

Fermanagh and Omagh
Community Planning Partnership



**Fermanagh and Omagh Community Planning Partnership – Community Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment
Environmental Report
October 2016**

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Non-Technical Summary

What is a Strategic Environmental Assessment?

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is to assess the potential environmental impact of the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan. It is a high level appraisal, considering the potential positive and negative impacts, the potential significance of the impacts and where required, potential alternatives, mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements. The overall aim is to safeguard the environment and promote sustainable development.

The value in this Strategic Environmental Assessment is that it demonstrates the level of environmental consideration that has been applied throughout the development of the Community Plan and will continue to be applied as the process proceeds into the delivery phase. Any physical development that arises from the Community Plan – or that receives the support of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board – will be subject to its own detailed site-specific environmental assessment in line with planning policy. In addition, any further plans or strategies that follow the plan will also be required to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation (Northern Ireland 2004).

What has been assessed?

The Strategic Environmental Assessment has assessed the potential environmental impact of the 78 strategic actions in the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan.

How is a Strategic Environmental Assessment undertaken?

The process for undertaking the Strategic Environmental Assessment has three stages:

- 1) Determination Report:** to consider whether the plan is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. This is a short report, with a series of yes/no answers. If the plan is considered to have no significant adverse environmental impact, the process need go no further.
- 2) Scoping Report:** to identify the significant environmental issues and level of detail required. This includes collecting baseline data and outlining an approach to undertaking the assessment.
- 3) Environmental Report:** the final report, citing the issues, alternatives, actions and measures for monitoring the impact on the environment.

Each stage of the process is consulted on by the Natural Environment Division of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Historic Environment Division in the Department for Communities.

What environmental impact could the Community Plan have?

The Community Plan sets out a vision for the district, shared principles, outcomes and strategic actions. Thematic action plans under each of the three themes will be formulated following the plan's adoption in April 2017. Therefore, at this stage, it is fair to acknowledge that there much specific information in relation to detailed actions yet unknown. This is of relevance in the context of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. Many of the negative environmental impacts will be dependent upon the specifics, such as the nature and location of activity. This cannot be assessed within the scope of this SEA, but is likely to be picked up in due course, on a case-by-case basis, in line with legislation.

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Instead, by assessing the 78 strategic actions in a sign-posting document, this Strategic Environmental Assessment aims to identify potential environmental issues early in the process and ensuring they are considered throughout.

How will the adverse environmental impacts be mitigated and monitored?

A series of mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements have been identified in section 6 of this report. Whilst many different mitigation measures have been identified, they can be summarised as the following:

- The erection of appropriate signage and signposting to promote the *leave no trace* principle and other environmental best practice across shared and open spaces, walkways, cyclepaths, greenways and blueways etc;
- The promotion of electronic communications, where appropriate, in the first instance, followed by public transport and in the last instance, car sharing;
- Applying the principle of sustainability across all action plans and relevant programmes;
- Ensuring that any enterprise support programmes (regardless of the sector of the business) includes raising awareness of the environment and includes the development and implementation of a full suite of Environmental Statements;
- Seeking to support the promotion brownfield and opportunity sites for development in the first instance;
- Promoting the cross-cutting principle of an ‘evidence based approach’, ensuring the need for any development is clear and the proposed action is not excessive; and
- Continuing to enforce existing litter prevention measures.

In addition to those summarised above, it is worth noting that any new physical developments that arise from the Community Plan (and thus are supported by the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board) will be subject to site specific environmental assessments during the planning process.

Next Steps

The Fermanagh and Omagh Community Planning Partnership invites you to consider the Strategic Environmental Assessment alongside the Community Plan itself.

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1) Introduction

This document comprises the Strategic Environmental Assessment (Environmental Report) for the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan. It is a high level appraisal and follows on from development of the Scoping Report which was issued on 10th June 2016. The comments, where relevant, are applied to this assessment and report.

The Community Plan is the long-term strategic planning document for the Fermanagh and Omagh District. It provides the overarching policy and strategic framework for the delivery of services by all Partner agencies. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has committed to reviewing its Corporate Plan to ensure it is consistent with the Community Plan. An overview of the Community Plan is provided in section 2 of this report.

The value in this Strategic Environmental Assessment is that it demonstrates the level of environmental consideration that has been applied throughout the development of the Community Plan and will continue to be applied as the process proceeds into the delivery phase. The Community Plan is still in draft format; much has been developed in the interim period between the Scoping Report being issued for consultation and the finalisation of this assessment. The Community Plan is still subject to further development following the first meeting of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board and secondly as a result of the public consultation phase.

The Community Plan sets out a vision for the district, shared principles, outcomes and strategic actions. Thematic action plans under each of the three themes will be formulated following the plan's adoption in April 2017. Therefore, at this stage, it is fair to acknowledge that there is much specific information in relation to detailed actions yet unknown. This is of relevance in the context of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. Many of the negative environmental impacts will be dependent upon the specifics, such as the nature and location of activity. This cannot be assessed within the scope of this SEA, but is likely to be picked up in due course, on a case-by-case basis, in line with legislation. Instead, this report is a sign-posting document, aiming to identify potential environmental issues early in the process and ensuring they are considered throughout.

This SEA is undertaken in accordance with *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005)*, which provides guidance on SEA in the UK from the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and devolved administrations.

2) The Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan

2.1) Context to the development of the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has a legislative duty, under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 to *initiate, maintain, facilitate and participate in community planning*. Community Planning partners must participate and assist the Council in discharge of its duties in relation to Community Planning.

The Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan is being developed in three phases:

- The collation of a robust evidence base, providing
 - a detailed statistical profile of the region with regard to its social, economic and environmental baseline;
 - a comprehensive strategy review, considering the range of strategies and policies that affect the Fermanagh and Omagh region;
- Widespread public engagement, in which over 900 people directly participated across all 7 District Electoral Areas (DEAs), ensured all Section 75 groups were suitably engaged and included the views of local elected representatives, which informed the priority areas the Community Plan should seek to address; and
- Establishing a Themes Co-Ordinating Group (TCG), comprising of statutory partners, other public sector partners, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector, which met on a monthly basis, to convert the priorities into outcomes, indicators and strategic commitments / actions and form a vision statement for the Community Plan

The Community Plan is now at a draft stage. It is still subject to further development following the first meeting of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board and the comments received during the public consultation phase

2.2) The Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan

The Community Plan applies an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) Model, which starts by setting out the overall vision for the local area: **“Our vision is of a vibrant, living place where people enjoy improved prosperity and in a safe, shared, connected and sustainable environment”**.

The Plan also identifies a set of shared values and principles: i) Openness, accountability and transparency; ii) Equality, inclusivity and diversity; iii) Addressing deprivation; iv) Prevention and early intervention; v) Sustainability; (vi) An ‘evidence based’ approach; vii) Effective engagement; viii) Continuous improvement and ix) Working collaboratively.

The three themes and nine outcomes in the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan are presented in table 2.1 below: (The strategic actions are assessed in section 4 of this document).

Table 2.1: Fermanagh and Omagh Community Planning Themes, Priorities and Outcomes (draft August 2016)

People and Communities	
Priority	Outcome
Physical and Mental Wellbeing	1. Our people have improved physical health and mental wellbeing
An Ageing Population	2. Older people lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives
Strong, Safe, Shared and Inclusive Communities	3. Our communities are inclusive and safe, and people feel safer
	4. Our communities are more vibrant, resilient and empowered
Children and Young People	5. Our people have the best start in life with lifelong opportunities to fulfil their potential
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	
Priority Area	Outcome
Economic Growth, including local, sustainable jobs, infrastructural improvements and tourism	6. Our economy is thriving, expanding and outward looking
Connectivity	7. Our district is a connected place
Environment	
Priority Area	Outcome
Natural Environment (including climate change and energy), Cultural and Built Heritage	8. Our outstanding natural environment and cultural and built heritage is enhanced and sustainably managed
Sustainable Future Development for all	9. Our district is an attractive and more accessible place

3) Baseline Information, Environmental Implications and SEA Objectives

3.1) Introduction

The collection, collation and articulation of a robust evidence base has been a cornerstone of the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Planning Process. This task was undertaken on a thematic basis and covered the social, economic and environmental aspects of the district. There still remain gaps, in terms of subject area and geographical tier, which will be covered as part of the SEA process.

The Environmental Report for the Community Plan encompasses a full and comprehensive list of baseline environmental data, utilising GIS mapping, info graphics and charts where appropriate to display the data. This includes a mapping of the significant number of international and regionally designated important sites including Ramsar, SACs, SPAs and ASSIs.

3.2) Baseline Information

Table 1 below provides a summary of the baseline information against a full range of environmental receptors. The receptors used are drawn from *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005)*.

Table 3.1: Baseline Information

Environmental Receptor	Summary of Baseline Information	Source
Air Quality and Climate Change	<p>Air quality within Fermanagh and Omagh is generally of a high standard in terms of meeting national air quality targets. It has been determined that in current conditions, there is limited chance of exceeding any of the national air quality objectives for the listed pollutants. As such, no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) have been designated in the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Area. However, it is recognised that air quality has become a significant issue at a Northern Ireland level, particularly in relation to nitrogen dioxide and ammonia and its impact on biodiversity.</p> <p>The Fermanagh and Omagh area has made a significant contribution to renewable energy provision in Northern Ireland; 497 applications for single wind turbines were received within the district between 2002-2015 and planning permission has been granted for 33 wind farms.</p>	<p>DAERA: Local Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and Smoke Control Areas (SCA)</p> <p>Centre for Ecology & Hydrology</p> <p>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council: Planning Department (formerly DoE)</p>

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Environmental Receptor	Summary of Baseline Information	Source
	<p>Flooding has been a prominent issue, particularly in recent years. There are eight settlements within FODC which have a 1% risk of flooding in any year. In addition, the flood defences in Omagh town centre have been indicated as no longer sufficient to provide the minimum level of protection required under PPS 15 Planning and Flood Risk. However land within the floodplain may be able to be developed with proper modelling and mitigation measures put in place.</p>	<p>DAERA Flood Maps (formerly DARD)</p>
<p>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</p>	<p>Fermanagh and Omagh is rich in biodiversity with many different types of wild grassland, pristine lakelands and rivers, three different peatland ecosystems, calcareous habitats, and hedgerows providing settings for an opulent range of wildlife. Biodiversity is perhaps best demonstrated by the range of designated areas (8 Ramsar areas, 120 ASSIs, 20 Special Areas of Conservation, 13 National Nature Reserves and 3 Special Protection Areas (Pettigo Plateau, Upper Lough Erne and Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea) and the presence of 30 priority habitats and 216 priority species.</p> <p>It is recognised that Northern Ireland has an increasing issue with nitrogen dioxide and ammonia levels. The current background levels are greater than the critical levels for some habitat types.</p> <p>In addition, the State of the Environment 2013 report noted that significant challenges remain to reverse the decline of biodiversity at a Northern Ireland level.</p>	<p>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council: Local Biodiversity Action Plan</p> <p>Centre for Ecology & Hydrology</p> <p>NIEA: <i>From Evidence to Activity: A Second Assessment of the State of Northern Ireland's Environment</i></p>
<p>Population and Health</p>	<p>The population has grown over the past decade, and is projected to continue to grow. The majority of this is expected to be driven by natural change (births less deaths) with limited net inward migration over the period anticipated. The population in the district is getting older, with 15.3% of the 2014 population aged over 65 years; by 2030, the over 65 population will account for 23%. Life expectancy in the district has increased and is generally above average. However, there are noted issues with regard to both physical and mental wellbeing, including an</p>	<p>NISRA Mid-Year Population Estimates;</p> <p>NISRA Mid-Year Population Estimates – Components of Change</p> <p>NISRA Population Projections for Areas within NI (2012 based)</p>

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Environmental Receptor	Summary of Baseline Information	Source
	increase in the number of residents with hypertension, obesity and being prescribed anti-depressant drugs which have raised concerns.	DoH Public Health Information Branch HSCNI – Prescriptions for antidepressant drugs
Economy and Employment	Despite a historical linkage with ‘traditional industries’, the majority of jobs located in the Fermanagh and Omagh district are in the tertiary sector. Average earnings are below the NI average and the majority of businesses are micro-businesses. Tourism is an important contributor to the local economy. Town centre vacancy rates have increased since 2009.	DfE Census of Employment DfE: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings DFE: LGD Tourism Statistics Land and Property Services 2014
Housing	A total of 992 houses were built in the towns and villages in the district between April 2008 and March 2015. 70% of the remaining residentially zoned land is located in the two main towns. Almost three-quarters of all dwellings in the district are owner occupied (above the NI average), with a below NI average level of social rented housing. The majority of dwellings in the district are detached. The revised Housing Growth Indicators for Fermanagh and Omagh project an additional 4,500 dwellings are required for the period 2012-2025. The district has a potential oversupply of housing sites / land.	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council: Planning Department (formerly DoE) NISRA Census 2011
Cultural Heritage and Landscape	Fermanagh and Omagh has an expansive presence of built and cultural heritage, with a range of listed buildings, heritage sites, sites of historical interest, designated character areas and areas of archaeological potential and interest. However, there are 76 buildings on the Buildings at Risk Register (BARNI register) and access to some of the sites – held on private land – remains an issue. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area comprises a mixture of landscapes which provide a rich resource of productive agricultural land, habitats for nature conservation, archaeological and historical features and remains. Key features include Lough Erne, which covers 144km ² of the district, the UNESCO Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark, the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (partly located in the district). There are proposals in place for a further 258 Local Landscape Policy Areas	DfC: Buildings at Risk Register NIEA: Digital Downloads Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 and Omagh Area Plan 1987-2002

