settlement Limits

Providing 'Settlement Limits' to Tullaghan and Rock Ross will enable the local authority to manage the future development of these areas in accordance with capacity of local infrastructure.

## 11.4 Implementation and Finance

### 11.4.1 Introduction

The responsibility for the implementation of policies and objectives contained within this development plan will be dependent on a number of possible sources, including EU programmes and grants, the National Government, the Local Authority and the Private Sector. The local authorities will require developers to incorporate the objectives of this plan into their development proposals. Other objectives, particularly key infrastructural elements will require government funding and support. Where appropriate, the local authority will seek financing from specified sources, both the public and private sector, as well as from EU programmes and grants.

The implementation of a plan may be constrained by a number of elements, namely, the economic climate, political support, allocated local authority funding, and the availability of funding from other sources. Therefore, no funding of projects is guaranteed in advance nor is the implementation of all objectives contained within the plan. However, the local authority intends to exercise all their legal powers to ensure that objectives are implemented. This includes using compulsory acquisition powers where necessary.

### 11.4.2 Phasing

It is an objective of the planning authority to promote the implementation of the plan in a rational and sequential approach that is in keeping with the proposed development strategy (i.e. Phases 1 and 2) and to ensure that essential facilities (such as road infrastructure, water, sewerage etc.) are secured and in place concurrent with proposed development projects. All zoned areas are intended to be serviced and linked to the mains network for waste water drainage schemes. The sequence with which development is intended is on a logical and sequential basis and should be concurrent with the installation of the new Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). In general, the progress of the WWTP will assist the sequence of development and ensure there are no conditions where development will be deemed premature until the treatment plant is completed and operational. The local authority reserves the right to refuse development on the grounds of incomplete infrastructure provision or where it is contrary to the proposed order of phasing.



### 11.4.3 Development Contributions Scheme

Under the Development Contribution Scheme, specific objectives will be implemented, where appropriate, via conditions and appropriate levies placed on development proposals. The commitment of development levies can apply to the provision of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority, which may be provided, or are intended to be provided, by or on behalf of a local authority (Part 3, Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000). Levies for public infrastructure and facilities can relate to:

- The acquisition of land.
- The provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities and amenities and landscaping works.
- The provision of roads, car parks, car parking places, sewers, waste water and water treatment facilities, drains and watermains.
- The provision of bus corridors and lanes, bus interchange facilities (including car parks for those facilities), infrastructure to facilitate public transport, cycle and pedestrian facilities, and traffic calming measures.
- The refurbishment, upgrading, enlargement or replacement of roads, car parks, car parking places, sewers, waste water and water treatment facilities, drains or watermains.
- Any matters ancillary to the above.

Particular developments may be exempt from contributions. These may include community, sporting and social facilities (including churches, schools and community halls), as well as extensions to buildings and renovation works to buildings or structures identified on the Record of Protected Structures. Exemptions may also be granted for refurbishment works associated with 'living over the shop/business' schemes.

It remains within the power of the local authority to initiate where appropriate any 'special' or 'supplementary contribution schemes' where it is considered appropriate to achieve in the instance of special contributions, where specific exceptional costs not covered by the scheme are incurred by the local authority but specifically necessary to facilitate a development. The Council has the power under Section 49 of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) to make a supplementary development contribution scheme to deliver specific public infrastructure in addition to the general scheme but where it should not duplicate the general scheme.

### 11.4.4 Bonds

To ensure that development undertaken by private developers is satisfactorily completed the local authorities may impose, as a condition, of the planning permission, that a security bond or other acceptable security be lodged with them. This bond is to ensure that all roads, footpaths, open spaces, lighting and other services within a development be completed to an acceptable standard. The amount of the security bond will be based upon the estimated cost of the development works and this bond shall remain in place until all prescribed works are satisfactorily completed or until the development is taken in charge by the local authority. If it is proposed to have the estate or development taken in charge by the local authority, it shall be necessary to have the ownership of all areas of public open space, roadways, and services within the development legally transferred and registered to the relevant local authority.

### 11.4.5 Additional Funding Sources

Additional funding sources and mechanisms are available from the various government departments and other sources and are changeable and require investigation during the plan period. Such bodies have varying criteria regarding the type of developments they fund and may be useful to consider in the achievement of development objectives. Examples of some of the current available funding programmes are as follows, (this list is not exhaustive);

#### **ACCESS II – Dept. of Arts, Sport and Tourism**

The current scheme called ACCESS II (Arts and Culture Capital Enhancement Support Scheme II) administered by the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism runs from 2007 to 2009. ACCESS II is designed to assist the provision of high standard arts and culture infrastructure, thereby enhancing access to the arts throughout the country and is intended to provide a further impetus to the development of arts and culture facilities, thereby enhancing the quality of life for our citizens.

#### **Social and Community Facilities Capital Scheme – Social Cohesion**

A new Social and Community Facilities Capital Scheme was established and rolled out in 2006 to fund targeted capital developments, carried out through local authorities, which are

designed to enhance communities, address disadvantage and improve social cohesion at a local level.

### **Business Improvement Districts Schemes**

The Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act 2006, enacted on the 24 December 2006, provides the legal framework for the operation of Business Improvement District Schemes (BIDS) in Ireland. The Business Improvement Districts provisions of the Act came into force on the 24 April 2007. S.I. No. 165 Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act 2006 (Commencement) Order 2007 commenced these provisions.

A Business Improvement District Scheme (BIDS) is an organisational and financing mechanism, with a legal basis, through which businesses can, on a self-help basis, develop and implement initiatives, in defined areas, to improve those areas for the betterment of the trading environment in which they operate.

Essentially, in a BID scheme, a group of businesses come together and decide firstly that they want enhanced services or a wider range of services, or new facilities or activities in an area. Secondly, these businesses decide that they are willing to pay for such services, facilities or activities. A specially established BID company is charged with responsibility for implementing the provisions of the BID scheme. The local authority plays a key role in any such company. In addition, the local authority collects the annual BID contributions that fund the scheme.

### **Community Fund/Community Initiative Scheme**

An elected council may, by resolution, establish a separate 'community fund' to support specific community initiatives such as amenity, recreational, environmental or community development projects of benefit to the area concerned. Contributions to the community fund may be made by local voluntary, business or community groups, and may be raised by the local authority by way of a community initiative scheme. It is a matter for the elected members to decide whether to adopt a community initiative scheme, following a process of local consultation. Such a scheme is based on the payment of an annual contribution by each household for a specified number of years towards a particular community initiative of benefit to the local community. Details of the project, the amount of the annual contribution, waiver

arrangements, the period for which it is operable and the area to which it applies must be set out in the scheme (sections 109–110 of the Local Government Act 2001 refer).

