

FERMANAGH AND OMAGH

Position Paper One

Population and Growth

June 2014

Paper 1: Accommodating Population Growth across Fermanagh and Omagh

Purpose: To assess the land use needs of a growing population in the Fermanagh and Omagh Council Area and to consider the adequacy of the existing growth strategy for accommodating growth up to 2030.

Content: The paper provides information on:-

- (i) a profile of the population including the different Section 75 groups of people, identifying those which the plan is likely to have an impact on;
- (ii) population growth and population projections up until 2030;
- (iii) a settlement strategy for accommodating growth

Recommendation: That the Shadow Council notes the findings and considers how to achieve balanced growth across Fermanagh and Omagh.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This is the first of four papers aimed at:

- building the capacity of members to make informed planning decisions, particularly within the plan making context;
- providing baseline information which will inform planning policy making at local level; and
- linking with important ongoing work in relation to the development of a Community Plan and other strategic work being undertaken by the Council.

1.2 This paper sets out key baseline data and presents a potential growth strategy. Members are reminded that no formal decisions can be made until plan making power transfers to local government. Equally, any future decision making will need to be made within the context of a Sustainability Appraisal under the provision of Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011. This paper is therefore intended to generate

members' ideas on how planning can best meet the needs of a growing community and different groups within the community.

- 1.3** Therefore, the key outputs of this paper are:
- to conduct a screening exercise of the people within our community (Section 75 Groups) who are likely to be affected by a local development plan;
 - to identify policy goals which may be used to formulate policy and assess the likely affects of the Plan on the various groups within our community; and
 - to consider the existing growth strategy and strategy to accommodate future growth.
- 1.4** Members' ideas on different options are welcome and will be subject to a sustainability assessment at a later date. The next three papers will address growth issues associated with housing, the economy, town centres and recreation and open space.
- 1.5** It is important to stress to members that in compiling the report the best information available has been used. However, much of the data from the 2011 Census has not yet been released and it is anticipated that further area data will become available in Spring 2015. Accordingly, it is recommended that the report is reviewed at that time to establish whether this will result in any significant changes to the conclusions.

2.0 Population Profile

- 2.1** Population change has implications for the provision of housing, employment opportunities and public services including health, education and infrastructure. It is therefore important to know the components of population change and the characteristics of the population when planning for future growth. Planning is also about meeting the needs of everyone.
- 2.2** Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires a public authority, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - between men and women generally;
 - between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to the above obligations, public authorities are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or race.

2.3 The principle of promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people must be a key objective behind the plan and will be a central theme of the sustainability assessment. In land use planning terms this means ensuring everyone benefits from quality housing, employment, and access to public services and recreation facilities. These themes will be addressed in more detail in later papers. However, this paper begins the process of identifying issues and needs facing different groups within our area over and above the general population, so that these can be considered at every stage of the plan making process. If an aim of the plan is also to help build a cohesive society then it must also be recognised that this can only be achieved by “sharing space” and “accessing opportunities”. Therefore, the paper also examines the extent to which segregation occurs and the pattern of multiple deprivation.

(a) Age Structure

2.4 Fermanagh and Omagh are broadly in line with the Northern Ireland population age structure albeit with a slightly higher proportion of those under 16 years of age (Tables 1 and 2). In relation to age it is young and old people who tend to be most vulnerable. There tends to be more elderly people in the towns where there is a range of facilities including nursing homes, sheltered and other housing designed to meet their needs, together with better access to services. However, there are also many elderly people living in the countryside where access to services is more problematic, particularly in Fermanagh. There is a slightly younger age profile in the rural areas around Omagh town as well as within newer housing developments such as those in Killyclogher, Omagh (see Maps 1 & 2, Appendix 1).

Table 1 – Age Structure of Population 2001

	0-15 years	16-64 years	65+ years
NI	23.6%	60.9%	15.5%
Fermanagh District	24.1%	60.0%	15.9%
Omagh District	25.9%	60.6%	13.6%

Source: Census 2001

Table 2 - Age Structure of Population 2011

	0-15 years	16-64 years	65+ years
N Ireland	20.95%	64.49%	14.56%
Fermanagh & Omagh	21.92%	64.0%	14.08%
Fermanagh	21.26%	63.81%	14.92%
Omagh	22.72%	64.2%	13.08%

Source: Census 2011

- 2.5** The Northern Ireland trend is that the proportion of people over 65 years of age is growing and is expected to reach 20% of the total population by 2027 (NISRA 2012-based population projections). The district is likely to follow this trend. A key issue for elderly people is poverty with many older people having to live on reduced incomes, with reduced mobility and increased disability. Nearly one half of people over 60 in Northern Ireland live with a long term illness or disability and this grows with age (Census, 2001). Over one fifth (22%) of Northern Ireland's pensioners live in low income households (defined as below 60% of medium income after deducting housing costs), some 4% points above the UK average (Family Resources Survey, 2007). This is reflected in car ownership with one fifth of retired couples and two thirds of single pensioners living in households without a car. It is also reflected in fuel poverty. In 2006, a third of all households were in fuel poverty with single pensioners being the group at greatest risk (Northern Ireland Housing Survey, 2008). Fermanagh is one of the areas in Northern Ireland with the greatest proportion of houses without central heating.
- 2.6** The growing number of elderly is a key factor in declining average household size, projected to drop for Fermanagh and Omagh from 2.71 in 2008 to 2.53 in 2022 (NISRA Household Projections, 2008). This has been taken into account by DRD when formulating the Regional Development Strategy 2035 Housing Growth Indicators. A Local Development Plan has a role in providing development land to meet these indicators (which will be discussed in the following paper) and facilitate housing units to meet the needs of the elderly, particularly nursing homes, sheltered accommodation and smaller sized units. It also has a role in ensuring such units are accessible. Building control ensures design compliance, however planning needs to ensure that housing for the elderly is sited where it is accessible to local services and transportation. These services include health and other community facilities together with recreation and shops. A rising elderly population will also increase demand for health and community services, the development of which will also need to be accommodated.
- 2.7** Around one quarter of the population is under 16. The number of children under 16 in Fermanagh are projected to rise by 500 between 2008 and 2023 to 13,700 with a 300 increase in Omagh District to 12,100 (NISRA, Population Projections 2008). This will have implications for provision of crèches, nurseries and schools. Perhaps the largest change will be in the provision of secondary education with the development of the education campus at Lisanelly, Omagh and the amalgamation of Portora and the Collegiate in Enniskillen.
- 2.8** Children are also a vulnerable group. Over one quarter (26%) of children in Northern Ireland are living in low income households (FRS, 2007). Young people do not have independent use of a car. Therefore,

safe and sustainable access to community and recreation facilities, including play parks and sports grounds, remains high on the agenda.

- 2.9** All of the above issues are also relevant to people between 16 and 65, the key difference being employment is a major issue for those people of working age. In 2013 the claimant count for Omagh and Fermanagh Districts was 1,694 people and 2033 respectively, an annual average of 5.1-5.2% (DFP Claimant Count, 2013). Unemployment is a particular issue for young people, with unemployment for those aged 16-25 in N. Ireland rising from 12% to 19% between 2008 and 2010. Unemployment is looked at in more detail later.