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Environmental Receptor	Summary of Baseline Information	Source
	(LLPAs) and 3 Special Countryside Areas (SCAs) within Fermanagh and Omagh ¹ .	
Material Assets	There are currently 25 active quarries dealing with a finite resource with limestone and sand and gravel prominent in different sub-sections of the district. Gold extraction is also present, with an active mine and an additional exploratory mine (which sits within the Sperrins AONB). There are 38,000 hectares of peatland with commercial peat extraction taking place in 3 locations across the district.	Quarry Products Association of Northern Ireland (QPANI)
Soil	The soil quality index for Northern Ireland ranges from very good to very poor. Fermanagh and Omagh has 44.1% classified as being between moderate and very good quality compared to 57.1% for NI. Much of the poorer quality lands are peatland which is predominantly found within upland areas. The low lying areas are generally productive agricultural land. It is recognised that Northern Ireland has an increasing issue with nitrogen dioxide and ammonia levels. Whilst it is not a significant issue in Fermanagh and Omagh at this time, an increase in levels locally could have a detrimental impact on soil quality.	Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Transport and Accessibility	Fermanagh and Omagh district has an extensive network of road infrastructure and services ranging from major strategic routes to minor local roads. However, 5 of the top 10 wards most deprived wards in terms of proximity to services are located in the district. This may be in part due to the fact there are no motorways or dual carriageways within the district, nor is there a rail network. There are extensive footpaths systems within the urban areas and a National Cycle Network which passes through the area. Given the rural nature and size of the district the private car is the most common mode of transport with 85% of households in the district having access to at least one car. The other main modes of travel within the district are public transport, walking and cycling.	DfI Transport Statistics Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Index 2010 (NIMDM) NISRA Census 2011
Waste	There has been a decrease in the amount of household waste sent to landfill overtime.	DAERA: Municipal Waste Report

¹ In addition to the key features and identified designated sites, it is recognised that the Historic Environment Division within the Department for Communities are undergoing a process of review in regard to Areas of Special Archaeological Interest across Northern Ireland. This is likely to lead to recommendations regards changing some of the existing ASAI's and identifying new ones for designation. Similarly, the Gazetteer of Nucleated Historic Urban Settlements, which informs the definition of Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAPs) is also being updated and the work is nearing completion.

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Environmental Receptor	Summary of Baseline Information	Source
	Equally, the amount of household waste that is recycled, reused and composted has increased. However, the district is still working towards the 50% recycling rate as set out in the Waste Framework Directive. This also relates to Material Assets.	
Water	The six water treatment works in the district are sufficient to provide for the needs of the residents, having a compliance rate that is above the water quality target of compliance. The European Community freshwater fish directive also applies to our waterways with over 90% of our waters complying with the UK Target of the Water Framework Directive (UKTAG WFD) microbial standards. The main issue is that 6 waste water sites have no remaining headroom capacity and have not been identified for update within NI Water Capital Works programme 2015-2021	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Planning Department DAERA Environmental Statistical Report (formerly DOE) NIEA North Western Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021

3.3) Environmental Issues

The environmental assessment of the Community Plan will identify and assess the environmental issues and problems that affect the Fermanagh and Omagh area, utilising the information identified through an analysis of the baseline data. From this assessment, the Community Planning Partnership (which will be in place during the Environmental Reporting process) will be able to predict whether the current environmental issues and problems will be exacerbated, stabilised or enhanced by implementing the Community Plan. The results of this are in the Significance Assessment (section 4) of this report.

Environmental issues were frequently raised throughout the public engagement phase and are reflected across the Community Planning outcomes². Based on the findings of the initial engagement phase, and the information summarised in table 1, the existing environmental issues and problems that affect Fermanagh and Omagh are summarised below:

- There is an increased risk of flooding as a result of climate change and other factors;
- The provision of new infrastructure (transport, digital and public utilities, amongst others) could have significant adverse implications for landscape, scenic quality, habitats, biodiversity, flora and fauna and potential impacts on air and water quality and effects of aerial deposition;
- Town centres and other areas are suffering from increased vacancy rates and are in need of measures to improve accessibility and the environment;
- The extraction of minerals and development of renewable energies (gold, gas, peat and wind in particular) can have a significant impact on biodiversity, flora and fauna, habitats, landscape quality and human health/residential amenity;
- There is a need to balance the desire to grow our tourism economy, utilising our rich landscape, whilst protecting the landscape and the biodiversity / flora / fauna within;

² The results of the public engagement phase can be found at:
<http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/communityplanning/>

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- Reducing the carbon footprint of the district, but recognising the rural characteristics of the area and the difficulty in replacing the car as the dominant form of transport in the district.

In addition to the Fermanagh and Omagh specific issues raised above, it is noted that there are range of issues at a Northern Ireland level that need to be monitored closely across the District to aid mitigation efforts. These include, but are not limited to³:

- An increase in nitrogen dioxide emissions, due to transport, and ammonia emissions, mainly due to livestock, which pose a risk to sensitive habitats and ecosystems;
- Greenhouse gas emissions have reduced by 11% between 1990 and 2007, but transport emissions are still increasing and long term trends on rainfall and temperature levels remain unclear;
- Only around 25% of rivers and lakes across NI meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directorate, with little overall change in status since 2009;
- Whilst the overall quality of the marine environment is increasing, marine litter remains a significant issue, with just one third of marine bodies meeting objectives;
- Land use and landscape character in NI has been changing with the development of upland wind farms;
- Biodiversity continues to be under threat, with broad habitat changes reported in the Northern Ireland Countryside Survey (2007) showing continued loss of semi-natural habitats mainly resulting from agricultural conversion and rural building, but the rate of loss had declined since the 1998 survey;
- Archaeological resources are still at risk from agricultural land use and urban activities, but protected sites have fared better. The Second Survey of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest has led to an increase in the number of listings, but also an increase in the number deemed to be at risk; and
- Whilst there has been a steady increase in recycling rate in recent years, the focus must now be on waste prevention and reducing consumption;

3.4) The Absence of the Community Plan

Failing to develop and implement a Community Plan for the Fermanagh and Omagh area would be a failure to comply with statutory duty under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016. This is a highly unlikely instance.

However, in the absence of the Community Plan, there would be a lack of co-ordination at a strategic level, with a consequent effect on operational activity. Such a level of co-ordination is particularly relevant given the dispersed rural settlement pattern of the District. In particular, the failure to implement the Community Plan could lead to:

- A lack of proactive support for preventable measures to aid community resilience in areas of current flood risk;
- A lack of recognition for, and a joined-up approach to, addressing areas of need in human health, in particular the challenge of a growing older population;
- A lack of balance between economic development (including tourism) and environmental conservation at the strategic level;

³ All information sourced in the bullet points is sourced from: NIEA / DoE, 2013, *From Evidence to Opportunity: A Second Assessment of the State of Northern Ireland's Environment*. Accessed through: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/corporate-report-from-evidence-to-opportunity-second-assessment-of-state-of-ni-environment-2013.pdf>

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- Tourism development and increased access to the countryside occurring without sufficient consideration of potential impacts on biodiversity, habitats and landscape quality;
- A void in a cross-organisational approach to promoting alternative forms of transport (including lobbying for increased public transport provision) to reduce the dependence on the car.

3.5) Developing SEA Objectives

It is clear that the key issue the Community Plan must address – and indeed the value it adds – is balance. In the absence of the Community Plan as an overarching, long term, strategic document, social and economic objectives could be set in isolation of environmental objectives. With this in mind, we have developed a range of SEA objectives, against which all outcomes and actions cited in the Community Plan will be assessed.

The Community Plan should...

1. ...seek to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of the population
2. ...support the ageing population to live healthy, independent and socially connected lives
3. ...promote safe, inclusive, resilient and vibrant communities
4. ...support the younger population by addressing educational inequalities and promoting life skills
5. ...seek to improve public utilities infrastructure
6. ...protect, enhance and sustainably manage the outstanding natural environment and cultural heritage
7. ...safeguard all designated sites, habitats and priority species from adverse impacts, loss and fragmentation
8. ...promote improved access to the countryside in a sustainable manner
9. ...support the district in becoming more energy efficient
10. ...seek to reduce the district's carbon footprint
11. ...promote the use of sustainable models of transport where possible
12. ...seek to ensure that public transport connections, cycling and walking routes are easily accessible to all
13. ...seek to protect and, where possible, enhance shared and inclusive open spaces
14. ...seek to protect existing areas/sites which are at risk from flooding
15. ...seek to minimise the production of waste
16. ...promote the level of recycling, supporting the achievement of the 50% target under the Waste Directive.
17. ...promote awareness of climate change and environmental issues and empower the local community to become more resilient to climate change
18. ...seek to bring a sense of balance to the utilisation of alternative energy sources and material assets against the preservation of our environment
19. ... seek to make the district a more attractive and accessible place for living, visiting and working

4) Methodology

4.1) Introduction and Approach

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation (Northern Ireland 2004) requires the Environmental Report to assess and evaluate the likely significant environmental impacts that, in this instance, the implementation of the Community Plan could have. Examples from other Councils, and utilising the Scottish SEA Toolkit, suggest the findings in the Environmental Report should be unbiased, robust, objective, transparent and easy to understand.

The approach proposed in the SEA Scoping report was to apply the SEA objectives and the topic and sub-questions identified to the Community Planning outcomes. Whilst this ethos remains, strategic high level actions have since been developed under each outcome and it is felt that these strategic actions were a more appropriate level of detail at which to undertake the assessment.

4.2) The SEA Framework - Summary

The Strategic Environmental Assessment was undertaken using the three staged method as outlined in the Scoping Document, which is summarised below.

Stage 1 - Scoping: The SEA Scoping report included a scoping of all Community Planning outcomes. This was to determine if any of the outcomes could have an impact on any of the environmental receptors, regardless of whether the impact was likely to be positive or negative or how significant it could be.

This stage was covered in the Scoping Report, and the conclusion was that all the outcomes were scoped in for further examination. Although the focus of the assessment has moved to strategic actions (as opposed to outcomes), the ethos remains and all actions were scoped in for further consideration.

Stage 2 – Significance Assessment: This stage tested the likely significance of the impact of each strategic action on the environment. Strategic Actions deemed to have a high level of adverse significance are taken on to stage 3 to assess alternatives, mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements. Those deemed to have a low level of significance or a net positive impact are noted, but not taken forward to Stage 3. A justification is provided for each strategic action. The Significance Assessment is in section 5 of this report.

Stage 3 – Assessment, Mitigation and Monitoring: This stage considered potential alternatives to the strategic action, whether or not the alternatives are viable or best placed to deliver an all-round optimal outcome. Following the identification of the alternative, measures for mitigating against the adverse impact to the environment are identified alongside proposed method of monitoring the impact on an ongoing basis. These are set out in section 6 of this report.

5) Significance Assessment

5.1) Introduction

The Significance Assessment is the second stage of the Environmental Assessment process. It considers what impact on the environment the strategic actions within the Community Plan are likely to have. This includes whether the impact is net positive, net negative or nil. The significance of each strategic action is also assessed. Those that are deemed to have the potential to have a significant negative impact on the environment will be taken forward to the next stage of the assessment (section 5 of this report) where alternatives, mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements will be outlined. Those deemed to have the potential to have a net positive impact, or low levels of significance will be noted but not taken forward. They will continue to be informally reviewed as the Community Plan progresses into thematic delivery plans.