Other funding organisations to be investigated include the Government Departments and associated Agencies of Education and Science, Health & Children, Agriculture & Marine, Environment Heritage & Local Government, Public Transport and Arts, Sport & Tourism as well as European Funding Agencies.

### 11.5 Planning Process

It is a policy of the Council to:

- Encourage meaningful participation and community involvement in the implementation of policies and objectives.
- Engage with government departments, state and semi-state companies, the County Development Board, private developers (through development control and public-private partnerships), and community and voluntary groups so as to explore opportunities for the plan's implementation.
- Pursue funding from all available sources and implement a comprehensive Development Contribution Scheme

#### 11.5.1 Introduction

Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council are required to control development by ensuring that permissions granted under the Planning Acts are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Development Plan. Appendix A of the County Development Plan is concerned with the standards which will be applied to development proposals. It takes account of the policy statement and new circumstances relating to control of use and the protection and improvement of the environment generally. Provision is made for a flexible application of prescribed standards, in particular circumstances, where proposed development is otherwise consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of an area. The *Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2007*, require that the Planning Authority, in considering applications for permission to carry out development, shall be restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area including the preservation and improvement of the amenities thereof, regard being had to the provisions of the Development Plan and the provisions of any special amenity area order or any European site or other area so

prescribed. There is also provision for the imposition of conditions on permissions granted.

The granting of planning permission does not in itself enable development to commence. There are other legal and procedural requirements which may have to be complied with. In this context, attention is drawn, in particular, to the need to comply with the Building Control Act, Public Health Acts, Fire Regulations and Air and Water Pollution legislation.

### **11.5.2 Compliance with Permissions Granted and Enforcement**

Development must be carried out and completed in accordance with the planning permissions granted. In cases where development, including a material change of use, has commenced or is being carried out without planning permission or in breach of a permission, enforcement proceedings will be taken. The Planning Authority may require removal, modification or completion of the development or termination of the use, as necessary, to conform with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

It will continue to be the policy of the Council to use all powers at its disposal to ensure that development only takes place with the benefit of valid planning permissions and that all conditions attached to permissions are complied with in the developments. The Council will seek to encourage developers to meet with residents' groups in the areas affected by development.

## APPENDIX I – LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES

### Appendix I

#### Land Use Zoning Objectives

ZONE	EXPLANATION
<b>Open Space/ Amenity</b>	To conserve and protect the identified lands from any new development, save for the development of amenity walkways and recreational developments.
<b>Caravan Park</b>	To allow for development, enhancement and retention of existing caravan park and associated tourist facilities.
<b>Coastal Conservation Zone</b>	To restrict development of this area to ensure the adequate protection of these coastal lands.
<b>Coastal Management Zone</b>	To ensure that this area remains free from development but facilitates access as an important local amenity.
<b>Community Facilities</b>	To reserve land for community, civic, educational, institutional, cultural, recreational and amenity purposes.
<b>East &amp; West Gateway Opportunity Sites</b>	<p>The 'East Gateway Opportunity Site' will facilitate mixed use employment and enterprise type development. Such development will be architecturally designed to increase the visual amenity of this prime site which heralds the entrance to the town from the remainder of the county.</p> <p>The 'West Gateway Opportunity Site' will also facilitate mixed use employment and enterprise type development. Again, such development will be architecturally designed to increase the visual amenity of this prime site which heralds the entrance to the town from the Leitrim/Sligo area.</p> <p>It is the policy of the Council to promote/facilitate development on such lands to maximise their dominant strategic gateway locations/entrance to the town. Developments should actively address road frontages and the entrance to the town and should demark these significant locations by appropriately scaled and designed developments</p>

## APPENDIX I – LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES

	which make a significant and positive contribution to the town. No direct access onto the bypass will be permitted from these sites.
<b>Enterprise / Employment</b>	To reserve land for mixed-use, commercial, industrial and employment related uses.
<b>Established Development</b>	These comprise areas of the town where a principal use has been established. In most cases, the building line and road frontage associated with these areas are satisfactory and shall be maintained. Where vacant plots and under-utilised lands exist in these areas, localised infill development that is compatible with adjacent uses shall be encouraged.
<b>Established Rural Development</b>	To limit development on these lands to persons who comply who have a bona fide 'need' for housing in this area and comply with the <i>County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)</i> Rural Housing Policy (Policy RH2)
<b>Finner Camp Opportunity Site</b>	To provide, should the <i>Department of Defence</i> relinquish their ownership of this site in the future, the Council will have the authority to ensure that it is appropriately developed in accordance with the proper and sustainable planning and development of the lands in particular for tourist related development opportunities.
<b>Liable to Flood</b>	To preserve and remain free of development lands which are liable to flood to protect the flood plain and avoid exacerbation of flood risk.
<b>Opportunity Sites</b>	To identify lands with specific development opportunities, including employment and/or retail uses that are appropriate in terms of mix of use and compatibility with the wider area whilst recognising features of importance that are specific to the site. These areas provide and require opportunities for high architectural quality and signature building design.
<b>Proposed Natural Heritage Area</b>	To ensure the protection of the Finner Dunes, proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).
<b>Proposed Road Alignments</b>	To ensure that development proposals provide for connectivity between development lands and

## APPENDIX I – LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES

<b>(Indicative)</b>	maximise the development opportunities identified through the new developer led road linkages.
<b>Protected Structures &amp; National Monuments</b>	To protect those Protected Structures, National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, National Monuments and Architectural Conservation Areas.
<b>Provision of Walk/Cycleways</b>	To protect those identified amenity corridors to enable the continued and future development of public amenity walkways/cycleways and to provide connectivity between development lands.
<b>Recreational/Leisure</b>	To make provision for new and maintain existing recreation facilities.
<b>Residential</b>	To reserve land primarily for residential development and other compatible uses and services incidental to residential development.
<b>Residential Phase 1</b>	To develop these lands for residential purposes prior to the release of phase 2 lands.
<b>Residential Phase 2</b>	To make provision for the long term reservation of land for residential development that will occur beyond the life of the plan.
<b>Special Protection Area</b>	To ensure the protection of Donegal Bay, Special Protection Area.
<b>Tourist Facilities</b>	To allow for development, enhancement and retention of existing tourist facilities.
<b>Town Centre</b>	To protect and enhance the vitality, viability and character of the Town Centre by providing for and improving retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a developing town.



## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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### Appendix II

#### Housing Strategy

##### 1.1 Introduction

This *Housing Strategy* shall be implemented within the area of the plan described as the area of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*. Therefore this Strategy shall supersede the implementation of the *Housing Strategy* contained in the *Bundoran Development Plan 2004-2010* for the administrative area of Bundoran Town Council and also shall supersede the implementation of the *Housing Strategy 2006-2012* as contained in the *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)* for the administrative area of Donegal County Council that is contained within the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*.

##### 1.1.1 Legislative Background

The preparation of a *Housing Strategy* is a requirement under the *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007* in particular *Part C and Part II of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2002*.