(b) Marital Status

- 2.10** Since 1991 there has been an increase in the proportion of single people in N. Ireland. In the Fermanagh and Omagh, the trend is similar, albeit with a slightly higher proportion of married people (Table 3).

Table 3 - Marital Status in 2011

	All People ≥ 16	Single (never married) %	Married * %	Divorced %	Widowed** %
NI	1,431,540	36.14	51.63	5.45	6.78
Fermanagh/Omagh	88,353	35.76	53.41	4.0	6.77
Fermanagh	48,664	35.46	53.27	4.11	7.16
Omagh	39689	36.14	53.59	3.96	6.31

Source:- Census 2011

*2011 Married – This includes people who were remarried; those who are separated but still legally married; and those in a same-sex civil partnership. ** 2011 Widowed includes surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership.

- 2.11** Official statistics mask the number of couples (unmarried) who are co-habiting. The role of planning is not to pass moral judgements but to meet the needs of the population. In this case, the challenge is providing housing to meet the needs of single people. It is reasonable to assume that many single wage earners will not have the same purchase power of a double income household. Single people also have different social needs to those who are married/co-habiting and have families. Young, single people are key to the economy of any town centres, providing a significant part of the market for pubs, clubs and restaurants. However, this can mask the feeling of social exclusion experienced by many single people, particularly the elderly, disabled and single parents. Single parents remain one of the most disadvantaged groups with over half falling within low income groups and over half of lone parent families not having access to a car (Poverty site, 2010).

(c) Gender and Life Expectancy

2.12 The usually resident population is broadly split on a 50/50 basis between men and women. Life expectancy continues to improve for both males and females. Over the period 1998-2000 to 2008-2010, life expectancy for males improved at a slightly faster rate than for females, reducing the gender gap to females who live around 5 years longer than males, a differential which is slightly higher than the N Ireland level. In the UK, life expectancy at birth is expected to increase by around five years between 2012 and 2037 (Office of National Statistics, 2013) for both men and women and it is therefore anticipated that life expectancy will similarly increase in the Council area.

Table 4: Gender balance of Fermanagh and Omagh Population

Sex	Fermanagh - Omagh	Fermanagh	Omagh	N. Ireland
Male	50.05%	50.12%	49.99%	49%
Female	49.94%	49.88%	50.01%	51%

Source: Census 2011

Table 5: Life Expectancy by Gender - Fermanagh and Omagh Population

	1998-2000		2008-2010	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
NI	74.49	79.57	77.07	81.52
Fermanagh	74.3	80.3	77.7	82.5
Omagh	73.8	80.3	77.3	82.8

Source: NISRA

2.13 There are key differences between the sexes in that women tend to take on the role of carer whether it be for children or aging relatives which is discussed later. Women suffer inequalities in terms of wealth, employment and access to services. The gender pay gap (i.e. the difference between men's and women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings) based on median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for full-time employees increased to 10% and 19.7% as measured by hourly earnings for all employees (Office of National Statistics, 2013). In Northern Ireland the difference is most pronounced for those on low incomes, with half of those people earning less than £7 being in part time employment, mainly women (DETI, 2010). The gender gap is also reflected in access to a private car with 25% of men in the UK and 40% of women lacking a car in their household or not possessing a driving license (Poverty site, 2010). These figures are often masked by the fact that only a small percentage of couples do not have access to a car.

2.14 Planning can have a role in addressing this inequality not only by facilitating job creation but by facilitating new employment opportunities

at locations accessible by sustainable forms of transport other than just the private car. The same holds true for shops, recreation, and community services. Planning can also help by adopting a more flexible approach to innovation and a flexible approach to home working.

(d) Health and Disability

- 2.15** A person is described as having a limiting long term health problem if they have a health problem or disability which limits their daily activities and which has lasted, or expected to last, at least 12 months. This includes problems that are due to old age (Census 2011). In 2011/12, 6% of children in Northern Ireland were disabled compared to 14% of adults of working age and 44% of adults over State Pension age (DSD Family Resources Survey). Overall, the health of the area is improving (Tables 6 & 7) but one in five people in Fermanagh-Omagh suffer from some form of limiting illness.
- 2.16** Areas within towns tend to have more elderly people and people with a long term illness e.g. Lisanelly 1 and Strule in Omagh and Devenish in Enniskillen. In general, where there are higher levels of long term limiting illness, there are lower levels of people who described their health as being good or very good and vice versa. There are also areas with slightly higher proportions of people providing unpaid care including Lisnarrick, Ballinamallard, Florence Court & Kinawley and Rosslea, Beragh, Fairy Water, Killyclogher 1 and Termon (see Maps 3, 4 &5, Appendix 1).

Table 6 – Health in 2001

	Limiting long-term illness	Good General Health	People Providing Unpaid care
NI	20.4%	70.0%	11.0%
Fermanagh	19.2%	72.2%	9.9%
Omagh	20.4%	71.4%	10.0%

Source: - Census 2001

Table 7 – Health in 2011

	Limiting long-term illness	Good or Very Good General Health	People Providing Unpaid care
NI	20.69%	79.51%	11.81%
Fermanagh	19.91%	81.02%	10.92%
Omagh	21.76%	78.62%	11.14%

Source: - Census 2011

- 2.17** If care in the community is to succeed, value needs to be attached to carers. In 2011/2012, 6% of the population were informal carers and that figure included 7% of working age adults, 9% of State Pension age

adults and 1% of children. Some 62% of reported carers are women. The time spent caring varies from 42% of adult carers providing care for less than 20 hours per week, to 22% caring for 50 hours or more per week. (DSD Family Resources Survey, 2011-12)

2.18 The link between health and wealth is well rehearsed as is the relationship between mobility and health. Therefore, as with other groups planning has a role in accommodating accessible housing, employment and services. Planning also has a role in helping to improve the health and well-being of people by avoiding development which would result in a deterioration in air or water quality; safeguarding and facilitating open space, sport and outdoor recreation; managing the adverse impacts of noise and nuisance by influencing the location, layout and design of new development. Planning also has a role in recognising and facilitating development to meet the needs of carers, by facilitating houses for those with special circumstances or extension of homes to include “granny annexes”.

(e) Households with or without dependent children

2.19 A “dependant child” is defined as 0-15 or aged 16-18 who is a full-time student and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s) (Census 2011). The proportion of households (including lone parent households) with dependant children has declined since 1981, although Fermanagh-Omagh remain slightly higher than the NI average (Table 8). In general, there are more areas in Omagh District with higher proportions of dependant children, particularly in predominantly Catholic areas in Omagh town and some rural areas (see Map 6, Appendix 1).

Table 8 – Households with Dependant Children – Census 2011

Households	Both districts	Fermanagh	Omagh	N. Ireland
% with dependant children 2011	35.12%	33.61%	36.64%	33.85%
% with dependant children 1981	48.29%	46.25%	51.01%	45.98%

Source: Census 1981, 2011

2.20 The decline in households with dependent children is another reason why the average household size has declined. However, a significant proportion of Fermanagh and Omagh are larger in size and this remains well above the Northern Ireland average. In part this could be due to the inclusion of other dependents such as the elderly or infirm (Table 9).