This section utilises the tabular methodology proposed in the Scoping Report. To aid the logistics of the significance assessment, the environmental receptors will be grouped into the following three broad topics:

- **Natural Environment:** Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna; Air Quality and Climate Change; Cultural Heritage and Landscape; Soil; Water
- **Built Environment:** Material Assets; Housing; Waste; Transport and Accessibility;
- **Social Environment:** Population and Health; Economic and Employment;

Table Key:

✓ = The action will have an impact, but it is not deemed to be significant

✓✓ = The action will have a significant impact

Green Shading = The impact will be net positive

Red Shading = The impact will be net negative

5.2) People and Communities

What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?	Next Step
1a) Provide early intervention and mental health promotion / improvement programmes		
This strategic action is focussed on implementing the principle of early intervention to deliver better health outcomes. It will have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is expected to benefit significantly due to better physical and mental health outcomes.	Natural and Historic Environment	Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment	
	Social Environment	
1b) Deliver co-ordinated programmes to reduce the effects of alcohol and drug misuse		
This strategic action aims to better co-ordinate a set of programmes and activity regarding alcohol and drug misuse. It will have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is expected to benefit significantly due to better physical and mental health outcomes.	Natural and Historic Environment	Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment	
	Social Environment	
1c) Provide programmes that will allow all people in the community to obtain, understand and use healthcare information to make appropriate health decisions, follow instructions for treatment and make better use of health services		
This strategic action is regarding the better use and dissemination of useful information. It will have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is expected to benefit significantly due to better physical and mental health outcomes.	Natural and Historic Environment	Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment	
	Social Environment	
1d) Improve access to and participation in active and creative pursuits, across all life stages		
This action could lead to the increased use of walkways, cycle paths, greenways / blueways and public open space. Many of these spaces are home to rich biodiversity, flora and fauna. Therefore, it is assessed that there is potential for this action to have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
	Social Environment	✓✓	
1e) Develop a local network of partners to co-ordinate and deliver improved access to and uptake of arts and cultural events and programmes			
Increasing access to and the uptake of arts and cultural events will require a diverse range of programmes to be delivered. This may involve utilising open and shared spaces, public realm and potentially areas of cultural importance. Therefore, it is assessed that there is potential for this action to have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
1f) Develop the South West Acute Hospital as a research centre of excellence in a specialist field			
Developing the South West Acute Hospital as a research centre of excellence is likely to result in more travelling to and from the district and potentially increase waste generation. Thus, it is deemed to have the potential to have a significantly adverse impact on both the natural and historic environment and the built environment (due to increased emissions as a result of increased transport). The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
2a) Develop an 'Age Friendly Strategy' to improve participation, health, security, active living and independence of older people			
The development of an 'Age Friendly Strategy' is itself not expected to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. However, as the strategic action specifically cites 'active living', which could lead to increased usage of walkways and public space, it is deemed as having the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
2b) Develop initiatives and pilot programmes to reduce isolation and loneliness amongst older people, including addressing transport and other barriers to participation			
This strategic action will almost certainly require more travelling throughout the district. It will have a significant positive impact on the social environment but is deemed to have the	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives,

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment.	Built Environment	✓✓	Mitigation and Monitoring
	Social Environment	✓✓	
2c) Provide relevant and timely information, advice and services to support carers and to help them to maintain their own health and wellbeing			
This strategic action is regarding the better use and dissemination of useful information. It will have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is expected to benefit significantly due to better physical and mental health outcomes.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
3a) Promote personal and community safety through provision of accessible information, initiatives and integrated support to vulnerable individuals and groups			
This strategic action is regarding the better use and dissemination of useful information and the better co-ordination of existing programmes. It will have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is expected to benefit significantly due to better physical and mental health outcomes.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
3b) Develop and implement intergenerational programmes aimed at reducing fear of crime			
The development and implementation of intergenerational programmes are all likely to take place in existing indoor venues. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
3c) Develop interventions and approaches with offenders and high-risk individuals to reduce the likelihood of offending/re-offending			

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
<p>This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
3d) Promote and support growth and development of shared education for all through the establishment and continuation of shared education models			
<p>Shared education requires the utilisation of facilities for more than one school and/or the replacement of existing facilities with new shared facilities. Promoting and supporting this will require more transport to and from schools and facilities, which is deemed to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment (and potentially the natural and historic environment). The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
3e) Promote and increase the use of open and shared space in the district			
<p>The increased use of open shared space could have an adverse impact on the natural and historic environment. A positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
3f) Increase understanding of and respect for minority groups and their cultures by supporting programmes of inclusive activity promoting equality and celebrating diversity			
<p>This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?	Next Step	
4a) Strengthen community infrastructure, including capacity building, across rural and urban areas			
Although the strategic action is likely to focus on capacity building and technology infrastructure within existing buildings in the short-to-medium term, the development of new physical infrastructure in the longer term could have significant adverse impacts on both the natural and historic environment and built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
4b) Develop integrated service delivery on an outreach basis in the form of rural hubs, where appropriate, using existing venues in order to better target services in rurally isolated areas			
Delivering services over a more sparse area, in many decentralised locations has the potential to reduce travel for service users, thus causing less damage to air quality than the existing arrangements. However, it could lead to more waste generation on a site-by-site basis, affecting the built environment. However, it is deemed that the waste generation issue is not significant and that the net overall impact on the environment would be positive.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
4c) Develop programmes of support for social enterprise / social entrepreneurs			
The creation of new business and increase in economic activity – social enterprise or otherwise – has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment through increased emissions, increased energy consumption and waste generation. The natural and historic environment could also suffer in the instance of new development.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
4d) Develop and implement a framework for community asset development and for transfer of assets to the community / voluntary sector, where opportunities arise and need is demonstrated			
The framework for community asset development and transfer is centred on transferring assets that are already in existence (community centres, play parks etc) over to new ownership. Any conservation or other environmental requirements will transfer in statue along with the asset. Therefore, It is deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Social Environment	✓✓	
4e) Develop programmes to encourage and recognise volunteering			
This strategic action aims to encourage and recognise the valuable contribution of volunteers across the district. It is a combination of better co-ordination of programmes and better marketing of important information regarding the value of volunteer contributions (monetary and non-monetary). It is deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action. The natural environment could also benefit as many opportunities exist in the district for conservation volunteering.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓	Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
4f) Develop community resilience infrastructure and projects to enable communities to withstand and recover from adverse impacts			
This strategic action centres on the response to flooding and other natural phenomena. This could lead to the development of physical infrastructure, or guidance and support, which would alleviate flooding or other incidents from certain areas. This may require the developments to be in areas of rich biodiversity, such as the lough shore. It could also have a significant positive impact on the natural and historic environment if flooding was avoided. There are also opportunities to benefit the natural environment as it is well recognised that allowing upstream spaces to flood is both good for biodiversity (in the right setting i.e. a wet habitat) and help prevent flooding downstream. Other actions to prevent flooding such as planting buffer woodlands along watercourses will help biodiversity. However, it is acknowledged that there could be the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and therefore is taken forward for further consideration.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring.
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
4g) Provide access to relevant and timely advice and information services			
This strategic action is regarding the better use and dissemination of useful information and the better co-ordination of existing programmes. It will have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is expected to benefit significantly due to better physical and mental health outcomes.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5a) Develop initiatives to reduce childcare barriers in order to support better access to learning			

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
<p>This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5b) Enhance local provision of parent support programmes to build family capacity and confidence, pre-birth and throughout early years			
<p>This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5c) Develop and enhance programmes to raise educational attainment levels in children and young people in the most deprived households			
<p>This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5d) Identify new approaches to re-engage disengaged pupils and support them to achieve their full potential, including use of vocational pathways and recreational activities			
<p>This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5e) Develop and implement community led programmes to improve attendance at school			
This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5f) Develop initiatives to encourage life-long learning and remove barriers to learning for the adult population			
This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5g) Develop programmes to reduce the impact of traumatic and painful family events on vulnerable children and families			
This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5h) Develop and implement a ‘Young People in Schools for Employment Local Action Plan’ to ensure young people have the necessary employability skills			
The development and implementation of an action plan (or strategy) in itself will not have any impact – positive or negative – on the natural and historic environment or built environment. It is expected to have a significant positive impact on the social environment.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5i) Increase young people’s resilience and problem solving skills through provision of Personal and Social development programmes			
This strategic action is centred on the enhancement and increased provision of programmes that exist in a limited form within the wider educational system. Therefore, the strategic action is deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action.
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
5j) Provide improved opportunities for play, recreation and creativity for all children and young people			
This strategic action is likely to lead to the increased use of public open space, public realm, walkways, cycle paths and green-ways / blue-ways. Many of these spaces are home to biodiversity, flora and fauna. If the increase in usage is not managed accordingly it could result in damage to biodiversity and habitat fragmentation. Therefore, it is deemed to have the potential to have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment. A positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any project or development.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	

5.3) Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
6a) Co-ordinate and deliver inclusive and accessible enterprise and entrepreneurship initiatives (including social enterprise)			
The creation of new business and increase in economic activity – social enterprise or otherwise – has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment through increased emissions, increased energy consumption and waste generation (which can affect the built and natural/historic environment). The natural and historic environment could also suffer in the instance of new development.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
	Social Environment	✓	
6b) Develop inclusive and accessible training and education initiatives informed by up to date analysis of predicted future employment opportunities and demands			
This strategic action is regarding the provision of training and education to build skills. It emphasises the need to look beyond current skills requirements and consider the skill needs of emerging industries. Any training and provision delivered is likely to be done in existing buildings and without displacing existing provision. Therefore, it is not deemed that this action has the potential to significantly adversely impact either the natural and historic environment or built environment.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
6c) Explore opportunities for innovative funding mechanisms to provide inclusive and accessible programmes which improve employability			
Exploring the opportunities for innovative funding mechanisms will be a desk based activity. The employability programmes that may follow as a result will be delivered within the existing infrastructure in the district and will run within the existing suite of programmes that are available. Therefore, it is not deemed that this action has the potential to significantly adversely impact either the natural and historic environment or built environment.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
6d) Implement an integrated, inclusive approach to ensuring that people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) are helped into sustainable employment and supported once in work			
This strategic action is focussed on the enhancement and better co-ordination of programmes and interventions that are already occurring in various forms. The activity will take place in existing indoor locations. Therefore, they are deemed to have no significant adverse impact on the natural, historic or built environment. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
6e) Provide increased access to university qualifications from within the local area			
Providing increased access to university qualifications locally aims to increase the qualification levels of those who cannot – or do not wish to – travel to undertake higher level courses. It will have a significant positive impact on the social environment but is not deemed	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
to have any significant impact – positive or negative – on the natural and historic environment or the built environment.	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓✓	
6f) Provide mentoring and training to support new and growing businesses, help existing firms create and sustain employment opportunities and encourage growth and internationalisation			
The encouragement of economic growth and internationalisation has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment through increased emissions, increased energy consumption and waste generation. The natural and historic environment could also suffer in the instance of new development.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
6g) Develop local access to research and innovation to support existing businesses and aid diversification into new business sectors where knowledge, technology and innovation are key drivers			
Increasing access to research and innovation will support the existing businesses in the district to improve their approach, diversify and ultimately, become more productive. There is potential that in the long run economic activity will increase which has the potential to cause increased traffic, waste generation and (in the long run) new development. However, it is unlikely that this strategic action in isolation would be a significant driver and thus it is not deemed to be a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment or built environment at this stage.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
6h) Develop a co-ordinated pathway for start-ups and business growth			
The creation of new business and increase in economic activity has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment through increased emissions, increased energy consumption and waste generation. The natural and historic environment could also suffer in the instance of new development.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
6i) Ensure and monitor the on-going availability and supply of appropriate industrial/commercial land and premises within the district			

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
<p>The availability and supply of suitable land and premises is likely to promote physical development, either in the form of renovation or new builds. Whilst this strategic action – nor the Community Plan – does not advocate the development of any particular sites, any physical development, regardless of location, is likely to present a risk to biodiversity, flora and fauna, habitat fragmentation, waste generation, the historic environment soil quality and water quality (depending on location). Thus, there is potential for this strategic action to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
6j) Develop a compelling proposition to attract investment into the area			
<p>The development of a compelling proposition to attract investment is largely a desk based activity and will not have any impact – positive or negative – on the natural and historic environment or built environment. In the long run, any investment secured in the area will receive due consideration of environmental issues through other Community Planning strategic actions, notably 6h.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		<p>Noted. No further action</p>
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
6k) Develop and promote the Fermanagh and Omagh area as a ‘Smart Region’			
<p>The principle underpinning the ‘Smart Region’ brand is the use of information to benefit the social, economic and environmental position of the Fermanagh and Omagh district. This also includes access to information, particularly through the smart phone and laptops. Therefore, seeking to enhance the connectivity across the district is likely to form part of the development and promotion of the ‘Smart Region’ brand. However, this is likely to be a lobbying campaign (within the context of this strategic action) and is not deemed to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment or the built environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		<p>Noted. No further action</p>
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
6l) Develop an inclusive and accessible continuum of support for post-school young people to follow modern apprenticeships and higher level skills training to meet the needs of emerging industries			
<p>This strategic action is an extension and enhancement of support programmes that may already be currently available. Any training and provision delivered is likely to be done in existing buildings and without displacing existing provision. Therefore, it is not deemed that this action has the potential to significantly adversely impact either the natural and historic environment or built environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment		<p>Noted. No further action</p>
	Built Environment		