The Act specifies that the *Housing Strategy* will:

- Estimate the existing and likely future need for housing in the area, and ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is made available to meet such needs;
- Provide that as a general policy a specific percentage (not exceeding 20%) of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for those in need of social and affordable housing in the area;
- Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes are provided to meet the needs of different categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities;
- Counteract undue segregation between persons of different social backgrounds.

##### 1.2 Policy Context

The *Housing Strategy*, as part of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*, is prepared within the context of the following policy frameworks set out at a national and regional level:

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Area (2005);
- Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoELG, 1999);
- Planning Guidelines on Childcare Facilities (DoELG, 2001);
- Guidelines on the Implementation of Part V (2004);
- The Rental Accommodation Scheme (DoELG, 2004);
- The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2004-2008;
- Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (DoELG, 1997);
- The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (November 2002);
- County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied);
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, - A Guide for Planning Authorities December 2008; and
- Urban Design Manual Parts 1 and 2, DoEHLG, December 2008

### 1.3 How to use this Housing Strategy

This document consists of a summary of statistical analysis of future population trends, housing supply and demand. The strategy subsequently sets out a series of policy objectives arising from key statistics that will be implemented during the life of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*.

### 1.4 Executive Summary

This *Housing Strategy* provides a comprehensive review of statistics in relation to demographics, demand for social and affordable housing and planning provision. This statistical analysis is comparative with that set out in the previous *Housing Strategy 2004-2010*. This assessment identifies a significant shortfall in the background data available for the plan area particular in view of the fact that this plan area includes statistics from both Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council. For the purposes of preparing this strategy we have been forced to identify trends in housing and population at a national level and assume that similar trends apply to the Development Plan boundary. As such there is a need for caution in the use of this data and its application. However, with this in mind, it is our conclusion that Bundoran Town and Environs is experiencing a significant slowdown in residential development in line with county and national wide trends. This is in response to a significant decrease in the demand for new housing. Demand for residential development has been driven over the last decade by increasing population figures and reducing average household size which triggered an unprecedented boom in housing construction. However this construction has now peaked and it would appear that there is a significant surplus in demand for housing within Bundoran Town and Environs. In fact figures would

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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suggest that even with the current housing stock, there will be a projected housing surplus of in excess of 40% by 2016. While many of these will be used as holiday homes it is likely that many will remain surplus to requirements.

In terms of the Council's social objectives, this *Housing Strategy* continues to reserve 15% of land zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses for the provision of social and affordable housing in line with the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied). Allocation of percentages in terms of social and affordable will be on the basis of 5% social and 10% affordable, although some flexibility in these percentages may be considered based on appropriate local need assessments. The Councils will jointly identify social and affordable housing needs that are best facilitated by accommodation within town centres in lieu of greenfield sites. A strong emphasis will be placed on appropriate house type mixes within developments that respond to the changing demographics of persons on the housing list.

This current Housing Strategy subsequently builds on the foundations of the objectives of the previous *Housing Strategy 2004-2010* to address issues of social segregation, poor dissemination of information on entitlements and associated issues related to poverty and poor standards of living.

### 2.0 Statistical Analysis

A statistical analysis is carried out in this section in respect of the factors that will have implications for the policies contained in this *Housing Strategy*. In doing so, the comprehensiveness of the statistical analysis is restricted by the extent of the area to which statistics relate i.e. statistics are available at (a) Bundoran Town Council administrative area level or (b) at county level, but are not specifically available at a plan area level.

### 2.1 Analysis of Housing Construction in County Donegal<sup>5</sup>

During the four year period 2004-2007 there were approximately 15,030 houses completed in County Donegal compared to 11,152 completed houses during the period 2000-2003 and 7,331 in the period 1996 to 1999. Updated figures show that the number of houses completed in County Donegal in 2007 were 4,164, houses compared to 4,387 in 2006, representing a reduction of 5% on the total constructed in 2006. It is expected that when final figures are calculated for 2008 that this will have declined considerably further

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<sup>5</sup> Figures based on data obtained from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's *Housing Statistics* last updated on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2008.

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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from this level with the first 11 months of 2008 totalling 2,374 dwellings completed representing an expected decrease in excess of 40% on the 2006 figure. 2006 would appear to represent a peak in the level of house completions in the county with a sharp decrease in 2008 expected from this level reflecting the end of the building boom nationally.

**Table 1: No. of Houses Completed in County Donegal over four year Intervals**

Year	No. of Units
2004-2007	15,030
2000-2003	11,152
1996-1999	7,331

**Source:** Tom Phillips + Associates using data obtained from Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's *Housing Statistics* (January 2009)

An examination of the number of commencement notices registered within the plan area shows that commencement notices do not represent a reliable source of information with respect to housing construction and has therefore not been quoted in this *Housing Strategy*.

During both the 1996-1999 period and 2000-2003 period, 90.5% and 88.0% respectively of all houses constructed in County Donegal were completed by the private sector and 9.5% and 12% respectively by the public sector. Figures for the first half of 2008 indicate that for this period, private house completions represent 94.2% of the total number of completions and public house completions make up 5.8% of total house completions. Of the 2,374 dwellings completed in the first 11 months of 2008, 1,275 of these comprised individual houses, 921 scheme houses and 178 apartments. The 921 scheme houses represents a significant reduction from the peak in scheme houses in 2007 of 2,243 and is a further indicator of the reduction in housing construction in 2008 in Donegal County and in particular multiple unit residential developments.

**Table 2: Houses Built by Sector**

Year	% Completed by Private Sector	% Completed by Public Sector
2004-2008	91.1	8.9
2000-2004	88.0	12.0
1996-1999	90.5	9.5

**Source:** Tom Phillips + Associates using data obtained from Bundoran Town Council (July 2008)

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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Also of significance, is the fact that average household size has decreased in the County over the period 1961-2000 from 4.03 to 3.02. The 2006 census indicated a further significant decline to just 2.86 persons per household at the county level and 2.69 persons per household in urban areas. This declining average household size can be considered a significant driver in the increase in demand for housing in the County in recent years.

### 2.2 Housing Units Granted Permission in Bundoran Town Council Area

There are no statistics available for houses constructed in the Bundoran Town Council area and as such we have analysed the planning applications for residential units which have been granted as an indicator of the level of development within the Town Council boundary. During the period 1996-1999 the combined total number of residential units granted planning permission within the Bundoran Town Council area was 373 units compared to only 256 units granted planning permission during the period 2000-2003. From 2004-2007, the total number of residential units granted full planning permission within the Bundoran Town Council area was 299 (see Table 3 below). Comprehensive information at a plan area level in relation to the total number of houses constructed is not available as previously indicated.