Table 9 – Household Composition

	All Households	1 Person Household (%)	2 Person Household (%)	3-4 Person Household (%)	5 + Person Household (%)
NI	703,275	27.93	30.19	31.44	10.46
Fermanagh/Omagh	41,512	27.1	27.43	31.35	14.11
Fermanagh	23,069	27.55	28.39	31.14	12.91
Omagh	18,443	26.52	26.25	31.61	15.62

Source: Census 2011

2.21 The role of planning in relation to access and service provision has been rehearsed with regards to the elderly and children. It is worth emphasising that those acting as carers regularly face the same issues particularly in households where the carer is on a low income and does not have access to a car. The Local Development Plan has a role in providing a range of houses types to meet the needs of different household sizes and to provide policy to facilitate those wishing to expand their houses to meet changing needs, providing it does not harm other interests of acknowledged importance.

(f) Sexual Orientation

2.22 There are no specific figures available on how many people may be Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual or Trans-gender or Trans-sexual in Fermanagh-Omagh. People in this group often feel excluded or marginalised in society. More importantly, they can also fall victim of discrimination and threat of physical violence from the less tolerant in society. Whilst the Plan is unlikely to bring forward specific proposals and policies for them, it is anticipated that many of the measures in a Local Development Plan aimed at providing a range of house types, creating employment and accessible services as well as improving safety and security will benefit this group.

(g) Race and Ethnicity

2.23 In 2001, 9% of Northern Ireland's population were born outside the region and this was a similar statistic in both Fermanagh and Omagh Districts. By 2011, this proportion had increased to 11.1% for N. Ireland compared to 13.36% of the Fermanagh-Omagh population. The majority of non-indigenous people were born either in the rest of the UK or in the Republic of Ireland. The remainder comprises people born in other European countries and countries outside Europe (Table 10).

Table 10: Country of Birth for Fermanagh – Omagh 2011

	N Ireland	Rest of UK	Republic of Ireland	Europe	Outside Europe
Both Districts	86.64%	4.64%	4.69%	2.8%	1.16%
Fermanagh	84%	5.47%	6.66%	2.71%	1.13%
Omagh	89.83%	3.64%	2.32%	2.92%	1.2%
N Ireland	88.84%	4.47%	2.09%	2.6%	1.84%

Source: Census 2011 Note: Channel Islands and Isle of Man are excluded from the above figures.

2.24 Racial ethnicity remains predominantly ‘white’ with 99% of the district described in this category. Other ethnic groups including Asian, Black and Mixed comprise very small numbers (Census 2011) and as a consequence it is unlikely that the Local Development Plan will have a particular impact on these groups. However, it is important to monitor changes over time as this may have implications particularly in relation to equality of access to homes and jobs.

2.25 An exception may be Irish Travellers who have been described as a different ethnic group. Their needs can be distinctive in terms of providing sites or supported housing for travellers. The housing needs assessment undertaken by the NIHE addresses this matter and will be considered in a later housing paper.

(h) Religion and Political Opinion

2.26 The designation of settlements and provision of development opportunities needs to be carefully considered against the needs and spatial distribution of people of different religion or political opinion to prevent prejudice of any religious or political group and thus meet the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.

2.27 The Fermanagh-Omagh population has a predominantly Roman Catholic background in contrast to the region as a whole (Table 11). The majority of Super Output Areas (SOAs) are reasonably mixed though quite a few can be identified as being either predominantly (more than 70%) Protestant/Other or Roman Catholic. On the whole there are more ‘balanced’ communities in Fermanagh than in Omagh (see Map 7, Appendix 1). However care needs to be taken when examining mix across the wide area as this can conceal the stark differences between neighbourhoods in towns and villages.

Table 11: Religious composition of Fermanagh-Omagh 2011

Religious background	Fermanagh-Omagh	Fermanagh	Omagh	N. Ireland
Roman Catholic	64.23%	59.16%	70.34%	45.14%
Protestant/Other Christian	33.07%	37.78%	27.42%	48.36%

Source: Census 2011

2.28 In Northern Ireland, political opinion is viewed as being closely associated with religious belief in that Catholics will generally vote for Nationalist parties while Protestants vote for Unionist parties. However, the results of the first preference votes cast in the 2014 Local Elections suggest that some Catholics vote for Unionist parties as well as for other parties and independents (Table 12). Of course the converse could also be true for some Protestants.

Table 12: Political Opinion across Fermanagh-Omagh 2014

Political Party Groupings	Proportion of First Preference Votes
Nationalist parties	60%
Unionist parties	37%
Independent/Other	3%

Source: 2014 Local Government Election Results

2.29 Care needs to be taken when making comparisons between communities of different religious/political persuasion as this can be extremely divisive and can unravel the definite progress made in bringing the two communities together. However, there are certain facts which need to be addressed. The proportion of Catholics in low income groups in Northern Ireland is much higher than their Protestant counterparts, 26% compared with 16% (Family Resources Survey 2008/9). Those areas where deprivation is greatest can be identified spatially using the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010.

(i) Spatial Deprivation

2.30 An effective way to promote good community relations and equal opportunity is to tackle social deprivation and inequalities in the labour market and public health. The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010 identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Northern Ireland. Within the context of the average rankings for the 26 LGDs in Northern Ireland where ranks range from 1 (most deprived) to 26 (least deprived), Fermanagh and Omagh are ranked 22 and 17 respectively, however within each district there are areas and neighbourhoods which are very deprived. The MDM shows that 4% of the Fermanagh and 7% of the Omagh population live in the most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Northern Ireland. The new Council area also contains two SOAs which are amongst the top 10% most deprived in Northern Ireland – Lisanelly 2 (Rank 80) in Omagh and Devenish (Rank 83) in Enniskillen – out of a total of 890 SOAs in Northern Ireland (890 being least deprived).

- 2.31** The advantage of this spatially led approach is that it identifies disparities between urban and rural areas and adjoining neighbourhoods, for example, Lisanelly 1 (least deprived) & Lisanelly 2 (more deprived) in Omagh. Generally speaking, the more peripheral areas of Fermanagh-Omagh tend to be more disadvantaged compared to the immediate hinterland of the towns and the productive river valleys. There are significant pockets of deprivation (income, health, education, skills) in the two hubs and in Fintona and Irvinestown (see Map 8, Appendix1)
- 2.32** The highest concentrations of deprivation with respect to proximity to services (i.e. long distances to key services e.g. A & E hospital, GP premises, supermarket, leisure centre) include Belleek and Boa, Belcoo and Garrison and Rosslea in Fermanagh and Owenkillew, Sixmilecross, and Termon in Omagh. Devenish is the most deprived SOA in terms of housing quality and housing access. The most deprived SOAs for crime and disorder are Portora, Devenish and Erne in Enniskillen, Lisanelly 2 in Omagh town and Fintona.
- 2.33** Deprivation is also reflected in economic activity. Whilst unemployment has fallen from 7.0% (Fermanagh) and 8.5% (Omagh) in 2001 to just below 5% in 2011, despite the down turn in 2007 (Table 13) there are localised areas of higher unemployment in Lisanelly (8.4%), Owenkillew (8.31%) and Devenish (8.51%). In providing employment, manufacturing and construction provide proportionally more employment in the new council area compared to N.I average and service jobs are comparatively lower (Table 14). Thus the role of any future Local Development Plan in addressing deprivation through a generous supply of economic development land should not be underestimated.