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
	Social Environment	✓	
6m) Promote Enniskillen and Omagh as economic hubs for the district and support commercial and industry led development			
<p>Promoting the two main towns of the district is primarily a desk based marketing exercise. However, supporting commercial and industry led development is likely to require physical development, either in the form of renovation or new builds. Whilst neither this strategic action – nor the Community Plan – advocate the development of any particular sites, any physical development, regardless of location, is likely to present a risk to biodiversity, flora and fauna, habitat fragmentation, waste generation, the historic environment soil quality and water quality (depending on location). Thus, there is potential for this strategic action to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment. . A positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any project or development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
6n) Develop new and enhance existing tourism products, infrastructure and visitor experiences to international standard			
<p>Developing new and enhancing existing tourism products could lead to increased levels of usage at key tourism sites. Increased usage could lead to increased traffic levels, with adverse impacts on air quality, waste generation, decrease water quality and have adverse impact on biodiversity, flora and fauna. Thus, there is potential for this strategic action to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment. . A positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any project or development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
6o) Develop support initiatives (including mentoring and support programmes) that will help create, sustain and grow tourism businesses			
<p>The creation of new business and increase in economic activity – tourism businesses or otherwise – has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment through increased emissions, increased energy consumption and waste generation. The natural and historic environment could also suffer in the instance of new development. . A positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any project or development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?	Next Step	
6p) Develop and promote the Fermanagh and Omagh area as a world class outdoor activities destination (to include greenways, blueways and other outdoor activity provision)			
<p>Developing new world class outdoor activities will require site specific assessments, which current legislation stipulates. However, this strategic action makes no site specific recommendations, nor does it advocate for any specific sites. The promotion activity will largely be a desk based marketing exercise. Whilst there is no site specific recommendations in this strategic action, it is deemed as having the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment. . A positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any project or development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓ Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring	
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
6q) Co-ordinate an innovative and integrated approach to marketing and promotion of our tourism offering and grow our share of the national and international markets			
<p>This strategic action is the co-ordination of activity to increase the impact of the output. The activity is likely to be largely desk based marketing and promotion of the tourism offering in the district. Whilst the objective is to increase the number of tourists visiting the district, this action in itself is not deemed to have the potential to significantly adversely impact any element of the environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	Noted. No further action	
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment		✓
6r) Support the Gas to the West initiative and promote uptake across the region			
<p>The ‘Gas to the West’ initiative is an ongoing initiative that is subject to an environmental assessment in its own right. This strategic action does not propose any physical development; it is focussed on the promotion of the scheme with the sole purpose of increasing uptake of gas powered central heating in the homes in the district where it will be available. The internal works that may need to be undertaken on a premises-by-premises basis may have a minor adverse impact on the natural and historic environment, but it is not deemed significant at this stage. Any of the significant physical works will be covered by the environmental assessment covering the ‘Gas to the West’ initiative. Should this position change, we will update this assessment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	Noted. No further action	
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment		✓
6s) Identify and prioritise infrastructure investment that protects and promotes public health, safety and the sustainable development of our district			

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
<p>The identification and prioritisation of infrastructure investments, regardless of the fact that this Plan makes no site specific recommendations nor does it advocate for or identify any sites, could have an adverse impact at a significant level on the natural and historic environment and built environment. The social environment could be disturbed at a less significant level in the short term (depending on the project) due to noise pollution. However, a key facet of the action is to promote sustainable development that could have a positive impact on across a range of environmental receptors in the long term. Nevertheless, the action is taken forward for further consideration.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
<p>7a) Promote the strategic importance and advance the upgrade of key transportation corridors</p>			
<p>The development of key transportation corridors has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment. It puts biodiversity, flora and fauna at risk and could potentially increase the district's carbon footprint. However, this action will concentrate on the promotion of the need for upgrades and is likely to be a lobbying effort. Any scheme taken forward would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment. Nevertheless, it will be taken forward at this stage for more detailed consideration. It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
<p>7b) Advance and strengthen transport, digital and mobile infrastructure and connectivity to improve urban/rural linkages across the district as well as links to the wider region</p>			
<p>Advancing and strengthening a range of physical and digital infrastructure has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment. It puts biodiversity, flora and fauna at risk and could potentially increase the districts carbon footprint. Therefore, it is deemed to have the potential to significantly adversely impact the natural and historic environment and the built environment. It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring</p>
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
<p>7c) Improve provision of walkways, cycle-ways, community trails and water based infrastructure in our district, connecting to regional and national networks where appropriate</p>			
<p>Providing walkways, cycle-ways, community trails and water based infrastructure and promoting its use is likely to have a significant positive impact on air quality (through decreased emissions). However, the development phase poses a risk to the natural</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	<p>Take forward to consider Alternatives,</p>

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
environment, as there is a chance of damaging biodiversity and causing habitat fragmentation. Therefore, it will be taken forward for more detailed consideration. It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any development	Built Environment	✓✓	Mitigation and Monitoring
	Social Environment	✓	
7d) Develop an Integrated Transport Strategy for the Fermanagh and Omagh district to improve rural connectivity and address current access needs			
The development and implementation of an action plan (or strategy) in itself will not have any impact – positive or negative – on the natural and historic environment or built environment. Any physical development that arises through the Integrated Transport Strategy will be subject to its own site specific environmental assessment. Therefore, this strategic action will not be taken forward for further consideration on environmental impacts at this stage.	Natural and Historic Environment		Noted. No further action
	Built Environment		
	Social Environment	✓	
7e) Develop initiatives to improve accessibility for all, in relation to the physical environment and publicly funded transport services			
This strategic action seeks to increase the accessibility to key services for older people and those with limited movement and other impairments. This is likely to involve improving access to buildings and parks through the development of ramps and similar infrastructure. It will also require transport services to be suitable to accommodate wheelchairs. As some physical development may be required, there is a probability that this strategic action could cause significant adverse impact to the natural and historic environment and the built environment. The social environment is likely to benefit significantly.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
7f) Maximise the potential of St Angelo Airport			
Maximising the impact of the airport would lead to increased traffic (both in air traffic and ground traffic). This would have a significant impact on emission levels and air quality. Surrounding biodiversity, flora and fauna could also be at risk and waste levels could increase. Therefore, it is deemed to have the potential to significantly adversely impact the natural and historic environment and the built environment. It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any development It could also have an adverse impact on the social environment through noise pollution, but this is not deemed to be significant at this stage.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	

5.4) The Environment

What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?	Next Step
8a) Develop and implement management plans for the Sperrins AONB and for the Global Geopark in partnership with neighbouring areas		
The development and implementation of a management plan will aim to conserve the significant natural and built environmental assets within the Sperrins AONB and Global Geopark. Therefore, it has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the natural and historic environment and the built environment.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓ Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓
	Social Environment	
8b) Develop a network of walkways, cycleways, community trails and water based infrastructure that connects people to biodiversity across out district and the wider region (where appropriate, taking advantage of opportunities brought about through major infrastructure projects)		
Developing a network of walkways, cycle-ways, community trails and water based infrastructure and promoting its use is likely to have a significant positive impact on air quality (through decreased emissions). The connecting of people to biodiversity, and connection of biodiversity to habitats has the potential to increase public awareness of biodiversity and link habitats. However, in the short term, the development phase poses a risk to the natural environment, as there is a chance of damaging biodiversity and causing habitat fragmentation. It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any development. Therefore, it will be taken forward for more detailed consideration.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓ Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓
	Social Environment	✓✓
8c) Protect and restore vulnerable habitats and increase biodiversity throughout the district		
The protection and restoration of vulnerable habitats has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the natural environment with catalytic positive impacts on the built environment and social environment. The restoration of the habitats is likely to require people to access sensitive habitats on a short term basis. However, this strategic action will be led by teams with significant environmental experience and has the sole objective of maximising the environmental assets for the benefit of biodiversity, flora and fauna.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓ Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓
	Social Environment	✓
8d) Develop and promote wildlife/habitat corridors		

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?	Next Step	
<p>The development and promotion of wildlife/habitat corridors has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the natural environment with catalytic positive impacts on the built environment and social environment. There is a chance that the development phase could have a negative impact on the natural environment. However, this strategic action will be led by teams with significant environmental experience and has the sole objective of maximising the environmental assets for the benefit of biodiversity, flora and fauna. Therefore, it is deemed as having a significant net positive impact on the natural and historic environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
8e) Protect, manage, conserve and invest in our built heritage and reduce the number of buildings on the buildings at risk register			
<p>This strategic action is centred on protecting the built and cultural heritage in the district and recognising the economic value of the historic environment⁴. Therefore, it is likely to have a significant positive impact on the built environment, by seeking to reduce the number of buildings on the ‘at risk’ register and setting up structures to minimise the probability of buildings slipping into the at risk register in the future. This also has the potential to have a positive knock-on effect on the natural and historic environment and the social environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
8f) Promote and build increased local appreciation of, and access to, our natural, built and cultural heritage assets			
<p>Promoting increased appreciation of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the district has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the natural, built and cultural environment. However, this is likely to involve – and the strategic action specifically cites – increasing access to sensitive environmental assets. Therefore, on balance, it is deemed as having the potential to have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
8g) Engage people in protecting and enhancing their local environment and in becoming community environmental champions			
<p>The engagement of people and creation of community environmental champions is aimed at increasing awareness of the environmental assets within the district and promoting the</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓	Noted. No further action

⁴ Department of the Environment, 2012, Study of the Economic Value of Northern Ireland’s Historic Environment. Accessed through: https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/study-of-the-economic-value-of-ni-historic-environment-summary-report-may-2012_0.pdf

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
sustainable management of them on an informal basis. Therefore, it is deemed as having the potential to have a net positive impact across all facets of the environment.	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
8h) Reduce dependency on traditional fossil fuels and develop and support local initiatives which incorporate renewable energy			
Increasing the provision of renewable energy in the district has the potential to reduce the carbon footprint of the district; achieving this would have a significant positive impact on many aspects of the environment. However, many forms of renewable energy have negative impacts, for example, by causing visual and/or noise pollution which would significantly impact the social environment. Similarly, physical development may be required, which, although subject to site specific environmental assessments, can have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
8i) Develop initiatives to drive innovation in energy efficiency			
Innovation in energy efficiency has the potential to reduce emissions and the carbon footprint, with a positive impact on air quality. This can have an indirect positive impact on the natural environment. However, innovation can require physical development that can place the natural and historic environment at risk (although designated sites will be protected by current legislation). Alternative forms of energy also have the potential to significantly adversely impact the social environment and built environment, through visual and/or noise pollution.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
8j) Create an industry forum to promote and develop skills in sustainable and energy efficient construction methods to support Bream certified development			
This strategic action aims to skill the construction industry in the district (both the current industry and the future industry) on leading methods of sustainable and energy efficient construction. This includes opportunities such as passive buildings. This has the potential to increase energy efficiency in buildings, thus having a direct and significant positive impact on the built environment. Positive indirect impacts on the natural and historic environment and social environment are also probable.	Natural and Historic Environment	✓	Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
8k) Explore opportunities to build awareness of and develop programmes to improve energy efficiency of homes across the region			

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<p>This strategic action aims to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes across the district. This is likely to include initiatives such as improved insulation, boiler repair / replacement and the promotion of energy efficient windows. These improvements would be focussed on existing buildings. Therefore, it is deemed to have no significant negative impact on the environment, with positive impacts across all receptors likely (with the built and social environment likely to benefit significantly).</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓ Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓✓
	Social Environment	✓✓
8l) Develop programmes to promote waste minimisation in both domestic and in industrial/commercial sectors		
<p>Promoting waste minimisation (and indeed the maximisation of recycling) has the potential to reduce the tonnage of waste going into landfill. This has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the built environment and natural and historic environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓ Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓✓
	Social Environment	✓
8m) Develop and enhance the waste infrastructure across the district		
<p>The overall objective of developing and enhancing the waste infrastructure is to reduce the tonnage of waste going to landfill and increase the percentage of waste that is re-used. Achieving this is likely to have significant positive environmental benefits. However, the route to achievement is likely to involve aspects of physical development. Depending on the nature of the infrastructure, this could have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment and the social environment.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓ Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓
	Social Environment	✓✓
8n) Ensure that the highest environmental standards are achieved across all waste management projects and programmes		
<p>This strategic action indirectly offsets the potential negative impact of action 8m above. The purpose of all strategic actions under ‘The Environment’ theme is to boost the environment. Ensuring the highest environmental standards are achieved across all waste management projects and programmes is likely to have significant positive environmental impacts across all receptors.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓ Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓✓
	Social Environment	✓✓
8o) Promote the development of sustainable infrastructure to assist in flood risk management		

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?		Next Step
<p>This strategic action centres on the development of sustainable infrastructure to alleviate the impact of flooding. Flooding has a significant negative impact on society and can damage aspects of the environment. Any action that alleviates flooding is likely to have a significant positive impact on the social environment. However, development may be required in areas of rich biodiversity, such as the lough shore, which has the potential to adversely impact the natural environment significantly. Therefore, the strategic action is taken forward for further consideration.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
8p) Identify, prioritise and action appropriate means of mitigating against and responding effectively to flooding events			
<p>The overall objective of this strategic action is to benefit the social environment by reducing the risk of flooding. It could also have a significant positive impact on the natural and historic environment if flooding was avoided. Where this is not possible, there will be a focus on enhancing the response to flooding. There are also opportunities to enhance biodiversity in appropriate areas and help alleviate the threats of flooding, such as planting woodland buffers or flooding areas upstream. However, there is a small chance that some of the activity required to deliver on this strategic action may require physical development in areas that are environmentally sensitive, in particular areas around the shore of Lough Erne and the rivers in the district.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	
9a) Ensure that new development is of a high quality design, positively reflecting the distinctive identity of our towns, villages and rural area, whilst meeting the housing and employment needs of the area			
<p>Ensuring that new development is of a high quality design aims to maximise the consistency in the appearance of the townscapes and landscapes in the district. This has the potential to have a strong positive impact on the built environment, with subsequent benefits on the social environment (reduced potential for visual pollution) and the natural and historic environment (by ensuring due consideration is given to natural environment and historic environment issues).</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓	Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
9b) Enhance and improve the quality of public realm (i.e. external public spaces) to make our towns, villages and neighbourhoods more welcoming, accessible, clean and attractive to business, local users and visitors			
<p>The overall aim of this strategic action is to enhance the quality of open and shared public space for the benefits of the citizens of the district and users of the space. However, this may require some degree of physical development in order to bring the public realm up to</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives,