By applying a rate a 36% of all units granted are not yet constructed, in line with the methodology used in the *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)*, it is estimated that there could be approximately 108 no. residential units that have been granted planning permission within the plan area during the period 2004-2008 but have not yet been constructed indicating an estimate of the surplus of planning permission for residential units that have not yet been implemented. These figures are presented as crude figures that provide a picture only of the level of supply within the plan area and are not presented as comprehensive and fully accurate statistics.

One explanation for the drop in the total number of units permitted in the Town Council area during 2000-2004 is the cessation of the 'pilot tax incentive scheme.' A further explanation for the drop in figures, between 2004 and 2007 is the economic downturn and this would follow similar trends as indicated by the reduction in the number of housing completions at the County level indicated in Section 2.1 above.

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

**Table 3: Housing Units Granted Planning Permission**

Year	No. of Units
2004-2007	299
2000-2003	256
1996-1999	373

Source: Tom Phillips + Associates using data obtained from Bundoran Town Council (January 2009)

### 2.3 Holiday Homes

The *County Donegal Housing Strategy 2006-2012* found that during the period 2000-2004, 17.7% of the total number of units granted planning permission in the County were holiday homes. This was a fall in number from the period 1996-2000, when it was estimated that 23% of all houses granted planning permission were holiday homes. In terms of completions however, the analysis indicates that more holiday homes were constructed in the 2000-2004 period compared to 1996-2000.

There is no current data available with respect to the number of holiday homes within the jurisdiction of this plan but it may be expected that the proportion of holiday homes granted in Bundoran as a tourist resort would be greater than that granted in the County, as a whole. As such we are applying a greater percentage to the houses granted permission to get an approximate number of holiday homes within the town as detailed in Table 4. It may be appropriate during the plan period to undertake a detailed analysis of holiday homes, details of which can be incorporated into the next housing strategy.

**Table 4: Holiday Home Construction**

Year	% of Houses Which are Holiday Homes in Co. Donegal	Estimated % of Houses Which Are Holiday Homes in Bundoran	Estimated no. of dwellings which are Holiday Homes granted permission in BTC Area
2000-2003	17.7%	30%	77 Dwellings
1996-1999	23%	30%	112 Dwellings

Source: Tom Phillips + Associates, January 2009

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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### 2.4 Projected Housing Demand Over the Period 2009-2015

Population projections predict that the population of the plan area could reach 2,160 by 2016 i.e. by the end of the plan period. Based on an average household size of 2.69 persons per household<sup>6</sup>, this could give rise to a total housing need of 803 units within the plan area over the period of the plan. A survey of Bundoran Town and Environs indicated that there are in excess of 1,400 residential units within the Plan Boundary indicating a high degree of vacancy of units. This approximate calculation would suggest that there may be up to 600 residential units in excess of requirements to provide for the 2016 population projections suggesting a vacancy in excess of 40%. It is considered that many of these vacant units are provided as holiday accommodation although some are likely to be built units which have been constructed but not yet sold. However there are no available datasets detailing this information. For the purposes of this housing strategy, and given Bundoran's image as a holiday resort town we consider that the holiday accommodation could account for 30% of all units, significantly higher the percentage at county level.

It is considered that given the lack of information available with respect to the numbers of holiday homes in the town a comprehensive survey of all residential units should be carried out during this Development Plan period.

### 3.0 Social and Affordable<sup>7</sup> Housing

Part V of the *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007* requires that the *Housing Strategy* must make provision for both social and affordable housing. In this regard, this strategy defines social housing as rented housing provided either by the Local Authority, or by Voluntary or Co-operative Housing Body.

#### 3.1 Existing Demand for Social and Affordable Housing within the Plan Area

Traditionally, the Local Authority focused on meeting such housing need through the limited direct provision approach. At present, the Local Authority plays an important role in meeting the needs of affordable accommodation through:-

- Shared ownership arrangements;
- Affordable housing initiatives;
- Support for voluntary co-operative housing schemes;

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<sup>6</sup> This figure represents current trends as laid down in the County Housing Strategy.

<sup>7</sup> Affordable Housing is defined as owner-occupier, or shared ownership, provided at a price below market value.

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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- The provision of private housing sites;
- Loans and grants to purchase/improve dwellings;
- Land acquisition programmes for public/private housing;
- Opening of zoned land – ‘serviced land’ initiative;
- Zoning additional housing land; and
- The application of increased residential densities where applicable.

In the context of housing provision, it is extremely important to integrate the above initiatives and to work where possible in co-operation with the private sector to increase housing supply.

### 3.2 Social Housing Need

The information below outlines the facts and figures that are available in relation to social housing need:

- Social housing need in Bundoran Town Council in 2008 was 142 (NB – this excludes the environs area of the plan);
- For the Donegal Electoral Area and excluding Bundoran Town Council, social housing is provided on the basis of the allocations of DoEHLG.

### 3.3 Affordable Housing Need

Applications for affordable housing will be considered in accordance with the are generally not received until such time as affordable houses are constructed. Despite this, it is our understanding that there are currently no applications resting with Bundoran Town Council for affordable housing in the plan area.

### 3.4 Delivery of Housing Under Part V

Within the Donegal Electoral Area, excluding Bundoran Town Council, 41 no. social housing units have been delivered under Part V and 28 no. affordable housing units have been delivered under Part V. To date, no Part V units have been delivered within the Bundoran Town Council area.

Within the environs area of the plan, the absence of zoned lands to date has created a void in terms of delivery of social and affordable housing under Part V i.e. within the environs of Bundoran, there has been no policy framework to provide social and affordable housing through the mechanism of Part V. On this basis the level of planned future provision of social and affordable housing through Part V will be guided by the policy and zoned framework that is adopted within this plan.



### 3.5 House Types

The breakdown of house types to be provided for social and affordable housing responds to changes in demographics in the town, in terms of those who are in need of social and affordable housing. In this regard, in the Bundoran Town Council Area, need has changed in recent years towards a requirement for smaller units to accommodate single persons, single parents and the elderly confirmed by the significant reduction in average household size down to 2.69. As a result, targets are set at 30% of social housing to be 2 bed units and 70% of social housing to be 3 bed or greater.

In relation to affordable housing in the Donegal Electoral Area, provision is intended to be in the main for 3 bed starter homes for young first time buyers. In relation to Bundoran Town and Environs area, outside Bundoran Town Council area, house type targets for social housing are set at 10% 2 bed units and 90% 3 bed units whilst affordable housing shall be mainly for 3 bed units.

### 3.6 Voluntary Housing

Provision of voluntary housing during the period 2004-2007, in the Donegal Electoral Area including the area of Bundoran Town Council was 354 units comprising a mixture of family units and sheltered units for the elderly and for people with disabilities. The Council will continue to support the provision of such voluntary housing within the Bundoran Town and Environs in line with the wider policy context in Donegal County.