Table 13 - Economic Activity of the Population (16-74 year olds) in 2011

	Economically Active			Economically Inactive
	Total	Unemployed	Long-Term Unemployed	Total
NI	66.22%	4.96%	44.98%	33.78%
Fermanagh	67.14%	4.71%	47.35%	32.86%
Omagh	64.52%	4.92%	46.79%	35.48%

Source: - NISRA Census 2011

Table 14 – Employee Jobs by Industry 2011

	Total No of Jobs	% Jobs in Manufacturing	% Jobs in Construction	% Jobs in Services
Fermanagh	20,754	14.9%	5.1%	78.3%
Omagh	17,513	8.3%	8.6%	80.9%
Combined	38,267	11.9%	6.7%	79.5%
NI	681,641	10.9%	4.8%	83.1%

Source: DETI District Council Briefings November 2013. Employee jobs by Industry, September 2011 (Northern Ireland Census of Employment 2011)

2.34 Education has also an important role in promoting economic well-being. Better education improves access to employment opportunities. It improves the quality of people's lives and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society. Education raises people's productivity and creativity and promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances. In addition it plays a very crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution. Since 2001, the proportion of people aged 16 years old and over who had a degree or higher qualification has increased and the proportion that had no or low (1-4 O Levels/CSE/GCSE or equivalent) qualification has decreased (Table 15). However education achievement in parts of the main towns and rural areas remains low, particularly in Gortrush, Devenish, Drumquin, Fintona, Newtownbutler and Lisnaskea (see Map 9, Appendix 1)

Table 15: Qualifications of Population over 16 years of age in Fermanagh-Omagh

	Fermanagh	Omagh	Northern Ireland
No or low qualifications	44.09% (44.79%)	42.17% (43.34%)	40.63% (41.64%)
Degree or higher qualification	21.27% (13.52%)	23.28% (14.43%)	24.0% (15.8%)

Source: Census 2011, NISRA. Figures in () are for 2001.

2.35 Whilst a Local Development Plan does not deliver educational services, it can assist in making such services more accessible either by facilitating new state-of-the-art facilities or providing travel options.

(j) The East West and Urban-Rural Divide

2.36 The Family Resources Survey Urban Rural Report (DSD, 2011-12) reveals that the average weekly income in Northern Ireland in 2011/12 was £372 before housing costs however, this figure is skewed upwards by the Belfast Metropolitan area where the average is £401. Nearly 21% of people are in relative poverty and this percentage is highest in the rural west at 25%. About 60% of N.I. household income comes from wages or salaries with another 9% from self-employment. However in the rural west 15% of income is derived from self-employment, with nearly 25% of males self-employed compared to a 14% N.I. average. Male unemployment is also higher at 8%. Households in the urban west are more dependent on income subsidy with 35% receiving a benefit compared to 19% in the rural east. The rural west also receives the highest level of non-income related benefit at 76% compared to 69% in the urban east. In contrast it also has the

highest level of house ownership with 48% of homes owned outright (DSD, FRS Urban Rural Report 2011-2012).

- 2.37** What this means for a Local Development Plan is that not only is there a need for quality employment to lower the need for benefits, but there is also a culture of independence and entrepreneurship and if facilitated many households will generate their own income and provide their own homes.
- 2.38** In 2001, both Fermanagh and Omagh Districts were relatively rural with just over half of the population living in designated settlements while the remainder lived in the open countryside (Table 16). Fermanagh District had a high percentage of the population living in villages, however this figure may be disproportionate as the District does not have hamlets or smaller settlements designated as is the case in Omagh District. This will be looked at later in the paper when a settlement strategy for growth is discussed. Comparable statistics at settlement level are not yet available for 2011.

Table 16 – Urban-Rural Population Split

	Fermanagh District	Omagh District
Main Town	13,560 (23%)	19,836 (41%)
Local Towns	4,527 (8%)	3,039 (6%)
Total Towns	18,087 (31%)	22,875 (48%)
Villages	12,609 (22%)	2,568 (5%)
Total Urban	30,696 (53%)	25,443 (53%)
Rural Remainder	26,831 (47%)	22,509 (47%)
Total District	57,527 (100%)	47,952 (100%)

Source: - Census 2001

- 2.39** From this analysis it is clear that the towns need to develop in order to fulfil their roles as regional hubs and, in the case of Enniskillen, a regional gateway. This said, the needs of those people living in the rural area cannot be forgotten and if those populations are to be sustained they will also require their share of housing and employment opportunities. These themes will be picked up in later papers.

Conclusions

- 2.40** From the analysis a local development plan can assist building inclusive and cohesive communities addressing everyone's needs by providing equality of opportunity, facilitating employment and wealth creation, providing accessible services, increasing transportation options and promoting shared space. Decisions must be made based on targeting deprivation and being aware of the consequences for Catholic and Protestant communities. The policy areas where a Local Development Plan is likely to have an impact on Section 75 groups is summarised in Table 17. With members agreement this could serve as an initial screening for an Equality impact Assessment.

Table 17 A preliminary identification of local planning policy likely to have an impact on community relations and social equality

POLICY TYPE	Religious Belief	Political Opinion	Racial group	Age	Marital status	Sexual Orientation	Gender	Disability	Dependency	Comments – nature of policies and likely impact of policies on the S – 75 Groups
Settlement	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Designation and status of settlements and identification of development opportunities and limits may impact on groups of religious belief / political opinion due to the spatial distribution of such groups
Housing	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	Quantum and distribution of zoned housing lands could have a differential impact on religious / political groups. The amount whether it is urban / rural, accessible, social / private will also have differential impacts on the ethnic groups, elderly persons/ house-forming people, persons with disabilities and those with dependents.
Business and Industry	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	X	X	Quantum and distribution of employment land could result in differing access to employment for certain groups i.e. religion, race, gender and age
Open Space & Recreation	√	√	X	√	X	X	X	√	√	Quantum and distribution of open space and recreation facilities could result in differing levels of access for identified groups i.e. Religion / political. Also Disability, Gender, Dependency and Age.
Retailing and town centres	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	X	The hierarchy of commercial/town centres, development opportunities and control policies could result in differing levels of accessibility to retailing and leisure related services for identified groups. Town centres tend to be relatively neutral areas.
Community Uses	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	√	Spatial and physical accessibility to Ccommunity uses can have particularly on religious groupings / political opinion , age and disability.
Transportation	√	√	X	√	X	X	√	√	X	Differing levels of accessibility to all services depending on location/quality of infrastructure for identified groups.
Environment	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Location of protected areas for conservation, archaeology or landscape could have differential impacts, positive or negative, for different groupings.
Minerals	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	The location of areas protected for / constrained from minerals proposals could have differential impacts, for different religion / political groups.
Countryside	√	√	X	√	X	X	X	X	X	The location of policy areas and resultant protection / restrictions on development, could have differential impacts, positive or negative, for different groupings - religion / political. Also persons of house-forming age.
Services and Utilities	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Differing levels of accessibility to public services and utilities depending on location of facilities provided - religion / political.
Tourism	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Location of areas protected for and constraining tourism proposals could have differential impacts on different religious / political groups.
Design	X	X	X	√	X	X	√	√	√	Design both in terms of appearance and physical access affects everyone but has a particular impact on people with mobility difficulties such as the disabled, elderly and people with young children.
Totals	12	12	1	6	0	0	5	6	4	

Note: All policies affect everyone in the community in some way. Potential impacts have been identified where they are particularly pertinent to the special needs of a particular group.