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What is the impact?	What receptors does it affect?	Next Step	
<p>suitable standard. As some of the public realm may be in close proximity to sensitive environmental sites, this activity has the potential to significantly adversely impact the natural environment. It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance biodiversity onsite as part of any development. The social environment is likely to enjoy the benefits of the action.</p>	Built Environment	✓✓	Mitigation and Monitoring
	Social Environment	✓	
9c) Develop initiatives to encourage and promote civic pride in our area			
<p>This strategic action seeks to instil a sense of pride into Fermanagh and Omagh residents in their local area. This will include raising the awareness of key assets in the district. The overall objective is for people to feel proud of their area, seek to keep it tidy and self-promote it as a result. It has the potential to have a positive impact on a range of environmental receptors, as raising awareness will include the key environmental features of the district, such as the rich array of biodiversity, monuments and fresh water.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓	Noted. No further action
	Built Environment	✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
9d) Progress the sustainable redevelopment and use of key ‘opportunity sites’ in our main towns and across the district			
<p>The overall objective of this strategic action is to make the district a more attractive place to work and invest by progressing the (re)development of opportunity sites in a sustainable manner. Opportunity sites are highly likely to be brownfield sites, and this will inherently ensure that the impact on the natural and historic environment is reduced (in comparison to developing on greenbelt land). However, any physical development could pose a significant risk to the natural and historic environment and the social environment (through noise pollution in the short term). In addition, the increased activity as a result of the development (and during the development phase) has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment, through increased emissions, waste generation and energy consumption.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓	
9e) Increase countryside access across the district, promoting the ‘leave no trace principle’			
<p>Increasing access to the countryside will go in tandem with the aim of promoting more exercise for the benefit of physical health and mental wellbeing. However, our walkways and open countryside may be in proximity with rich biodiversity, flora and fauna. Increasing the use of walkways and access to open countryside could lead to habitat fragmentation, therefore potentially having a significant adverse on the natural and historic environment. The promotion of the <i>leave no trace principle</i> will seek to minimise this impact (and the potential impact of littering). It is noted that a positive impact is possible too through potential opportunities to enhance or restore biodiversity onsite as part of any development.</p>	Natural and Historic Environment	✓✓	Take forward to consider Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring
	Built Environment	✓✓	
	Social Environment	✓✓	

6) Alternatives, Mitigation and Monitoring

6.1) Introduction

This section assesses the strategic actions in the Community Plan that are deemed to have the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the environment (as identified in the significance assessment in the previous chapter).

The assessment considers the alternatives (and whether or not they are viable), proposes mitigation measures and identifies monitoring arrangements on a strategic action-by-action basis.

The section is laid out on a thematic basis, with each applicable strategic action listed within the parent theme.

6.2) People and Communities

Action 1d) Improve access to and participation in active and creative pursuits

What is the impact?

This action could lead to the increased use of walkways, cycle paths and green-ways / blue-ways. Many of these spaces are home to biodiversity, flora and fauna. The increase in usage, if not managed accordingly, could result in damage to biodiversity and habitat fragmentation, although the spaces will have been designed to provide sustainable access to the outdoor environment while minimising impact on the surrounding habitats. Similarly, in urban areas, it is likely to result in the higher utilisation of open shared space and public realm, with potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity and the potential for increased littering.

Alternatives

An alternative is to proceed with the strategic action within strict parameters. For example, limiting all activity to existing indoor venues, where the potential impact on biodiversity and littering should greatly reduce. However, this could lead to an increased use of motor vehicles to travel to the venue and is likely to increase energy consumption in the venues. This is not considered a viable alternative, as the potential environmental benefits are not significant. Not proceeding with the strategic action at all would have a significant negative impact on the social environment, and thus is not viable.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is managing the underlying resource well. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage across the walkways, cycle paths, green-ways / blue-ways, open shared space and public realm. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Areas of shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures. Any new sites that may need to be developed to accommodate increased demand (which is not a specific part of the strategic action) would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

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Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

Action 1e) Develop a local network of partners to co-ordinate and deliver improved access to and uptake of arts and cultural events and programmes

What is the impact?

Whilst arts and creative events and programmes are typically associated with indoor venues, this is not always the case. This action could lead to more gatherings and performances in public spaces, which could lead to damage to biodiversity, flora and fauna and increased littering. It may also lead to the increased usage of the district's cultural assets, which without proper management, could fall into disrepair.

Alternatives

An alternative is to proceed with the strategic action within strict parameters. For example, limiting all activity to existing indoor venues and/or limiting the scale of activity outside to very small groups. This would reduce the potential adverse impact on the natural environment and cultural environment. However, it may lead to more travelling, with increased emissions likely to reduce air quality. Limiting the activity significantly could also have a significant negative impact on the social environment, as the aim of the strategic action is to increase participation, which is likely to require a range of different approaches in order to work.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is managing the underlying resource well. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage or signposting via event stewards in appropriate public spaces for such events. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna or cultural assets. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Areas of shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures. In extreme cases, individual projects can be assessed environmentally on a project-by-project basis.

Monitoring Arrangements

Project specific data on the number of attendees at arts and creative events by venue is likely to be collected as part of the performance management system for the strategic action. This can and will be analysed to mitigate against the overuse of areas with sensitive biodiversity, flora and fauna. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

Action 1f) Develop the South West Acute Hospital as a research centre of excellence in a specialist field

What is the impact?

The development of a research centre of excellence would almost certainly lead to more partnership working and collaboration. This could lead to increased journeys to and from (and within) the district, with associated negative impacts on emission levels and air quality. Depending on the specialism, it could also result in increased waste levels with the potential

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for medical waste. In the longer term, it could require the development of new facilities, but this is not the direct aim of the strategic action and would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Alternatives

There is no alternative to developing a research centre of excellence apart from not taking the strategic action forward. Not taking the action forward could have significant adverse impacts on the social environment. Therefore, on balance, we feel it is more appropriate to take the strategic action forward, making best use of already existing facilities and the investment made in it.

Mitigation Measures

The ethos within most service areas in the current environment is to maximise the use of electronic communications where possible. This will continue to be promoted throughout this strategic action. Where journeys are required, the use of public transport will be promoted (the South West Acute Hospital is located on the outskirts of Enniskillen town and is connected by a bus service). Where electronic communications and public transport are not suitable, car sharing will be promoted. In addition, as noted previously, any significant new infrastructure developments associated with this action would be mitigated by a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Anything more detailed will be dependent upon the strategic action being implemented and centre of excellence status being granted.

Action 2a) Develop an 'Age Friendly Strategy' to improve participation, health, security, active living and independence of older people

What is the impact?

The development of an 'Age Friendly Strategy' itself may not have a significant negative impact, but the promotion of active living could. This may lead to the increased use of walkways, cycle paths, green-ways / blue-ways and shared open space / public realm. Many of these spaces are home to biodiversity, flora and fauna. The increase in usage, if not managed accordingly, could result in damage to biodiversity and habitat fragmentation and the potential for increased littering. However, the spaces will have been designed to provide sustainable access to the outdoor environment while minimising impact on the surrounding habitats

Alternatives

The extreme alternative is not to promote active living, and remove it as an aspect of the 'Age Friendly Strategy'. However, a more viable alternative is to promote active living in allocated areas, utilising existing indoor space. This is likely to happen as a matter of course, as ensuring benefits for the social environment will require supervised and co-ordinated active living to make the action compatible with the older population and those most in need of assistance in this area.

Mitigation Measures

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The key to mitigating the adverse environmental impacts of the Age Friendly Strategy will be to bear the environment in mind as the strategy is developed. This will result in the development of strategy specific measures to alleviate the scale of environmental impacts. It is likely to involve mitigation measures similar to those outlined elsewhere in this assessment such as the provision of signage, promotion of the *leave no trace principle* and enforcement of the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

Action 2b) Develop initiatives and pilot programmes to reduce isolation and loneliness amongst older people, including addressing transport and other barriers to participation

What is the impact?

Reducing isolation amongst older people will require additional travelling, including to and from rural areas, which will have an adverse impact on emissions and subsequently air quality. Overcoming transport barriers will have a similar effect, with more vehicles likely to be travelling throughout the district, whether this is to bring people to services in urban/rural hubs or key services to rural communities.

Alternatives

The alternative is the status-quo, with a lack of additional provision for social contact for older people having to travel to services; this is currently only possible on a very limited basis and as a result isolation and loneliness ensues. Indeed, it may be more environmentally favourable to promote programmes that transport people together as opposed to the current sporadic movement. Not taking the programme forward will continue to have a significant adverse impact on the social environment. While the programme will also look at initiatives such as promoting digital contact, it is not considered that this negates the need for face-to-face social interaction.

Mitigation Measures

The strategic action will not directly promote the use of single car journeys, but will encourage greater utilisation of public transport and community transport. This will be further supported by encouraging effective planning to get the maximum value from the strategic action, considering the positive social benefits and negative environmental impact in equal measure. As is common practice across public and community transport providers, environmentally friendly vehicles will be encouraged.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. The number of journeys taken using public transport and community transport is currently collected and analysed, with the potential to do so on a route-by-route basis.

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Action 3d) Promote and support growth and development of shared education for all through the establishment and continuation of shared education models

What is the impact?

Shared education requires the utilisation of facilities for more than one school. Promoting and supporting this will require more transport to and from schools and facilities, which will have an adverse impact on emissions and subsequently air quality. The increased use, particularly of outdoor facilities or of walkways / cycleways etc. to access these, could have a negative impact on biodiversity, flora and fauna and the potential to increase littering levels.

Alternatives

The alternative is not to promote shared education and remain with the current model whereby schools utilise their own facilities. In order to maintain a high standard, this is likely to require the development of new facilities on a school-by-school basis. It is likely this would have a greater negative environmental impact (although recognising that each site would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment). Not developing new facilities would lead to a reduction in the standard of provision and would have a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the district young people.

Mitigation Measures

The majority of secondary level schools in the Fermanagh and Omagh district are in clusters (Enniskillen Town and Omagh Town, and in the medium term, the Strule Shared Education Campus in Omagh). This in itself is a good mitigation measure, as it should allow for walking between schools and facilities. Where this is not possible, the promotion of bus services will mitigate against single car journeys. Appropriate signage and enforcement will alleviate against littering, and effective planning should alleviate the potential for overuse of key facilities.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. The number of journeys taken using public transport and community transport is currently collected and analysed, with the potential to do so on a route-by-route basis. Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

Action 3e) Promote and increase the use of open and shared space in the district

What is the impact?

The increased use of open and shared space could have an adverse impact on the natural environment and cultural heritage. Over-use of open and shared space could damage biodiversity, flora and fauna and, if the space is in close proximity to waterways, reduce water quality due to contamination and littering.

Alternatives

An alternative is to manage and restrict the use of open and shared space and promote community cohesion through existing buildings. However, this would not maximise the potential benefits to the social environment (wellbeing and community cohesion), nor would it

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allow much potential to improve the awareness of and appreciation in the open and shared space available within the district.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is managing the underlying resource well. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage across the walkways, cycle paths, green-ways / blue-ways, open shared space and public realm. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Areas of shared and open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures. Any new sites that may need to be developed to accommodate increased demand (which is not a specific part of the strategic action) would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 4a) Strengthen community infrastructure, including capacity building, across urban and rural areas

What is the impact?

Although the strategic action is likely to focus on capacity building and technology infrastructure within existing buildings in the short-to-medium term, the development of new physical infrastructure in the longer term could have significant adverse impacts on a wide range of environmental receptors. However, the development of new physical infrastructure would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation

Alternatives

An alternative is to focus solely on capacity building and the enhancement of current community buildings. This is the majority of what the strategic action hopes to achieve in the short-to-medium term. Promoting new physical infrastructure (and supporting the process required to achieve it) will only occur on a long term basis where there is strong evidence of need.

Mitigation Measures

The importance of sustainability will form a key part of the capacity building exercise with the community and voluntary sector. Any new physical development (community centres, parks and open space etc) will require a detailed needs assessment and will be subject to a site specific environmental assessment.

Monitoring Arrangements

There is no quantitative measure to monitor the potential environmental impact of this strategic action. Instead, monitoring will only be required in the instance of the Community Planning Partnership support for a project involving new physical infrastructure.

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Action 4c) Develop programmes of support for social enterprise / social entrepreneurs

What is the impact?