### 3.7 Principal Reason for Housing Need

Both Bundoran Town Council information and Donegal County Council information indicates that there is a change occurring in relation to the reason for housing need as indicated on applications for social and affordable housing. The breakdown of the principal reasons for housing need in the County is as follows:

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

**Table 5: Breakdown of Housing Need in Co. Donegal**

CATEGORY OF NEED	SHARE (%)
Not reasonably able to meet the cost of accommodation	50
Unfit Accommodation	16
Medical or Compassionate Reasons	13.5
Overcrowded Accommodation	11
Involuntary Sharing	5.5
Elderly	1.8
Travellers	0.9
Disabled	0.6
Leaving Institutional Care	0.5
Homeless	0.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Donegal County Council

The statistics show that in County Donegal, the principal reason for housing need is, 'not reasonably able to meet the cost of accommodation'. During the period 1996-2000, the main reason indicated for housing need was that applicants were living in unfit, or unsuitable or in overcrowded accommodation.

### 3.8 Meeting Needs

The response to meeting the housing need will involve a range of allocation of tenancies under the Council's own Social Housing programme and the voluntary housing programme, the provision of assistance in the form of a loans scheme, an affordable housing scheme, a traveller accommodation programme, and the Rental Accommodation Scheme.

In meeting this need, guidance in relation to the availability of the various schemes will be essential and the implementation of Part V will be integral in order for the Council to ensure the greatest output of social and affordable housing that can be achieved in the context of the legislative framework that is set out for the delivery of such housing.

### 4.0 Housing Strategy Goals and Objectives

#### 4.1 Goal

*'To facilitate and support the provision of a standard of accommodation for the people of the area of the Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 in a manner so as to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the plan area.'*

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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### 4.2 Objectives, Policies and Proposals

It is the policy of the Council to:

1. Reserve 15% of land zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses for the provision of social and affordable housing. Allocation of percentages in terms of social and affordable will be on the basis of 5% social and 10% affordable as a guide. Exact percentages shall be subject to negotiation to meet the needs as determined.

Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council shall continue to impose the following condition on all planning applications for housing on the relevant zoned lands:

*Prior to commencement of development, the applicant/developer shall enter into an agreement with the Council under Section 92(2) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 for:*

- a) *Transfer of part of lands within application site; or*
- b) *The building and transfer of houses within application site; or*
- c) *The transfer of fully or partially serviced site with application site; or*
- d) *Transfer of other lands; or*
- e) *The building and transfer of housing on other lands; or*
- f) *The transfer of fully or partially serviced sites on other lands; or*
- g) *The payment of an agreed sum of money; or*
- h) *A combination of (a) and any one or more of other options [i.e. (b) – (g)]*

**Reason:** *To comply with the Council Housing Strategy*

2. Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council will work in tandem so as to coordinate the delivery of social and affordable housing through Part V mechanism within the plan area that will meet identified needs.

The adoption of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015* shall provide a new policy framework for the delivery of social and affordable housing in Bundoran. It shall be essential for the Councils to work jointly in the implementation of the *Housing Strategy* having regard to the significant area of new land zoned for residential purposes that is provided for in the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*.

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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3. The Councils will jointly identify social and affordable housing needs that are best facilitated by accommodation within town centres in lieu of greenfield sites. In doing so the Councils shall subsequently target the appropriate fulfilment of these needs by means of active consultation with landowners and developers.
4. To provide, through Bundoran Town Council Civic Offices, advice to applicants in relation to the range of housing assistance available in accordance with all current schemes.
5. Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council will consult with the DoEHLG and the relevant groups representing the range of disabled people to promote and develop the concept of lifetime adaptable housing to meet the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly, single persons and changing family situations.
6. Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council propose to further bridge the gap between the housing waiting list and the various supply mechanisms through the continued active promotion of voluntary housing. Additional housing units supplied through the voluntary agencies to be also secured by the way of turnkey and direct construction methods.

The Councils will continue their efforts to promote the activity of the voluntary housing bodies including implementation of guidelines for voluntary organizations in relation to how schemes are to be evaluated, so as to target schemes in areas of need as opposed to a development driven approach.

7. Standards to be set and achieved to meet the accepted practice on 'housing mix' as set out in all relevant guidelines as issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, policy H9 of Chapter 7 of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*.

The requirement under Objective OH-03 that 15% of all zoned lands be reserved for social and affordable housing guided by a 5% social and 10% affordable shall be used in order to offset social segregation. The Councils will also take into consideration the size and location of individual turnkey, voluntary and purchase schemes to prevent over concentration of any one social group and to avoid over concentration of social and affordable housing in larger settlements.

## APPENDIX II – HOUSING STRATEGY

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8. The Councils will further develop systematic monitoring and review systems to monitor the delivery of housing relative to demand and to avoid undue segregation in light of changing patterns of demand.

Annual reports will be prepared to monitor the procurement of housing and to review the need for agreements under Section 96(2). The monitoring system will ensure the update of a statistical analysis prepared as part of the *County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)* together with an update of the statistical analysis contained in this *Housing Strategy* as part of the *Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015*. The monitoring system will ensure the appropriate review of policy.

9. The Councils will strive to acquire and maintain a reasonable housing landbank for both general and specialised housing needs as part of its overall housing procurement policy with input of the Planning Section, the Housing Section and the support of services supplying critical environment in maintaining a landbank consistent with the need for housing and the sustainable development of the County.

The Councils will acquire and maintain a housing landbank as part of its overall procurement policy. A more detailed landbank acquisition and utilisation policy will be prepared to guide location, scale and use of lands to be acquired.

10. The Councils will seek to allocate an adequate measure of funding through the annual Budget process and otherwise to maintain all of their rented stock to an acceptable standard and specifically to upgrade older stock using all available funding sources. Upgrading and maintenance of stock will be carried out in full consultation with tenants and residents associations with input from the Council's tenant liaison facility. Where relevant, linking of these proposals with private management agreements will be ensured.
11. The Council will implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013.
12. The Councils will strive to achieve appropriate house type mixes within developments that respond to the changing demographics of persons on the housing list and in doing so, shall consider the experiences drawn from the document entitled, *Mixed Tenure Housing Estates: Development, Design, Management and Outcomes* (Housing Unit).