2.41 A Local Development Plan designed to complement a community plan can assist in combating many of the issues highlighted by formulating policy and proposals for the area designed at truly achieving sustainable development. Under the three key headings of sustainable development, (i.e., economic , social and environment) it is clear that if the needs of Section 75 groups are to be addressed then we need to increase the economic and social base, whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and improving public infrastructure. Accordingly, a number of needs and policy goals have been drawn from the above analysis that will assist in formulating the aim and objectives of the future Local Development Plan.

(a) Accommodating People and Creating Places

- (i) To build Omagh and Enniskillen as economic and transportation hubs and as the main service centres for shops, leisure activities, public administrative and community services including health and education. These are the most populated places and the town centres are the most accessible locations for people to travel to including those without a car.*
- (ii) To protect and consolidate the role of local towns and villages so that they act as local centres for shops and community services meeting the daily needs of their rural hinterlands.*
- (iii) To provide for vital and vibrant rural communities whilst protecting the countryside in which they live by accommodating sustainable growth within the countryside proportionate to the extent of existing rural communities.*
- (iv) To provide for 14,500* new homes by 2030 in a range of housing capable of meeting the needs of families, the elderly and disabled, and single people, at locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities, for those people with and without a car.*
- (v) To recognise the needs of both growing families and carers of the elderly and disabled by accommodating development which allows people to remain within their own communities and does not lead to significant harm to neighbours or the environment.*
- (vi) To facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of transportation in accordance with the community plan.*
- (vii) To accommodate cultural differences between Catholic and Protestant communities whilst promoting “shared spaces” to bring people together with equality of opportunity.*

(b) Creating jobs and promoting prosperity

- (i) To facilitate the creation of 4,100* new jobs by 2030 at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car.*
- (ii) To promote diversity in the range of jobs recognising the importance of employment in the primary sector (agriculture forestry and mining), secondary sector (industry and manufacturing) and tertiary sector (administration, commerce, retailing, leisure and tourism).*
- (iii) To recognise and accommodate entrepreneurship, innovation for large, medium and small firms by attracting new firms and accommodating expanding businesses.*
- (iv) The need to recognise the importance of self employment and home working, particularly in rural locations.*
- (v) The need to provide and encourage use of energy both as a means of generating money for the local economy, attracting investment in enterprise and providing sustainable and affordable lighting and heating for the population.*

(c) Enhancing the environment and improving infrastructure

- (iii) The need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and wellbeing.*
- (iv) The need to accommodate investment in power, water and sewerage infrastructure, and waste management particularly in the interests of public health.*
- (v) The need to improve connectivity between and within settlements and their rural hinterland through accommodating investment in transportation to improve travel times, alleviate congestion and improve safety for both commercial and private vehicles as well as more sustainable modes of transport including buses, walking and cycling.*
- (vi) The need to improve connectivity through telecommunication which both meets the needs of business and private households whilst reducing the need to travel.*

** The figure for new homes is justified later in the paper and, along with the figure for jobs, will be explored in later papers and may change.*

2.42 The traditional approach to planning can assist in achieving many of these goals by:

- (a) designating settlement limits and town centre boundaries;
- (b) zoning land for housing and economic development;
- (c) reserving land for community, recreational use or infrastructure;
- (d) identifying and designating areas subject to environmental protection.

2.43 However, if these needs are to be fully addressed there is also a need for **policy innovation** in the Local Development Plan, which is likely to vary significantly from established regional policy. The Draft Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) proposes to significantly increase the scope of the Local Development Plan by facilitating new councils to formulate their own policies. The extent to which the Council can do this and the detail of policies will be discussed in later papers.

2.44 It is not intended that the list of needs and policy goals is exhaustive. It is also recognised that these policy goals are based on a general academic analysis and would greatly benefit from both the views of members and input both from those involved in community planning and from the different Section 75 groups. Once these have been received, and in light of the findings of future papers, officers will then be in a position by the time of transfer of planning powers to formulate a draft set of aims and objectives for Members consideration and agreement.

2.45 Until such time it is recommended that they are used to consider any future strategy for ACCOMMODATING GROWTH and in drafting future TOPIC BASED papers.