The creation of new businesses and economic activity – social enterprises or otherwise – has the potential to have a range of significant adverse impacts on a range of environmental receptors. It is dependent on the specifics of the company / enterprise but it is likely to involve increased travelling (emissions and air quality), generate waste, increase energy consumption, potentially reduce water quality and potentially require new physical development.

Alternatives

The severe alternative is not to promote social enterprise or economic activity of any kind. A more viable alternative is to support activity but in a restrictive manner. However, neither of these is likely to reduce the environmental impact, as it is probable that new businesses (social enterprises or otherwise) will form in their own time, independent of the support programmes offered. There is a risk that businesses which form outside this support programme will have limited consideration for the environment.

Mitigation Measures

The programmes generated as part of this strategic action will raise awareness of environmental issues and promote social enterprises / entrepreneurs to develop and implement a suite of environmental policies, such as a Waste Management Policy, Environmental Statement and Energy Usage Policy to minimise the negative environmental impacts. Any new buildings would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

The performance management data collected on a project specific basis could include information on the number of social enterprises supported that have a suite of environmental policies in place. Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Data on waste levels (tonnage generated and the percentage sent to landfill and percentage recycled) is regularly monitored and returned to the Department for Infrastructure. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 4f) Develop community resilience infrastructure and projects to enable communities to withstand and recover from adverse incidents

What is the impact?

This strategic action centres on the response to flooding and other natural phenomena. This could lead to the development of physical infrastructure, or guidance, which would alleviate flooding or other incidents from certain areas. However, this may have a knock-on effect elsewhere and may require the developments to be in areas of rich biodiversity, such as the lough shore.

Alternatives

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An alternative is to continue to let nature take its course and respond to adverse incidents as and when they occur, using the current emergency strategies / plans. However, the findings from our community engagement phase suggest this would have a significant negative impact on the social environment. Any physical development would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Mitigation Measures

Due to the sensitive nature of flooding and adverse incidents, and the fact that it is an environmental issue, any detailed action plans generated as part of this strategic action will have assessed the impact of the environment prior to being implemented.

Monitoring Arrangements

Information on the number of flooding incidents is collected by the Rivers Agency. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 5k) Provide improved opportunities for play, recreation and creativity for all children and young people

What is the impact?

This strategic action is likely to lead to the increased use of public open space, public realm, walkways, cycle paths and greenways / blueways. Many of these spaces are home to biodiversity, flora and fauna. The increase in usage, if not managed accordingly, could result in damage to biodiversity and habitat fragmentation. In the instance where open space, public realm etc are in close proximity to water, contamination and littering could have an adverse impact on water quality. In the longer term, if the strategic action were successful, new development could be required to facilitate improved opportunities.

Alternatives

The most viable alternative is to implement a restrictive set of delivery plans that only allow play, recreation and activity in existing indoor facilities. However, this would lead to increased travelling, energy consumption and would not alleviate waste generation over-and-above what is likely to occur due to the strategic action. Not taking the action forward is not a viable alternative due to its severe adverse impact on the social environment.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is managing the underlying resource well. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage in appropriate public spaces. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Areas of shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures. The action does not specifically require new physical developments, and any development would only be supported by the Community Planning Partnership on the basis of a strong needs based assessment. Any development would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

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Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

6.3) Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Action 6a) Co-ordinate and deliver inclusive and accessible enterprise and entrepreneurship initiatives (including social enterprise)

What is the impact?

The creation of new business – and over the longer term, the expansion of those businesses - has the potential to have a significant adverse impact across a range of environmental receptors. Increased economic activity would almost certainly lead to increased transport levels (with adverse impact on emissions and air quality), the creation of waste, higher levels of energy consumption, and an increase in the carbon footprint, and depending on proximity, could damage water quality. In the longer term, increased economic activity could lead to an increase in physical development.

Alternatives

There are two alternatives to this strategic action. Firstly, not to deliver enterprise and entrepreneurship initiatives. This is unnecessarily restrictive and it is likely that some degree of enterprise would form in the absence of the initiatives anyway. The second is to place restrictions and limitation on the parameters of the initiatives. This may involve limiting what type of enterprises would be subject to support or the location where they are based. However, this is likely to raise issues of equality and inclusivity and may have a detrimental social / economic impact on particular areas.

Mitigation Measures

The role of the environment (natural, built and historic) will be included in as part of the enterprise and entrepreneurship initiatives. This will raise awareness of potentially damaging practices and promote why the environment is important. Part of the programme will include the development and implementation of a suite of environmental policies, such as a Waste Management Policy, Environmental Statement and Energy Usage Policy to minimise the negative environmental impacts. New physical development associated with enterprise / entrepreneurship initiatives would be subject to environmental assessment as part of the planning process.

Monitoring Arrangements

The performance management data collected on a project specific basis could include information on the number of businesses supported that have a suite of environmental policies in place. Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Data on waste levels (tonnage generated and the percentage sent to landfill and percentage recycled) is regularly monitored and returned to the Department for Infrastructure. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

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Action 6f) Provide mentoring and training to support new and growing businesses, help existing firms create and sustain employment opportunities and encourage growth and internationalisation

What is the impact?

Whilst the mentoring and training provision itself will not have an adverse impact on the environment, the creation of new business and expansion of existing businesses has the potential to have a significant adverse impact across a range of environmental receptors. Increased economic activity would almost certainly lead to increased transport levels (with adverse impact on emissions and air quality), the creation of waste, higher levels of energy consumption, and an increase in the carbon footprint, and depending on proximity, could damage water quality. In the longer term, increased economic activity could lead to an increase in physical development.

Alternatives

The alternative is to place stringent restrictions on new business creation or not directly encourage growth or internationalisation. Restrictions may include the type of business that can avail of the support or the location in which the business is located. In the absence of the strategic action, business creation and firm growth are likely to continue to occur, albeit at a reduced rate and taking longer. There is also the risk that the growth would occur without sufficiently considering the environment.

Mitigation Measures

The strategic action focusses on mentoring and training skills. The role of the environment (natural, built and historic) will be included in as part of the programme. This will raise awareness of potentially damaging practices and promote why the environment is important. Part of the programme will include the development and implementation of a suite of environmental policies, such as a Waste Management Policy, Environmental Statement and Energy Usage Policy to minimise the negative environmental impacts. New physical development associated with enterprise / entrepreneurship initiatives would be subject to environmental assessment as part of the planning process.

Monitoring Arrangements

The performance management data collected on a project specific basis could include information on the number of businesses supported that have a suite of environmental policies in place. Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Data on waste levels (tonnage generated and the percentage sent to landfill and percentage recycled) is regularly monitored and returned to the Department for Infrastructure. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 6h) Develop a co-ordinated pathway for start-ups and business growth

What is the impact?

Whilst the development of a focussed pathway itself will not have an adverse impact on the environment, the creation of new business and expansion of existing businesses has the potential to have a significant adverse impact across a range of environmental receptors. Increased economic activity would almost certainly lead to increased transport levels (with

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adverse impact on emissions and air quality), the creation of waste, higher levels of energy consumption, and an increase in the carbon footprint, and depending on proximity, could damage water quality. In the longer term, increased economic activity could lead to an increase in physical development.

Alternatives

The alternative is not to develop a co-ordinated pathway and continue with the wide range of support programmes that are currently provided by a multitude of providers. The advantage of a co-ordinated pathway is that should promote efficiency for providers and funders through increased synergy. A co-ordinated pathway should ensure that all supported businesses receive similar guidance with regard to the environmental implications of their business activity.

Mitigation Measures

The role of the environment (natural, built and historic) will be included in as part of the strategic action. This will raise awareness of potentially damaging practices and promote why the environment is important. Part of the programme will include the development and implementation of a suite of environmental policies, such as a Waste Management Policy, Environmental Statement and Energy Usage Policy to minimise the negative environmental impacts. New physical development associated with enterprise / entrepreneurship initiatives would be subject to environmental assessment as part of the planning process.

Monitoring Arrangements

The performance management data collected on a project specific basis could include information on the number of businesses supported that have a suite of environmental policies in place. Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Data on waste levels (tonnage generated and the percentage sent to landfill and percentage recycled) is regularly monitored and returned to the Department for Infrastructure. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 6i) Ensure and monitor the ongoing availability and supply of appropriate industrial / commercial land and premises within the district

What is the impact?

The availability and supply of suitable land and premises is likely to promote physical development, either in the form of renovation or new builds. Whilst this strategic action – nor the Community Plan – advocate the development of any particular sites, any physical development, regardless of location, is likely to present a risk to biodiversity, flora and fauna, habitat fragmentation, waste generation, the historic environment soil quality and water quality (depending on location).

Alternatives

An alternative is to limit available land and premises to only those that are developed and suitable in their current condition. This is very restrictive and would stifle economic growth and lead to increased dereliction. It is possible to promote brownfield sites and opportunity sites, in line with current planning policy. Indeed, this is likely to be part of the strategic action intrinsically.

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Mitigation Measures

The delivery plans that enable this strategic action will focus on the enhancement (where required) and promotion of existing land and premises that can be brought to the market quickly and with minimal impact on the environment. This will include promoting brownfield sites and opportunity sites. Where significant development is required, site specific environmental assessments are also likely to be required under current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

Project specific information on the quantity of land brought to market and the work required in order to make this happen is likely to be collected as part of the performance management system. Beyond that, quantitative monitoring arrangements are difficult to identify in the absence of more detailed thematic delivery plans, which have not yet been developed.

Action 6m) Promote Enniskillen and Omagh as economic hubs for the district and support commercial and industry led development

What is the impact?

Promoting Enniskillen and Omagh as economic hubs does not in itself have a significant adverse environmental impact, whereas supporting commercial and industry led development could potentially. The development could be in the form of innovation and technology led improvements within existing buildings; however, it could also include the remediation of land and physical development of new infrastructure. The latter has the potential to significantly adversely impact the environment across a range of receptors.

Alternatives

The alternative to supporting Enniskillen and Omagh as economic hubs for the district is not to promote the main towns and acknowledge their role as economic hubs. In terms of supporting commercial and industry led development, the alternative is to either not support it at all or to place parameters on the type of activity that will be supported. However, consideration to the type of development will occur as a matter of course, as all developments will be required to go through the application process. It is possible to promote brownfield sites and opportunity sites, in line with current planning policy. Indeed, this is likely to be part of the strategic action intrinsically.

Mitigation Measures

The delivery plans that enable this strategic action will focus on the commercial and industry led development that can maximise existing land and premises and which will have a minimal net impact on the environment. This will include promoting brownfield sites and opportunity sites. Where significant development is required, site specific environmental assessments are also likely to be required under current legislation. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further.

Monitoring Arrangements

Project specific information on the promotion programmes enacted for Enniskillen and Omagh, and the level of commercial and industry led development that this has impacted are likely to be collected as part of the performance management system. Beyond that, quantitative monitoring arrangements are difficult to identify in the absence of more detailed thematic delivery plans, which have not yet been developed.

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Action 6n) Develop new and enhance existing tourism products, infrastructure and visitor experiences to international standards

What is the impact?

Developing new and enhancing existing tourism products could lead to increased levels of usage at key tourism sites. In addition to the obvious impacts of development (which would be subject to site specific environmental assessments in line with current legislation), increased usage could lead to increased traffic levels, with adverse impacts on air quality, and increased waste generation and littering. It is worth noting that much of the Fermanagh and Omagh district's tourism offering is located in rural areas and associated with Lough Erne. Thus, increased usage of these key sites could have an adverse impact on biodiversity, flora and fauna, lead to habitat fragmentation and pose a threat to water quality (depending on the specific location of the products / infrastructure).

Alternatives

The alternative is to continue to promote Fermanagh and Omagh as a tourism destination but utilising only the existing sites and infrastructure. Doing this, assuming it was successful, would lead to increased traffic levels and usage at key sites, but perhaps not to the same degree. It would alleviate any risk associated with new development, but would lose the potential to enhance infrastructure that may be more environmentally friendly than what is currently in place.

Mitigation Measures

The outworkings of this strategic action are likely to include promoting the district as an eco-tourism location, which will ensure that environmental considerations are well considered throughout the delivery planning and implementation. The strategic action may lead to the enhancement of current facilities with more modern infrastructure that would have a positive environmental impact. Any designated sites will remain protected under current legislation and any new physical development will be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, also in line with legislation. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Local Government District Tourism Statistics, produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) provide visitor numbers for almost 25 key sites across the district, in addition to higher level data on trips, nights and expenditure. These are currently published annually and are analysed as a matter of course. In addition, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality, LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed.

Action 6o) Develop support initiatives (including mentoring and support programmes) that will help create, sustain and grow tourism businesses

What is the impact?

The objective of the action is to support the growth and sustainability of businesses in the tourism industry. The creation of business and generation of additional economic activity – tourism related or otherwise – has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the environment across a wide range of receptors. These could include increasing the carbon footprint, increasing energy consumption and increasing waste generation. However, the

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specifics of the impacts are largely unknown as they will be dependent on the nature of the tourism business supported in the programme and where the activity is located.

Alternatives

The alternative is to place restrictions on the type of businesses that will be supported on the programmes, whether it be the nature of the business or its location (or a combination of both). Whilst doing so would be viable, it could significantly reduce the potential economic benefits that may arise from the strategic action. It would also limit the potential for the programmes to have a positive impact on the environment, through the promotion of environmental issues, increased awareness of the surrounding environment and development of a suite of programmes to alleviate the environmental impact.