## APPENDIX III – PARKING STANDARDS

### Appendix III

#### Parking Standards

The provision for car-parking within the plan area shall conform to the requirements outlined in Appendix A of the County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied). For clarity purposes, these requirements are outlined below:

1. *Car-Parking shall be required to be provided within the site of proposed developments or in exceptional circumstances at a location close to proposed development in accordance with Table 7. Development types not specified in Table 6 shall be required to provide off street parking at ratio reflective of anticipated demand as determined by the Planning Authority. Commercial properties may be required to provide loading bays for appropriately sized vehicles, e.g. commercial vans, rigid lorries, articulated vehicles.*

**Table 6:**

Dwelling House	2 per house
Flats	1.25 per flat
Shops	4 per 90 sq m within speed limit 6 per 90 sq m outside speed limit
Offices	3 per 90 sq m within speed limit 5 per 90 sq m outside speed limit
Banks	5 per 90 sq m
Library	5 per 90 sq m
Hotel, Motel (excluding bars, function rooms to be calculated separately)	1 per 1 bedroom within speed limit 1 per 1 bedroom outside speed limit
Pubs/Lounges without dancing areas	1 per 9.0 sq m within speed limit 2 per 9.0 sq m outside speed limit
Pubs/Lounges with dance areas, dance halls, function rooms	1.5 per 9.0 sq m within speed limit 3.0 per 9.0 sq m outside speed limit
Restaurant	1 per 9.0 sq m within speed limit 2 per 9.0 sq m outside speed limit
Schools	1.5 per classroom and bus circulation/parking area adequate to service school population
Third Level Colleges	1 per classroom plus 1 per 6 students together with adequate bus circulation/parking area to serve school
Cinema	1 per 5 no. seats
Theatre	1 per 5 no. seats

## APPENDIX III – PARKING STANDARDS

Church	1 per 5 no. seats
Manufacturing	3 per 90 sq m or 1 per 4 no. employees, whichever the greater
Warehousing	1.5 per 90 sq m or 1 per 4 n employees, whichever the greater
Golf, pitch and putt	2 spaces per hole
Gold driving range	1 per bay
Bowling alley	1 per lane
Hospital	1.5 per bed
Guesthouse/B&B	1 per bedroom
Nursing Home	1 per 3 bedrooms
Surgeries	3 per consulting room
Take away	3 per 9.0 sq m
Sports hall/club	2 per 90 sq m plus 2%
Cash & Carry outlets	2 per 90 sq m

Dual use of spaces shall be permitted where it is clear to the Planning Authority that one of the uses are daytime and the other are evening use. Where it can be established that members of public visit the site by pre-arranged coach/bus cognisance shall be taken of same in calculating car-parking requirements.

Small extensions, which relieve overcrowding, shall be excluded from requirement to provide car parking, as shall the first 28 sq m of new developments. Applications for change of use of property shall be required to provide car-parking equivalent to requirements for proposed new use.

Net public area shall be used in calculating car-parking requirements. Commercial properties shall be required to provide loading bays where appropriate.

**Table 7**

<b>DIMENSIONS OF LOADING &amp; PARKING BAYS</b>	
Car-Parking Bays	5 m x 2.5 m
Circulation Aisles	6m
Loading Bay	Designed and sized for appropriate service vehicles

2. The Planning Authority shall seek financial contributions in lieu of actual parking spaces when
  - a) The developer cannot conveniently provide the required spaces;

## APPENDIX III – PARKING STANDARDS

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- b) The Council wishes to develop a centrally located car park rather than a number of individual car parks. The contribution per space will reflect the actual cost of developing the said alternative space.*
  
- 3. The Council will be prepared to enter into caretaker agreements with landowners/property owners to provide car parking in towns whereby:*
  - a) The landowner retains full ownership and development potential of the lands concerned;*
  - b) The Council will convert the lands into temporary car parking (usually for a period of at least 5 years);*
  - c) In this policy, adjoining lands owned by different landowners (back lands) may, by agreement with the parties, be aggregated into one single car park.*





## APPENDIX IV – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

### Appendix IV



#### Record of Protected Structures

Ref. No.	Name/Address	Description/Rating/ Special Interests	Importance Rating	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. and Value	Photograph (2008)
1	Sisters of Mercy/ Villa Nova	2 storey Georgian detached house with 2 storey hipped roof and rear projection	N/A	N/A	
2	Sisters of Mercy	Single storey Georgian gate lodge with hipped roof	N/A	N/A	



## APPENDIX IV – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Ref. No.	Name/Address	Description/Rating/ Special Interests	Importance Rating	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. and Value	Photograph (2008)
3	Presbyterian Church	Detached over gable fronted disused Presbyterian Church with spire to façade built 1865, with ruins of vestry to rear.	Regional	40801308  AGS	
4	Ulster Tourist House	Two storey 6 bay house with attractive fanlight.	N/A	N/A	



## APPENDIX IV – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Ref. No.	Name/Address	Description/Rating/ Special Interests	Importance Rating	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. and Value	Photograph (2008)
5-12	Bayview Terrace	Row of nine 2 bay 3 storey Victorian house c. 1890 with 2 storey canted bay window and cantilevered balcony and gables to front and 2 storey returns to rear.	Regional	40801310  AGSM	
13	Church of Ireland Episcopal Church	Detached Church of Ireland Episcopal Church	N/A	N/A	



## APPENDIX IV – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Ref. No.	Name/Address	Description/Rating/ Special Interests	Importance Rating	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. and Value	Photograph (2008)
14	St. Louise's Convent	Detached 7 bay, 2 storey Gothic revival convent on L-shaped plan with gabled single storey entrance porch with bell cote to gabled projecting central bay behind, built c. 1890, with 2 storey split level and single storey split level and single storey extensions to rear.	Local	40801306  AIGPS	
15	M. Phillips, The Bookies (Shell House)	Terraced 3 bay, 2 storey house built c. 1870, with frontage clad with shells and crockery mosaic c. 1930 with 2 storey return and single storey extension to rear.	Local	40801312  V	

## APPENDIX IV – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Ref. No.	Name/Address	Description/Rating/ Special Interests	Importance Rating	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. and Value	Photograph (2008)
16	Kitchen Bake Cake & Coffee Shop	Detached 5 bay single storey former Methodist Chapel with entrance porch to east built 1888 with extensions to NE and mezzanine inserted c. 1980 on conversion to coffee shop, with glazed porch to street.	Regional	40801302  APSM	
17	AIB Bank	Formerly mid-terrace 3 bay, 3 storey Italianate bank built c. 1875 with 2 storey return and single storey over basement extension to rear.	Local	40801305  ASM	

## APPENDIX IV – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Ref. No.	Name/Address	Description/Rating/ Special Interests	Importance Rating	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. and Value	Photograph (2008)
18	Thatched House	Terraced 3 bay storey, thatched cottage built c. 1830	Local	40801311  V	
19	Railway Bar	End of Terrace corner 3 bay, 2 storey former house built c. 1875 with 2 storey return and single storey over basement extension to rear.			

### Architectural Conversation Area

ACA1 Bayview Terrace: Row of eight two-bay, three –storey Victorian houses, built c. 1890.