3.0 Population Growth and Population Projections

Population Growth and Components of Change

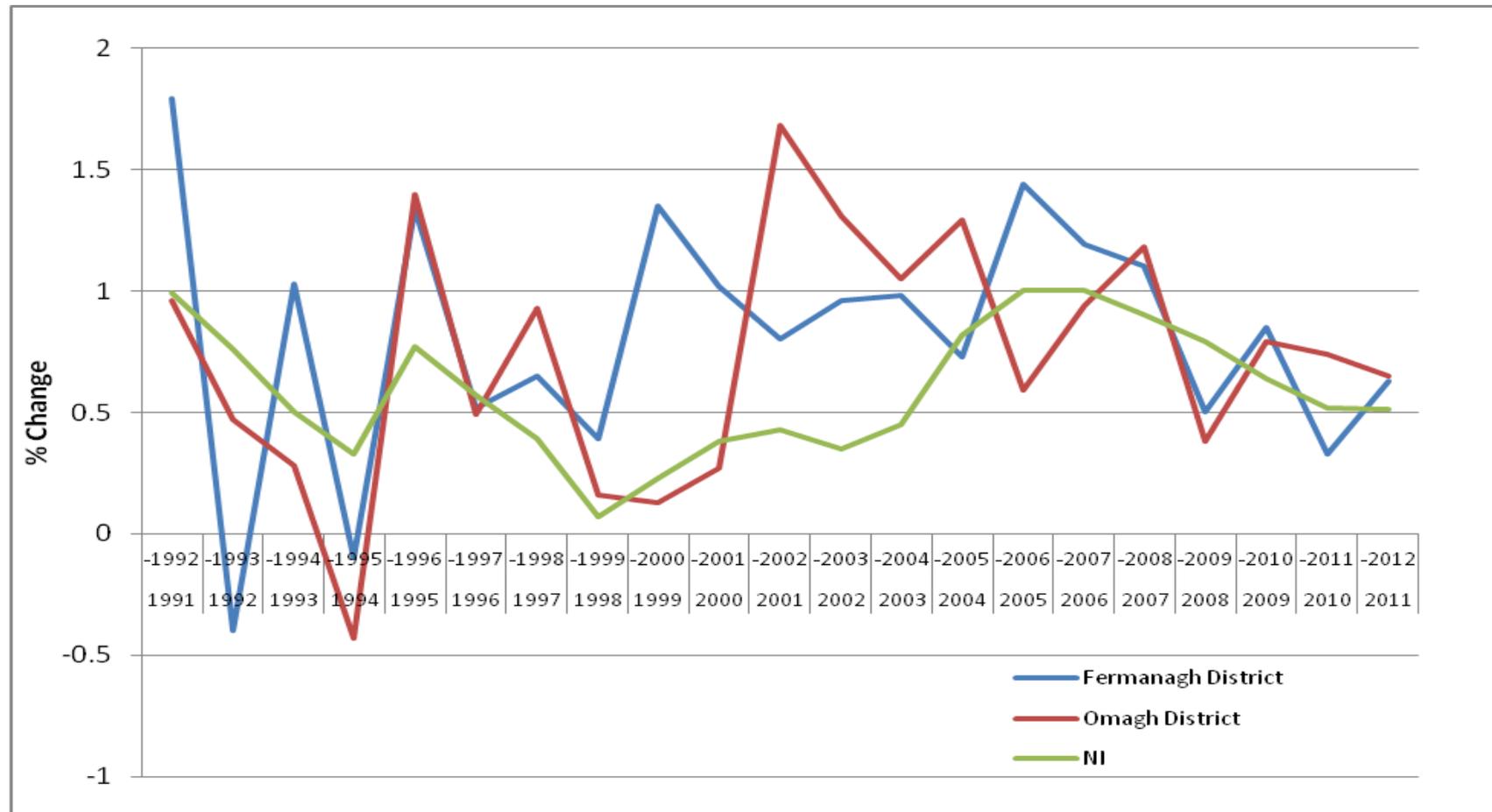
- 3.1** In 2011, the populations of Fermanagh and Omagh Districts were 61,805 and 51,356 respectively (113,161 in total). This represented, together, a 7.3% growth in the population over 10 years closely mirroring the Northern Ireland average. Only Omagh District achieved a higher rate of growth during the period 1971-1981. In the 40 year period (1971-2011), both districts have experienced population growth at a higher rate than the regional average (Table 18).
- 3.2** The Mid-Year Population Estimates indicate that both Fermanagh and Omagh Districts have increased in population since 1996 at a rate generally higher than the NI average. In 2012 both Districts showed a percentage change in Mid Year Population Estimates slightly above the Regional figure. There have been marked fluctuations in the Percentage Change year to year and between Districts since 1991 but more recent years have seen a steadying of this trend. Both Districts have been following more closely the NI trend of smaller year on year positive growth (Figure 1).

Table 18 Population Trends in Fermanagh & Omagh 1971-2011

Year	Fermanagh District	Omagh District	Both Districts	NI
1971	50,979	41,180	92,159	1,536,070
1981	51,594	44,290	95,884	1,532,200
1991	54,033	45,810	99,843	1,577,840
2001	57,527	47,950	105,477	1,685,270
2011	61,805	51,356	113,161	1,810,863
% change 1971-1981	+1.2%	+7.6%	+4%	-0.25%
% change 1981-1991	+4.7%	+3.4%	+4.1%	+3%
% change 1991-2001	+6.5%	+4.7%	+5.6%	+6.8%
% change 2001-2011	+7.4%	+7.1%	+7.3%	+7.4%
% change 1971-2011	+21.2%	+24.7%	+22.7%	+17.9%

Source: - Census 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 & 2011

Figure 1 - Percentage Change in Mid Year Population Estimates 1991-2012



Source: - NISRA 2012

3.3 Population change occurs due to the combined effect of net migration (both in and out migration) and the level of natural increase which is the difference between the number of births and deaths. Migration has had a significant impact on the population of NI and to a lesser extent the populations of both Districts. After a long period through the 1970s and 1980s of emigration from Northern Ireland exceeding immigration and a period of balanced migration flows during the 1990s, the recent period since 2004 has seen significant population growth due to migration from the expanded EU. Thus, in 2011, some 2.76% of the new Council area's population (2.88% of Omagh's population and 2.65% of Fermanagh's population) are from EU countries particularly the eight central and eastern European (A8) countries (Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Latvia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Estonia and Hungary). However, recent evidence suggests that since the economic downturn, the number of migrants has been declining and that natural growth is the main influence on population change (NISRA).

Population Projections

3.4 Every two years NISRA publishes population projections at local government level, the latest being the 2008-based projections. These take into account migration, natural increase and other factors. In the 2008-based projections, natural growth is the key driver with an element of net migration, including the inward migration of people from the European Union. It was therefore predicted that the total population in Northern Ireland would increase by 4% from 1.775M in 2008 to 1.839M in 2013 and by 5.8% between 2013 and 2023 (1.945M). However, the recently published 2012-based projections for N Ireland indicate lower levels of growth taking into account the 2011 Census results, the decline in inward migration due to the economic downturn so that natural growth is now the driver of projected population increase. Therefore, the projected figure for N Ireland's population in 2023 is now 1.927M. It is therefore anticipated that the 2012-based population projections at district level will be revised downwards. This is also likely to have an effect on household projections. Population projections become increasingly uncertain over longer time periods. As the plan period to 2030 extends beyond the period of the NISRA projections, the figures provided here are for indicative purposes only.

3.5 The key findings for 2008-2023 are that the population of Fermanagh-Omagh is expected to grow by around 10% and the number of children and working age people in Fermanagh-Omagh is expected to increase by some 3% and 1.5% respectively compared to a 54.8% increase in the number of pensioners. Thus, between 2008 and 2023, the proportion of children will decline from 21.96% to 20.56%, those of working age will decrease from 62.23% to 57.24% whilst those of

pension age will increase from 15.8% to 22.2%. These figures are based on current pensionable age and broadly follow the trend at NI level. However, it should be noted that between 2010 and 2020, the age at which women are eligible for the state pension will increase from 60 years to 66 years. By 2023, this will result in increasing the proportion of working age to 68.7% and decreasing the proportion of pensioners to 10.7%.

Table 19 - Population Projections 2008-2030

	2008	2010	2015*	2020*	2025*	2030*
Fermanagh District	61,966	62,840	64,985	66,906	68,537	70,117
Omagh District	52,115	52,882	55,034	56,944	58,563	60,195
Both Districts	114,081	115,722	120,019	123,850	127,097	129,009
NI	1,775,003	1,802,170	1,852,000	1,900,000	1,943,000	1,975,000

Source: - NISRA

*The projections for 2025 and 2030 were calculated using the percentage change between 2022 and 2023 and applied year on year (Fermanagh =0.46%; Omagh=0.55%; both districts = 0.5%) Figures for NI for 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030 are from 2012-based projections published November 2013.