Mitigation Measures

Providing support programmes will allow the providers to ensure that the businesses participating in the programme develop and implement a suite of environmental statements that will seek to minimise waste generation, maximise re-use and recycling and promote energy efficiency. It is also worth noting that eco-tourism is part of the Fermanagh and Omagh tourism offering and thus is likely to be noted during the programme(s).

Monitoring Arrangements

The performance management data collected on a project specific basis could include information on the number of businesses supported that have a suite of environmental policies in place. Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Data on waste levels (tonnage generated and the percentage sent to landfill and percentage recycled) is regularly monitored and returned to the Department for Infrastructure. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 6p) Develop the Fermanagh and Omagh area as a world class outdoor activities destination (to include greenways, blueways and other outdoor activity provision)

What is the impact?

The development and promotion of the district as a world class outdoor activities destination is likely to include a lot of desk based activity and marketing. However, there is likely to be a need to enhance the current infrastructure in order to make it truly *world class*, which is likely to include physical development. Given the nature of outdoor activities, it is possible that some of the development could be in areas with a close proximity to water and/or sensitive biodiversity, flora and fauna and could lead to habitat fragmentation.

Alternatives

The alternative is to not develop and promote Fermanagh and Omagh as a world class outdoor activities destination by focussing on an alternative offering with a lessened chance of causing environmental damage. Some examples might be to promote the district as an eco-tourism destination (solely) or promote the range of small towns and villages in the district. However, this would be failing to acknowledge the beauty of the district and its suitability as a an outdoor activities destination. It is also unknown whether the promotion of the district as an alternative type of destination would actually have less adverse environmental impact.

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Mitigation Measures

Promoting the Fermanagh and Omagh district as a world class outdoor activities destination will only be successful as a strategic action if the district maintains and develops its natural and historic environment. Indeed, outdoor activities can be very much complementary to a quality environment. It is worth noting that any site specific development that may be linked to this strategic action would be subject to a separate site specific environmental assessment. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Local Government District Tourism Statistics, produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) provide data on trips, nights and expenditure as well as visitor information for almost 25 key sites across the district. These are currently published annually and are analysed as a matter of course. Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 6s) Identify and prioritise infrastructure investment that protects and promotes public health, safety and the sustainable development of our district

What is the impact?

The objective of the strategic action is to ensure that infrastructure investment is prioritised in line with the needs of the district. This will include the social, economic and environmental needs in tandem. It is recognised that infrastructure development of any kind has the potential to significantly adversely impact on various environmental receptors, depending on the specific nature of the development, which is unknown within the context of this strategic action.

Alternatives

The alternative is to prioritise infrastructure development only on the basis of needing to conserve and enhance the natural, built and cultural environment. This would be very restrictive, as it would not bring a sense of balance to the needs of the district, as the environmental needs would get prioritised over the social and economic needs.

Mitigation Measures

The best method to mitigate against undue adverse impacts is to ensure a sense of balance and perspective is applied when identifying and prioritising the infrastructure development to take forward. Any physical development arising from this strategic action – and it is not the objective of the action to advocate for site specific developments at this stage – would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any development as and when it arises. However, an evidence based approach is a cross-cutting theme underpinning the Community Plan, and transparency is a shared value.

Action 7a) Promote the strategic importance and advance the upgrade of key transportation corridors

What is the impact?

Promoting the strategic importance of key corridors in isolation is largely a desk based exercise focussing on marketing and/or lobbying. However, the strategic action specifically notes the desire to ‘advance the upgrade of key transportation corridors’. The development of roads (new or upgrading) is typically a large scale development, with significant potential to adversely impact the environment across various receptors. For example, it could pose a risk to priority species and key habitats. In the long run, better road infrastructure could increase traffic flows.

Alternatives

The alternative is to focus on maintaining the current road infrastructure in the district. This would involve only minor works. However, this would fail to maximise the potential economic impact associated with better transport infrastructure and would have an adverse impact on the social environment, with enhanced demand for transport corridors a key piece of feedback from the consultation phase.

Mitigation Measures

It is important to ensure that any transportation schemes which are promoted or advanced through this strategic action are given due environmental consideration in line with current legislation. Indeed, any development would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment. In advance of any development getting this far, the socio-economic need for the upgrade of the transport corridor will need to be identified, therefore ensuring the proposed corridor upgrade is not excessive.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any development as and when it arises. However, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality, LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed.

Action 7b) Advance and strengthen transport, digital and mobile infrastructure and connectivity to improve urban/rural linkages across the district as well as links to the wider region

What is the impact?

Advancing and strengthening a range of transport, digital and mobile infrastructure and connectivity is likely to lead to physical development. Nevertheless, there could be positive benefits to the environment through reduced journeys undertaken as a result of improved digital connectivity. However, there still remains a probability of a significant adverse impact as a result of the physical development phase; biodiversity, flora and fauna could be at risk due to habitat fragmentation and soil displacement. In addition, there is a small potential that visual and noise pollution could impact the social environment. However, this will all need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Alternatives

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The alternative is to continue with the existing transport, digital and mobile infrastructure and seek advancement through technological means (for example, satellite based internet connectivity) and more efficient forms of transport (more efficient public transport, better route planning etc). Whilst the latter has the potential to make a difference in its own right, it is unlikely to be sufficient in scale to achieve the desired outcome and would only work in the short-to-medium term.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigating the adverse impact of this strategic action is to require the potential for adverse effects on the environment and try to plan infrastructure advancement in areas that are less sensitive. This would include consideration for visual and noise pollution. This is likely to happen as a matter of course, as all designated sites will be protected by legislation and any physical development arising from the strategic action will be subject to a site specific environmental assessment.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any development as and when it arises. However, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality, LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed.

Action 7c) Improve provision of walkways, cycle-ways, community trails and water based infrastructure in our district, connecting to regional and national networks where appropriate

What is the impact?

The improved provision of walkways, cycle-paths, community trails and water based infrastructure has the potential to significantly reduce emissions, particularly if the routes in the Fermanagh and Omagh district are connected to the regional and national networks. However, the physical development phase has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment; priority species and habitats could be fragmented. In the long run, increased usage of the walkways etc. could lead to increased littering and further damage to biodiversity, flora and fauna. However, this is not the objective of the strategic action and much remains unknown until the specifics of any projects are established.

Alternatives

The alternative is to concentrate on improving the quality of the existing networks in the Fermanagh and Omagh district, without seeking to extend the network or link it any further to the regional and national networks. This would limit the potential for development-led adverse impacts and it is likely the increased usage could be managed. However, this would offset the potential for positive impacts to the built environment through decreased emissions as it would limit the viability of the walkways, cycle-paths, community trails and water based infrastructure.

Mitigation Measures

Any physical developments arising out of this strategic action will be subject to its own site specific assessment, which will consider the specific environmental impacts in more detail. This is enforced by current legislation. In the longer run, there would be the erection of appropriate signage across the walkways etc. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Areas of

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shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures. Provision of wildlife / habitat corridors will actively promote the maintenance of ecological processes and where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly

Action 7e) Develop initiatives to improve accessibility for all, in relation to the physical environment and publicly funded transport services

What is the impact?

This strategic action seeks to increase the accessibility to key services for older people and those with limited movement and other impairments. This is likely to involve improving access to buildings, public spaces and parks through the development of ramps and similar infrastructure. It will also require transport services to be suitable to accommodate wheelchairs. As some physical development may be required, there is a probability that this strategic action could cause significant adverse impact to biodiversity, flora and fauna, and should alternative transport services be less fuel efficient than other options, it could increase emissions.

Alternatives

The alternative is to limit the type of initiatives that will be developed as part of the strategic action. This is likely to result in a focus on urban areas and other areas that are less environmentally sensitive. However, this would not be an equitable outcome as it would continue to limit the level of accessibility and of activity physically disabled people can undertake. It also limits the potential for innovative new methods which could result in a positive environmental impact.

Mitigation Measures

In the short term, the strategic action is likely to focus on smaller scale projects, most likely in urban centres that can be delivered quickly with next to no adverse environmental impact. In the longer term, larger scale projects (which are unlikely to have a large footprint) are likely to be subject to site specific environmental assessments (where legislation requires it). The fuel efficiency and environmental impact of vehicles is a commonly analysed factor in the decision making process when investing in new publicly funded vehicles.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any development as and when it arises. However, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality, LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed.

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Action 7f) Maximise the potential of St Angelo Airport

What is the impact?

The St Angelo Airport is one of only five licensed airports in Northern Ireland and thus a significant asset to the Fermanagh and Omagh district. Maximising its impact would lead to increased traffic (both in air traffic and ground traffic). This would have a significant impact on emission levels and air quality. Surrounding biodiversity, flora and fauna could also be at risk and waste levels could increase.

Alternatives

The alternative is not to promote or maximise the airport. However, not maximising the airport will ensure it does not meet its economic potential. There is a firm possibility that maximisation of the airport will lead to increased prosperity and wealth generation. There is potential to utilise some of the new wealth to invest in the surrounding natural environment.

Mitigation Measures

Any significant increase in air traffic at St Angelo Airport would be subject to specific environmental considerations under current legislation, including the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 and the Climate Change Act (2008). The strategic action acknowledges this and any delivery plans associated with maximising the airport would comply with legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on air quality, collected through the Air-Quality-Management Areas assessments would provide the overarching indicator for monitoring the impact of this strategic action. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

6.4) The Environment

Action 8b) Develop a network of walkways, cycle-ways, community trails and water based infrastructure that connects people to biodiversity across our district and the wider region (where appropriate, taking advantage of opportunities brought about through major infrastructure projects)

What is the impact?

The objective of this strategic action is to promote active transport and exercise to achieve benefits for the built environment (through reduced emissions) and physical health and mental wellbeing. This action also recognises the potential to use walkways, cycle-ways, community trails and water based infrastructure to connected habitats and bring people in close contact with nature, thus raising awareness of natural environmental issues. However, the physical development phase has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment; priority species and habitats could be fragmented. In the long run, increased usage of the walkways etc. could lead to increased littering and further damage to biodiversity, flora and fauna. However, this is not the objective of the strategic action and much remains unknown until the specifics of any projects are established.

Alternatives

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The alternative is to concentrate on improving the quality of the existing networks in the Fermanagh and Omagh district, without seeking to extend the network or link it any further to the regional and national networks. It may be possible within this to connect habitats that are currently fragmented and erect signage that makes users more aware of the nature surrounding them. However, this would not represent the full potential that the strategic action represents and could offset any potential for positive impacts that might arise from more active travel, more exercise and a better awareness of the environment.

Mitigation Measures

Any physical developments arising out of this strategic action will be subject to its own site specific assessment, which will consider the specific environmental impacts in more detail. This is enforced by current legislation. In the longer run, there would be the erection of appropriate signage across the walkways etc. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further. Areas of shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly

Action 8f) Promote and build increased local appreciation of, and access to, our natural, built and cultural heritage assets

What is the impact?

Promoting and building a local appreciation of our natural, built and cultural heritage in isolation is likely to serve the environment well. However, the action specifically cites increased access to natural, built and cultural heritage assets, some of which are likely to be located in environmentally sensitive sites. Increased access to sensitive sites, depending on the site, has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on biodiversity, flora and fauna and buildings and sites of historic and archaeological interest. In addition, increased usage could lead to increased littering.

Alternatives

An alternative is to maintain the status quo, whereby the natural, built and cultural heritage assets exist and are marketed accordingly, or to only promote appreciation and access to environmental assets that are less sensitive. However, the ethos of this strategic action is to attempt to maximise the potential of the environmental asset base by collective promotion and building appreciation. Increased appreciation could lead to a desire to maintain the asset base at a higher standard, with collective promotion potentially ensuring the same high levels of environmental standards are applied across all natural, built and cultural heritage assets.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is managing the underlying resource well. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage across the natural, built and cultural heritage assets. The signs will highlight environmental best practice and promote awareness of the asset. In extreme cases,

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particularly sensitive sites can be cordoned off and/or have limited access. Areas of shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Local Government District Tourism Statistics, produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) provide data on visitor information for almost 25 key sites across the district, which encompasses the many of the district's natural, built and cultural heritage assets. These are currently published annually and are analysed as a matter of course. Data on the usages of key walkways etc. across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis.

Action 8h) Reduce dependency on traditional fossil fuels and develop and support local initiatives which incorporate renewable energy

What is the impact?

Increasing the provision of renewable energy in the district has the potential to reduce the carbon footprint of the district; achieving this would have a significant positive impact on many aspects of the environment. However, many forms of renewable energy have negative impacts, for example, by causing visual and/or noise pollution which would significantly impact the social environment. Similarly, physical development may be required, which, although subject to site specific environmental assessments, can have a significant negative impact on the natural and historic environment, through endangering biodiversity, flora and fauna, removing soil nutrients and potentially water contamination. However, which environmental receptors could be impacted, and to what degree, is dependent upon the nature of the project.