## APPENDIX V – RECORD OF MONUMENTS

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### Appendix V

#### Record of Monuments

No. on Land-Use Zoning Map	Monument Classification	Townland	Monument No.	National Grid
M1	Promontory Fort	Drumacrin	DH-106-009	18179/35914
M2	Megalithic Tomb	Finner	DG-106-008	18264/35952
M3	Standing Stone(s) Site	Drumacrin	DG-106-010	18271/35918



## APPENDIX VI – LIST OF DESIGNATED SITES

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### Appendix VI

#### List of Designated Sites

<b>SACs</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
<b>Lough Melvin</b> <b>Site Code: 000428</b>	The site is a candidate SAC selected for upland oligotrophic lakes, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive - Atlantic Salmon and Otter.
<b>Dunmuckrum Turloughs</b> <b>Site Code: 002303</b>	This site is located about 2 km south-west of Ballyshannon in Co. Donegal. It consists of a series of low-lying winter-flooded depressions set in an undulating landscape of limestone hills. Dunmuckrum Turloughs is a candidate SAC selected for Turlough, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive.
<b>SPA</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
<b>Donegal Bay</b> <b>Site Code: 004151</b>	The Donegal Bay SPA is a very large, marine-dominated, site. It extends from Doorin Point, to the west of Donegal Town, to Tullaghan Point in County Leitrim, a distance of approximately 15 km along its northeast/south-west axis. The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Great Northern Diver, Light-bellied Brent Goose and Common Scoter. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands, and as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds.



## Appendix VII

### SEA Statement

#### **Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009-2015**

### **1.0 Background**

In June 2008, Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council commenced the review of the Bundoran Development Plan 2004–2010, with a view to preparing a new plan to be entitled the Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009–2015.

In January 2009, Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council jointly published the Draft Bundoran & Environs Development Plan for public consultation together with the SEA - Environmental Report. Following the receipt of submissions, a Managers Report was prepared and circulated to the Elected Members of Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council for their consideration. Material Alterations to the Draft Plan were published for a further period of public consultation throughout August 2009. A further Managers Report was prepared in respect of the submissions received at the Material Alterations stage and was issued to the Elected Members of Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council who decided to make the Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009-2015.

### **1.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Strategic Environmental Assessment was introduced to Ireland by the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, which implement European Directive 2001/42/EC, referred to herein as 'the Directive'. SEA is a tool aimed at ensuring that the environmental implications of strategic policies and programmes are taken into account before decisions are taken to adopt them.

In accordance with Article 7 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2004, Section 13(1), an SEA Statement should be prepared for the Bundoran and Environs Development Plan 2009–2015. It should be read in conjunction with the associated and published SEA - Environmental Report, SEA Scoping and Appropriate Assessment Screening documents.

### 1.1.1 SEA Process

The SEA process comprised of the following principal stages:

- (1) Screening: to determine which plans and programmes are likely to have a significant impact on the environment.
- (2) Scoping: to identify key issues of concern that should be addressed in the environmental assessment of the plan and to liaise with statutory consultees.
- (3) An Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Report: which reports the findings of the assessment on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan.
- (4) Consultation on the Draft Plan and associated SEA - Environmental Report, and;
- (5) This SEA statement: identified how environmental considerations and consultations have been integrated into the final plan.

### 1.1.2 Screening Process for SEA

A screening process was undertaken to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the review of the plan.

As a result, the Planning Authority determined that an SEA would be required due to (a) the regionally significant census population figures for Bundoran Urban area and (b) the identification of SAC and NHA sites within or adjoining the plan area and (c) the significant land coverage of the plan area. Following receipt of confirmation that an SEA would be required, this started with the SEA scoping process and meetings with statutory consultees. This early engagement ensured that the SEA took account of the key issues raised as part of this process and thus the form and structure of the SEA - Environmental Report.

### 1.1.3 Scoping Report for SEA

A scoping report was prepared in accordance with Article 13D of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004. The views expressed by the environmental bodies on the scoping report have been taken into account when producing the SEA - Environmental Report. In addition, the scoping exercise identified the emerging key issues to be considered within the Environmental Report in the areas of biodiversity, flora, fauna, water, cultural heritage, built heritage and landscape.

### 1.1.4 SEA - Environmental Report

As part of the review of the Development Plan, an SEA - Environmental Report was prepared detailing the likely significant effects on the

## APPENDIX VII – SEA STATEMENT

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environment if the Plan were implemented. The SEA - Environmental Report includes the information that was reasonably required to fully assess the plan, taking into account:

- Current knowledge and methods of assessment.
- The contents and level of detail in the plan.
- The stage of the plan in the decision-making process; and
- The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment.

### 1.2 Current Environmental Issues and Trends

One of the overarching issues facing Bundoran is the high numbers of seasonal visitors, which puts pressure on environmental resources, water and wastewater infrastructure during peak seasonal periods. Bundoran has a Blue Flag beach and is one of the most popular surfing destinations in Ireland. It is likely that a reduction in water quality would have serious implications for tourism. There is no waste-water treatment works at Bundoran and there is pressure on the sewerage infrastructure, however proposals are planned for a new waste-water treatment plant.

A key issue of concern is one-off housing and their reliance upon septic tanks. The long-term impact would be a large number of uncontrolled, diffuse discharges, which collectively could be a significant pollution source and could result in a deterioration in water quality. It is unlikely that these remote developments would be able to connect to a waste water treatment plant once it has been constructed, which makes the issue of diffuse pollution very difficult to address retrospectively.

Although the bathing water quality is good, the water quality, of the Bradoge River in Bundoran has declined over the past 15 years from 'unpolluted/good status' to 'moderately polluted'. The Water Framework Directive requires that all waters meet 'Good' ecological status and that there is no deterioration in water quality. Flooding is a natural phenomenon, which cannot be entirely prevented and has an important role in the natural environment. Some parts of Ireland are already susceptible to intermittent flooding and climate change is expected to worsen the situation. Development which takes place without sufficient regard to flooding and its effects on individuals and local communities puts those properties at greater risk and also increases the risk of flooding downstream. Intensive development along the Bradoge River, without full consideration of the extent of the flood plain and frequency of flood events, may place those properties at serious risk of flooding. It has been documented that the Bradoge River (Flood Id = 4172) floods every year

after heavy rain upstream of the culverted section. Furthermore, a tributary of the Drowes floods every year after heavy rain (Flood Id = 4173).

Improvements to the road network and in particular the construction of the Bundoran by-pass has alleviated congestion throughout the town. However rural roads around Bundoran are likely to become more congested during the peak tourist season, the congestion becoming worse with an increase in visitors to the town and surrounding area. Furthermore the lack of local employment, poor retail and services offered in the town centre creates an overreliance on travel to neighbouring towns. This, combined with the limited public transport availability, exacerbates the problem of traffic congestion and associated issues.