3.6 Assuming annual growth of 0.5% from 2023 onwards (based on the two districts combined rate of growth for 2022-23), the population could increase to around 129,000 by 2030 (Table 19). This represents a 7.49% rate of growth between 2015 and 2030. This suggests, taking into account population rise, an increase in working age and addressing unemployment that the Local Development Plan will need **to provide for the creation of 4,100 new jobs**. This will be considered in more detail in the paper on employment and the economy.

Table 20 – Household Projections

	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025*	2030*
Fermanagh District	23,100	23,600	25,000	26,200	27,500	29,000
Omagh District	18,300	18,800	20,300	21,500	22,800	24,300
Both Districts	41,400	42,400	45,300	47,700	50,300	53,300
NI	688,700	706,400	749,200	786,800	826,600	868,800

Source: - NISRA

* The projections for 2025 and 2030 were calculated using the percentage change between 2022 and 2023 and applied year on year (Fermanagh =1.12%; Omagh=1.37%; both districts = 1.24%)

- 3.7** The corresponding household projections for 2008-2023 which take account of population growth, a reduced size of household and the changing age structure of the population, could lead to an increase of 17.6% in the number of households between 2015 and 2030 (Table 20). The average household size in N Ireland has been projected to steadily decrease to 2.36 people per household in 2023. In Fermanagh and Omagh Districts, the average size of households is predicted to remain above the NI average (2.49 for Fermanagh, 2.55 for Omagh).
- 3.8** The NISRA household projections are broadly in line albeit slightly lower than those set out in the RDS 2035 figures which add in an element of second homes, housing stock that is vacant, and housing stock losses due to net conversion/closures or demolitions. A more detailed examination of housing, future growth and the provision of development land will be considered in a later paper. Whilst the economic climate that has prevailed since 2007 has impacted on the demand for development land, there are indications that a slow recovery in the economy is underway. There is therefore an argument for increasing the availability of development land to increase choice and flexibility and thus stimulate investment. This can only be achieved through a new plan with a strategic vision to 2030.

4.0 A Settlement Strategy for Accommodating Growth

Principles for Planning for Growth

- 4.1** To ensure that development is balanced and sustainable and helps to improve the quality of life for existing communities, intervention is needed. Plan making allows local people the opportunity to present their vision of how an area can be developed based on two guiding principles:
- *Sustainable Development* based on four objectives: social progress that meets the needs of everyone; effective environmental protection; prudent use of natural resources; and maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth.
 - *Equality of Opportunity* between people of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, sex, marital status, physical ability, sexual orientation, and those with/without dependants. This includes promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group (Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75)
- 4.2** These principles are also complemented by objectives aimed at addressing poverty (*Lifetime Opportunities - Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland*) and ensuring the special needs of rural communities are considered (*Rural Proofing*).

Existing Growth Strategies - Regional Context

- 4.3** In Northern Ireland a two-tier approach to planning for growth has been adopted, comprising the Regional Development Strategy and Local Development Plan. The Regional Development Strategy 2025 (DRD 2001) introduced a framework for the future physical development of the Region based on urban hubs and clusters, key and link transport corridors and the main gateways of ports and airports. Protection and enhancement of the environment allied to the promotion of a strong spatially based economy, a healthy living environment and an inclusive society were an integral part of the drive to achieve balanced growth within the region. The Strategy has been reviewed and these themes have been built upon in the RDS 2035 (2012).
- 4.4** Spatial Framework Guidance in the RDS 2035 which is aimed at achieving sustainable development, promotes economic development opportunities and population growth in the hubs and clusters. For the rural area outside of the main and local hubs, the spatial framework guidance is to sustain the rural communities living in smaller settlements (small towns, villages and small rural settlements) and the open countryside and to improve accessibility for rural communities. The RDS recognises that a strong network of smaller towns supported by villages helps to sustain and service the rural community.
- 4.5** The RDS identifies Enniskillen not only as a hub but also as an inter-regional gateway to the Republic of Ireland, being only 1 hours drive to Sligo. Omagh is also identified as a hub, being a major administrative centre and situated on the Western Economic Corridor. Unlike other hubs such as Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon, Enniskillen and Omagh are remote from each other so that there is little opportunity to cluster i.e. co-operation and sharing of services.
- 4.6** The RDS does not attempt to specify population growth for each Council district but instead applies housing growth indicators (HGIs) which are derived from examining 2008-based NISRA household projections, existing stock, vacancies etc. The previous RDS covering the period 1998-2015 had a total requirement of 208,000 new dwellings over that 17 year period. The total requirement in the RDS 2035 for the period 2008-2025 has been set at 190,000. Fermanagh and Omagh's share of this requirement as provided by the HGIs is 6,800 and 6,100 respectively for the period 2008-2025. When this projected to 2030 and housing completions deducted, the Local Development Plan should provide for 14,500 new homes across the council area. This is more than sufficient to meet the needs of a growing number of households which is anticipated to increase by some 8,000 over the same period (Table 20). Further details of these figures together with the extent of housing land supply will be addressed in the paper on housing.
- 4.7** The RDS spatial strategy is implemented at local level by development plans and HGIs for each of the existing 26 District Councils have been

produced as a guide. The current legislative requirement is that development plans must be “in general conformity with” the RDS. Under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, development plans must “take account” of the RDS.

Existing Local Area Plans

- 4.8** Both the Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 and Omagh Area Plan 2002 are now well past their notional end-by dates and were prepared long before the introduction of the RDS and in very different social and economic climates. Each plan established a settlement hierarchy upon which future development or growth was based. In both plans, the main town would be the focus for most development with the smaller towns and villages identified as local centres serving the needs of their rural hinterlands. However, unlike Fermanagh, the Omagh Area Plan had small settlements or hamlets designated below village level - a fourth tier in the settlement hierarchy. These settlements could accommodate small groups of dwellings or single dwellings as long as their size, character and identity were preserved.
- 4.9** Fermanagh has 39 villages compared to 9 in Omagh and they vary greatly in size, form and function and capacity to accommodate growth. For example, some of the larger settlements such as Ballinamallard and Belleek are fairly urban in character, accommodating important local industries and a range of shops and services. However, there are many smaller settlements such as Whitehill and Ardess which could be described as hamlets or clusters based around crossroads that are more rural in character.
- 4.10** Another distinction between the two existing districts is that Fermanagh has Dispersed Rural Communities. In all, 11 such communities were designated to promote rural regeneration and promote some scope for some additional residential development, based at focal points or in surrounding townlands (Table 21).