Alternatives

The alternatives are: a) do not develop and support locally based initiatives; b) develop and support local initiatives with appropriate restrictions, for example, by only considering options on existing sites and c) depending development of renewable energy initiatives that are not locally based but could lead to a reduction in fossil fuel dependency locally. These options are all likely to be viable. However, renewable energy developments are typically private sector led and are likely to continue to come forward in the absence of this strategic action. Choosing not to develop and support local initiatives to incorporate renewable energy would limit the potential to capture all of the positive externalities and may led to the development of renewable energy projects that do not fully consider the environmental impacts.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigating the adverse impacts is to ensure that renewable energy projects are balanced with the environmental sensitivities of the location in which they are based (or are proposing to be based). Indeed, any new renewable energy projects (or any projects) which require physical development will be subject to detailed site level environmental assessments as and when projects are developed. The scale and nature of the projects that could be undertaken is likely to be determined by criteria set out in the Local Development Plan for Fermanagh and Omagh.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any development as and when it arises. However, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality,

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LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed. Data on the number of planning applications for renewable energy projects, with some degree of underlying detail, is also collected and analysed as a matter of course.

Action 8i) Develop initiatives to drive innovation in energy efficiency

What is the impact?

Innovation in energy efficiency has significant potential to reduce emissions, lower the carbon footprint and reduce the dependence on fossil fuels. This can have an indirect positive impact on the natural environment. However, 'innovation' is a broad term, and specific projects could range from improving the existing energy infrastructure or developing new infrastructure. The former is likely to have some degree of environmental impact, but the latter would likely require physical development that can place the natural and historic environment at risk (although designated sites will be protected by current legislation). Alternative forms of energy also have the potential to significantly adversely impact the social environment and built environment, through visual and/or noise pollution.

Alternatives

The alternative is to limit the drive for innovation in energy efficiency to just existing infrastructure, as amendments to existing infrastructure are likely to have a less significant adverse impact on the environment than new developments. This is likely to form a significant part of the strategic action, as there are likely to be positives that can be reaped from the approach. However, limiting the scope of the strategic action in this way is not in the nature of innovation and has the potential to limit the benefits that can be accrued from improved energy efficiency.

Mitigation Measures

The Community Planning Partnership is committed to promoting an evidence based approach to all strategic actions. Therefore, in the context of this strategic action, there will need to be evidence presented that any project citing energy innovation can deliver significant benefits to the current position (thus enhancing air quality and other environmental receptors) that can more than offset any negative externalities to the natural environment. On a similar basis, it is likely that many of the projects that are developed as part of this action will be subject to a site specific environmental assessment as and when it arises.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any project as and when it arises. However, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality, LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed.

Action 8m) Develop and enhance the waste infrastructure across the district

What is the impact?

Developing and enhancing the waste infrastructure has the potential to reduce the tonnage of waste going to landfill by increasing the proportion of waste reused. The route to developing and enhancing the waste infrastructure is likely to require physical development, either through the enhancement of existing infrastructure or the development of innovative new processes and/or plant/equipment. This has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment. The impact will be dependent upon the nature of the development arising

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through the action and will vary on a case-by-case basis. However, there could be a risk to biodiversity, flora and fauna, air quality, water quality and visual/noise pollution.

Alternatives

The alternative is to continue with the current waste infrastructure in the district with a focus on improving the efficiency levels. This could be supported by a campaign aimed at reducing waste generation and increasing recycling levels. However, recycling campaigns operate as a matter of course and seeking efficiency improvements at the current array of infrastructure are ongoing. Therefore, whilst these are viable alternatives, it is difficult to recognise how this activity would add value over and above business-as-usual.

Mitigation Measures

The Community Planning Partnership is committed to promoting an evidence based approach to all strategic actions. Therefore, in the context of this strategic action, there will need to be evidence presented that any project citing waste innovation can deliver significant benefits over and above the current position that can more than offset any negative externalities to the natural environment. On a similar basis, it is likely that many of the projects that are developed as part of this action will be subject to a site specific environmental assessment as and when it arises.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring arrangements would depend on the specific nature of any project as and when it arises. However, high level environmental receptors such as air quality, water quality, LBAP targets and waste management figures are also collected and analysed.

Action 8o) Promote the development of sustainable infrastructure to assist in flood risk management

What is the impact?

This strategic action centres on the development of sustainable infrastructure to alleviate the impact of flooding. Flooding has a significant negative impact on society and can damage aspects of the environment. Any action that alleviates flooding is likely to have a significant positive impact on the social environment. However, development may be required in areas of rich biodiversity, such as the lough shore, which has the potential to adversely impact the natural environment significantly.

Alternatives

An alternative is to continue to let nature take its course and respond to adverse incidents as and when they occur, using the current emergency strategies / plans. However, the findings from our community engagement phase suggest this would have a significant negative impact on the social environment. Any physical development would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Mitigation Measures

Due to the sensitive nature of flooding and adverse incidents, and the fact that it is an environmental issue, any detailed action plans generated as part of this strategic action will have assessed the impact of the environment prior to being implemented.

Monitoring Arrangements

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Information on the number of flooding incidents is collected by the Rivers Agency. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 8p) Identify, prioritise and action appropriate means of mitigating against and responding effectively to flooding events

What is the impact?

The overall objective of this strategic action is to reduce the risk and flooding and increase the effectiveness of the response to flooding. The aim is to reduce incidents of flooding in domestic and non-domestic properties, and roads. There is a small chance that some of the activity required to deliver on this strategic action may require physical development in areas that are environmentally sensitive, in particular areas around the shore of Lough Erne and the rivers in the district – and it may require the prioritisation of areas with higher population density over open countryside.

Alternatives

An alternative is to continue to let nature take its course and respond to adverse incidents as and when they occur, using the current emergency strategies / plans, or to prioritise actions that favour the environment over and above society and the economy. However, the findings from our community engagement phase suggest this would have a significant negative impact on the social environment. Any physical development would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation.

Mitigation Measures

Due to the sensitive nature of flooding and adverse incidents, and the fact that it is an environmental issue, any detailed action plans generated as part of this strategic action will have assessed the impact of the environment prior to being implemented.

Monitoring Arrangements

Information on the number of flooding incidents is collected by the Rivers Agency. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly. Data on the quality of inland waterways is available through the North West Basin Water Management Plan 2015-2021.

Action 9b) Enhance and improve the quality of public realm (i.e. external public spaces) to make our towns, villages and neighbourhoods more welcoming, accessible, clean and attractive to business, local users and visitors

What is the impact?

The overall aim of this strategic action is to enhance the quality of open and shared public space for the benefits of the citizens of the district and users of the space. However, this may require some degree of physical development in order to bring the public realm up to suitable standard. As some of the public realm may be in close proximity to sensitive environmental sites, this activity has the potential to significantly adversely impact upon protected species and habitats, and could require development close to sites of historical, cultural and archaeological importance. In the longer term, the increased quality of the public realm could

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lead to increased usage of open and shared spaces that could have an adverse impact on the natural environment through increased littering and lack of due care for biodiversity, flora and fauna.

Alternatives

The alternatives are to either not seek to improve the quality of public realm or to do so only taking account of the environmental needs of the district. However, this is likely to be unduly limiting and is unlikely to achieve the optimal outcome or maximise the potential for this strategic action to connect people and nature, therefore raising awareness of the environment. The optimal outcome is the maximisation of benefits across the social, economic and environmental spectrum.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is managing the underlying resource well. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage across the walkways, cycle paths, greenways / blueways, open shared space and public realm. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited access. Areas of shared and open space and public realm will be subject to the Council's existing litter prevention and enforcement measures. Any new sites that may need to be developed to accommodate increased demand (which is not a specific part of the strategic action) would be subject to a site specific environmental assessment, in line with current legislation. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further.

Monitoring Arrangements

Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

[Action 9d\) Progress the sustainable redevelopment and use of key 'opportunity sites' in our main towns and across the district](#)

What is the impact?

The overall objective of this strategic action is to make the district a more attractive place to work and invest by progressing the (re)development of opportunity sites in a sustainable manner. Opportunity sites are highly likely to be brownfield sites, and this will inherently ensure that the impact on the natural and historic environment is reduced (in comparison to developing on greenbelt land). However, any physical development could pose a significant risk to the natural and historic environment, and the social environment (through noise pollution in the short term). In addition, the increased activity as a result of the development (and during the development phase) has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the built environment, through increased emissions, waste generation and energy consumption. However, the nature and scale of the impacts will be dependent upon the nature and development of the site. This strategic action neither identifies nor advocates for any particular site(s), nor does the Community Plan in its entirety.

Alternatives

An alternative is to limit available land and premises to only those that are developed and suitable in their current condition and thus not develop opportunity sites. This is very restrictive

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and would stifle economic growth and lead to increased dereliction. It is worth noting that many opportunity sites are brownfield in nature, and thus would limit the scale of the environmental assessment.

Mitigation Measures

The delivery plans that enable this strategic action will focus on the progression of key opportunity sites. It is likely to focus initially on sites that can be redeveloped / brought to the market quickly and with minimal impact on the environment (i.e. brownfield sites). Where significant development is required, site specific environmental assessments are also likely to be required under current legislation.

Monitoring Arrangements

Project specific information on the work required in order to make this happen is likely to be collected as part of the performance management system. Beyond that, quantitative monitoring arrangements are difficult to identify in the absence of more detailed thematic delivery plans, which have not yet been developed.

Action 9e) Increase countryside access across the district, promoting the ‘leave no trace principle’

What is the impact?

Increasing access to the countryside will go in tandem with the aim of promoting more exercise for the benefit of physical health and mental wellbeing. However, our walkways and open countryside may be in proximity with rich biodiversity, flora and fauna. Increasing the use of walkways and access to open countryside could lead to habitat fragmentation, therefore potentially having a significant adverse on the natural and historic environment. The promotion of the *leave no trace principle* will seek to minimise this impact (and the potential impact of littering).

Alternatives

An alternative is to proceed with the strategic action with strict parameters. For example, limiting all activity to existing walkways, cycle-paths and green/blue infrastructure that are well regulated. However, this would not maximise the potential to connect people with nature and it is unlikely that the potential environmental benefits from pursuing the alternative approach would be significant in scale.

Mitigation Measures

The key to mitigation is ensuring a comprehensive management plan is in place for access to the countryside. This will involve the provision of appropriate signage on popular rights of way and the existing networks of walkways etc. The signs will highlight the *leave no trace* principles and promote awareness of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna. In extreme cases, particularly sensitive sites can be fenced off and/or have limited seasonal access. Where possible biodiversity enhancement or restoration opportunities lie, these should be explored further. Areas of shared open space and public realm will be subject to the Council’s existing litter prevention and enforcement measures.

Monitoring Arrangements

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Data on the usages of key walkways across the district is already collected and analysed on a regular basis. Data to assist in the successful delivery of Fermanagh and Omagh's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is also collected and analysed regularly.

6) Conclusion

The Strategic Environmental Assessment has assessed the 78 strategic actions developed in the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan, taking 35 of the strategic actions through to the full assessment of alternatives, mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements.

The approach applied has aimed to be thorough – if a bit risk averse – and it is envisaged that the conclusions are unbiased, robust, objective, transparent and easy to understand.

It has been clear throughout that Community Planning process to date that the key issue to ensuring social, economic and environmental harmony is balance. It is hoped that this is clear in both the draft Community Plan and this Strategic Environmental Assessment.

It should be noted that ‘The Environment’ is one of three themes in the Community Plan, and thus has been placed on a par with the social (People and Communities) theme and the economic theme (Economy, Infrastructure and Skills). Therefore, it is expected that many of the strategic actions in the Community Plan will have a significant positive impact on the environment.

Where this is not the case, a series of mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements have been identified in section 6 of this report. Whilst many different mitigation measures have been identified, they can be summarised as the following:

- The erection of appropriate signage and signposting to promote the *leave no trace* principle and other environmental best practice across shared and open spaces, walkways, cyclepaths, greenways and blueways etc;
- The promotion of electronic communications, where appropriate, in the first instance, followed by public transport and in the last instance, car sharing;
- Applying the principle of sustainability across all action plans and relevant programmes;
- Ensuring that any enterprise support programmes (regardless of the sector of the business) includes raising awareness of the environment and includes the development and implementation of a full suite of Environmental Statements;
- Seeking to support the promotion brownfield and opportunity sites for development in the first instance;
- Promoting the cross-cutting principle of an ‘evidence based approach’, ensuring the need for any development is clear and the proposed action is not excessive; and
- Continuing to enforce existing litter prevention measures.

In addition to those summarised above, it is worth noting that any new physical developments that arise from the Community Plan (and thus are supported by the Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board) will be subject to site specific environmental assessments during the planning process.

Community Planning is an ongoing commitment and is long term in nature. Therefore, the objectives identified in this report will continue to be applied. The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 require the reporting of progress on the Community Plan every two years, with a review of the plan every four years. The framework for monitoring the environmental receptors outlined in this report will be established and reported on alongside the Community Plan (scheduled for 2019), with a more comprehensive review of the Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the review of the Community Plan in 2021.