Bundoran has a striking coastline however the visual Impact of intensive development on the sea shoreline has created a loss of sense of connection with the sea. A key part of the townscape is the Great Northern Hotel and the golf course, which surrounds it. Development has already begun to encroach upon the hotel and continued development within this area will significantly alter the landscape and visual characteristics of this part of the town. In addition, there is inefficient use of zoned lands for low density, sprawling housing, which does not meet the requirements of the town and may create a need for further development on potentially more sensitive sites, thus exacerbated existing issues. Finally, there is a lack of local knowledge, awareness and appreciation of protected sites throughout the surrounding area (SPAs, SACs, NHAs). Although not a direct impact per se, this lack of awareness creates problems when attempting to protect those sites as the general public may not appreciate the reasons why those sites should be protected, or indeed see the benefits of protecting those sites.

### **1.3 Summary of how environmental considerations and the Environmental Report were factored into the plan**

Environmental considerations and the SEA - Environmental Report were factored into the plan in a number of ways, summarised as follows:

- (1) The SEA - Environmental Report provided for clear identification of the environmental resources within the plan area and for an analysis of the character and quality of the existing resources.
- (2) Higher residential densities are being promoted in central and serviced areas.
- (3) A number of areas have been identified which are liable to flooding.

## APPENDIX VII – SEA STATEMENT

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- (4) There is a need to ensure the protection of the SAC and NHA river corridors, Donegal Bay NHA and SPA and Bundoran's Blue Flag Beach status.
- (5) To ensure that all freshwaters (River Drowes and Bradoge) accord with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive by achieving 'Good' status.

In addition, as a result of the interrogation and assessment, a number of mitigation measures were advocated within the SEA - Environmental Report, to offset predicted adverse effects. The key measures include:

- Carrying through plans for the installation of a waste-water treatment plant for Bundoran to cater for proposed residential and commercial growth and appropriate requirements for single dwelling development to protect the water environment.
- Provisions made for the development of a Biodiversity Plan for the area and the implementation of suitable conditions of planning in order to protect the natural heritage of the area.
- The completion of a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for the area against which proposals for development can be judged.
- Encouraging improvements in the public transport system to provide options for people travelling further afield (including re-use of disused rail lines).
- Encouraging and giving preference to development that addresses energy efficiency, and utilises small-scale (micro) renewable technology, in its design.
- Updating Bundoran's Record of Protected Structures and restrict development that would compromise the integrity or setting of such structures. Assessment of potential impacts upon this resource prior to granting of permission.
- Areas of high sensitivity should be zoned as agricultural land to protect against inappropriate development.
- Encourage the use of brownfield sites for development.

These recommended measures were considered in the formulation of the Draft Plan and subsequently have been carried through into the adopted Plan. The SEA - Environmental Report finally outlined proposals for monitoring

## APPENDIX VII – SEA STATEMENT

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in order to allow Bundoran Town Council and Donegal County Council to track the environmental effects of the Plan, gauge the effectiveness of any mitigation measures employed, identify unforeseen effects and manage any uncertainty encountered in the SEA process e.g. in the prediction of certain environmental effects.

The final stage of the process was the consultation period for the Draft Plan and SEA - Environmental Report. As a result of that process, a number of representations were received, primarily with respect to suggested changes within the Draft Plan. The suggested changes were considered by both the planning and SEA team and accordingly the Draft Plan was revised. None of the changes adopted within the final Plan were considered to significantly alter the findings of the SEA reported within the SEA - Environmental Report.

### **1.4 Summary of how submissions/consultations were taken into account.**

Submissions and consultations were taken into account through three separate stages of public consultation. At Pre Draft Plan, Draft Plan and Material Alteration stages, the public were invited to make written submissions regarding the Plan. Submissions were invited and subsequently a Managers Report was prepared. This Managers Report summarized the issues raised and responded to all the comments made, with a recommendation as to whether to amend or to retain the policies as presented, having regard to National and Regional policy guidance, the County Development Plan, planning guidance publications and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Following the receipt of written submissions, a number of proposed changes to the Plan were accepted by both the Manager in his Report and by the Town Council and County Council Elected Members.

### **1.5 Reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered.**

The Plan was prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 9 (1) of the Planning & Development Acts 2000–2007, which state that every six years, the Planning Authority shall prepare a Development Plan for its functional area.

As this Plan was prepared for the functional area of two Local Authorities, the Plan was also prepared in accordance with Section 9 (3).

## APPENDIX VII – SEA STATEMENT

To concur with the Planning & Development Acts 2000–2007, the Planning Authority contends that there were no other reasonable alternatives to preparing a Plan for the town.

### 1.7 Monitoring measures

Monitoring measures are summarised in the table below:

<b>Environmental category</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Continued assessment of biodiversity including flora and fauna throughout the Plan area.
Population and human health; air and climatic factors	Seek commencement of monitoring of air quality.
Soil	Seek commencement of monitoring of soil quality and coastal erosion.
Water	Continued monitoring of water quality within the rivers and Donegal Bay to retain Blue Flag status at the beach and to elevate the freshwaters to 'Good' status in accordance with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
Material assets	Protect the rich natural heritage and landscape, including the rolling sand dunes to the north-west of the town and the impressive coastline.
Cultural heritage	Record known loss or damage to protected sites or structures within the plan area. Monitoring of planning permissions within the Special Character Area.
Landscape	Update of Landscape Character Assessment. Monitoring of planning permissions within the plan area. Monitoring of planning permissions within zoning of 'Local Environment'. Update of Biodiversity Study.

### **Appendix VIII**

#### **Appropriate Assessment**

The principal legal framework for the conservation of wildlife is contained within; the European Habitats Directive (43/92/EU), European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), the Wildlife Act 1976, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and Part XIII of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The objectives of this European and National legislation are to provide for the protection and conservation of the flora and fauna in the habitats in which they occur.

The requirements relating to the Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans are set out in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive states;

1. For special areas of conservation, Member States shall establish the necessary conservation measures involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans, and appropriate statutory, administrative or contractual measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types in Annex I and the species in Annex II present on the sites.
2. Member States shall take appropriate steps to avoid, in the Special Areas of Conservation, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of this Directive.
3. Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.
4. If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest,



## APPENDIX VIII – APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

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including those of a social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Within this legal framework, the following are the stages in the Appropriate Assessment procedure;

- Determining whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects – the Screening Stage.
- Appropriate Assessment ascertaining the effect on site integrity.
- Mitigation and alternative solutions - where there is a risk of the plan having adverse effects on the integrity of a site, there should be an examination of mitigation measures and alternative solutions.

Following this procedure, as a result of the initial screening stage, and following consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), it was concluded that the Draft Bundoran & Environs Development Plan 2009 – 2015 (either acting alone or in combination with other plans or projects) would not have a significant impact on the Natura 2000 sites. A screening submission (report and letter) detailing these conclusions was sent to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government during September 2008 and no direction was received to the contrary of the conclusions of the Screening Report and letter. On that basis, it was considered that no Appropriate Assessment was required.