Table 21: Existing Settlement Hierarchy for Fermanagh and Omagh Districts

Settlement Hierarchy	Fermanagh	Settlement Hierarchy	Omagh
Main Town	Enniskillen	Main Town	Omagh
Local Towns	Irvinestown Lisnaskea	Local Towns	Fintona Dromore Carrickmore
Villages	Ardess Arney/Skea Ballinamallard Ballycassidy Belcoo Bellanaleck Belleek	Villages	Beragh Drumquin Gortin Greencastle Loughmacrory Mountfield Seskinore

Settlement Hierarchy	Fermanagh	Settlement Hierarchy	Omagh
	Brookeborough Carranbeg Carrontremall Carrybridge Church Hill Clabby Derrygonnelly Derrylin Donagh Ederney Florencecourt Garrison Kesh Killadeas Killesher Kinawley Lack Letterbreen Lisbellaw Lisnarick Magheraveely Maguiresbridge Monea Mullanaskea Newtownbutler Pettigo Rosslea Springfield Tamlaght Teemore Tempo Whitehill		Sixmilecross Trillick
Dispersed Rural Communities (DRCs)	Aghadrumsee Aghakillymaud Boho Cashel Coa Cooneen Corraney Derrygannon Knocks Mullaghduin Mulleek.	Small Settlements	Altamuskin, Clanabogan Creggan, Dooish Drumduff, Drumnakilly Dunmoyle, Dunmullan Edenderry, Eskragh Garvaghey, Gillygooley Glenhull, Gortaclare/Moylagh Gortnagarn, Kilskeery Knockmoyle, Mountjoy Newtownsaville Roscavey, Rousky Tattyreagh, Tircur Tummery/Lisdoe

4.11 It is therefore recommended that the settlement hierarchy for the new Council area be re-examined to identify if any settlements need to be re-designated based on their function and services. A starting point is to use a settlement classification based on the Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Infrastructure Wheel in the RDS 2035. This

outlines the patterns of service provision that are likely to be appropriate at different spatial levels including neighbourhoods, smaller towns, regional towns and cities (Table 22). Small settlements, Dispersed Rural Communities and the rural area complete the hierarchy of locations where development may take place.

Table 22: Settlement Hierarchy Classification

Infrastructure	Principal City	Regional Town	Smaller Towns	Villages
Skills	University	Further Education; Special Schools	Library; post- Primary	Nursery; Primary School
Health	Acute Hospital, A& E, Maternity	A&E Hospital, Children's Home, Minor Injuries, Outpatients	Pharmacy, Health Centres, Social Services, Day Care Centres	Doctor, Ambulance, Outreach Services
Social	Museums/Gallerie s, Conference/Conc ert Arena	Leisure Centre(pool) Visitor Centre, Advice Centres, Arts & Culture Centre	Community Centre, Sports Facility, Welfare Services	Local Hall, Play Areas
Environment	Power Generation, AONB/ASSI	Water & Sewage Treatment Plants, Waste-landfill, Waste-recycle	Recycling, Renewables, Water & Sewers Supply	Access to clean water, sewage disposal
Commercial	Department Stores, Specialist Shops, Arts & Cultural Facilities	Shopping Centres, Retail Warehousing, Range of Restaurants	Supermarket, Restaurants, Mix of Retail Facilities	Shop, Pub, Post Office, Petrol Station
Justice	Police HQ, High Court, Prison Forensic Science	Police District, County Court, Probation Service	Police Station	Neighbourhood Watch
Productive	Tourism Signature Projects, Science Centre, Major Industrial parks, Strategic Development Zones	Industrial Park, Tourism Office	Enterprise Centre, Information Office	Workshop/ Business unit
Networks	Ports & Airports, Key Transport Nodes, Energy Generation Interconnector	Major Roads, Bus/Rail, Park N' Ride, Cycle Network	Link Corridors/Trunk Roads, Bus/Rail to larger centres	Local Roads, Broadband, Urban Street Lighting, Local Bus, Cycle

Source: RDS 2035 (DRD 2012)

A Proposed Settlement Strategy for Accommodating Growth

4.12 To achieve the RDS objectives of promoting population growth and economic development in the main hubs and sustaining rural communities living in small towns, villages, small rural settlements and the open countryside, a strategy for accommodating growth can be defined based on the following settlement hierarchy:

Main Town – *The hubs of Enniskillen and Omagh act as the main service centres with Enniskillen also acting as an inter-regional gateway. It is therefore intended to focus major population and economic growth on Enniskillen and Omagh, thus maximising benefits from efficient use of existing facilities, infrastructure and their strategic location on the transport corridors. It is anticipated that the attraction of the town centres will be reinforced by retail, office and mixed use development. They will accommodate economic development through expansion and creation of industrial estates and modern enterprise and business centres. They will accommodate new residential development both within the existing urban fabric and through the expansion and creation of new neighbourhoods.*

Local/Small Towns - *These are important local service centres providing a range of goods, services, leisure and cultural facilities to meet the needs of their rural hinterland. Growth should be balanced across these towns to sustain, consolidate and revitalise them, focusing new retail and services within their town centres and providing opportunity for privately led economic investment in business and industry. These towns also can accommodate residential development in the form of housing estates, smaller groups or individual houses.*

Villages – *These important local service centres, provide goods, services and facilities to meet the daily needs of the rural area. They are good locations for rural businesses and can accommodate residential development in the form of small housing estates, housing groups and individual dwellings.*

Small settlements – *These act as a focal point for the rural community and take the form of a rural cluster or cross roads development where consolidation of the built form can provide opportunity for individual dwellings and/or small groups of houses and small rural businesses.*

Dispersed Rural Communities – *These take into account remoteness, evidence of community activity associated with focal points e.g. school, shop, and an established dispersed pattern of settlement. Policies within DRCs may include provision for small scale housing, appropriate economic development enterprises, and new social or community facilities.*

The Open Countryside - Outside settlements, residential and other types of development will also be facilitated so long as it is balanced between protection of the environment from inappropriate development, while supporting and sustaining vibrant rural communities. The rural area offers opportunities in terms of the potential for growth in new sectors, the provision of rural recreation and tourism, its attractiveness as a place to invest, live and work, and its role as a reservoir of natural resources and highly valued landscapes.

- 4.13** Under the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), Councils will be expected to bring forward a strategy for development in the countryside. This should reflect the aim, objectives and policy approach of the SPPS tailored to the specific circumstances of the plan area.
- 4.14** In defining where each settlement sits in the hierarchy, account should be taken of a wide range of factors, including the RDS spatial framework, the population of individual settlements and an assessment of the role or function of settlements. The housing paper that follows will focus in more detail on apportioning housing within the settlement hierarchy.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendations

- 5.1** The purpose of this paper has been to provide base line information on the population of the new Council area to assist in informing the Community Plan and to establish the planning needs of the community. In compiling this paper, it is recognised that this evidence can be supplemented by the Community Plan process.
- 5.2** It is therefore **recommended** to Members that:
- (i) This report is considered and updated in light of work undertaken as part of the community planning process.
 - (ii) Local and regional organisations representing groups under Section 75 are identified, included in the Statement of Community Involvement and consulted with as part of the process of formulating a new development plan.
 - (iii) The needs identified are used as a working draft for the preparatory studies for the Local development Plan, and are taken into account when formulating both the aims and objectives of the plan and future policy.
 - (vii) Consideration is given to the existing growth strategy and Members' suggestions on changes to the settlement hierarchy such as alterations to the status of existing settlements or

designation of new settlements, including dispersed rural communities are welcome and will be subjected to a sustainability appraisal.

- (viii) The settlement hierarchy and strategy is broadly in keeping with the Regional Development Strategy and provides a framework against which to formulate a Local Development Plan.