



FERMANAGH AND OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Position Paper 14

Landscape Character Assessment

December 2015

Landscape Character Assessment of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

Purpose: To provide members with a Landscape Character Assessment for Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and to highlight those areas most vulnerable to change within the district.

Content: The paper provides information on:

- (i) The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment for Fermanagh and Omagh District and its key findings;**
- (ii) An assessment of the scenic quality, sensitivity to change and the overall capacity of each Landscape Character Area to absorb development; and**
- (iii) A strand of the Countryside Assessment of the plan area and is to be read in conjunction with the Environmental Assets Paper, Strategic Settlement Evaluation and Development Pressure Analysis.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)¹ is the process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. LCA documents, identifies and explains the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas.
- 1.2** The Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area comprises a mixture of landscapes which include mountain valleys, open moorland, river valleys, drumlins, lakelands, low lands, raised bogs, rolling farm land, cliffs and mountains. These landscapes provide a rich resource of productive agricultural land, habitats for nature conservation, archaeological and historical features and remains which illustrate ways in which the land has provided for human occupation and activity in the past. It also provides for many recreational needs and has the potential to become an increasingly important tourist asset.

¹ See Appendix 1 for details of abbreviations used in this paper.

- 1.3 Landscapes of national importance have merited designations as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The landscapes within Fermanagh and Omagh include part of the Sperrin Mountains, designated as an AONB in 2008. The purpose of the designation is to protect and conserve the scenic qualities of the area and promote their enjoyment.
- 1.4 The AONB forms a backdrop to much of the district in the north east, with the mountain valleys of the Glenelly and Owenkillew rivers lying below an expanse of open moorland. The Strule Valley, numerous drumlin features, the scenic and valued resource of the Lakelands, dramatic cliffs and mountains such as Cuilcagh, lowlands such as Arney, Garrison and Camowen Valley, areas of lowland raised bog and rolling farmland are other important landscapes within the District. There is a particular remoteness and wilderness to many of portions of the District.

2.0 Regional Planning Policy

- 2.1 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) places Sustainable Development at the heart of the planning system. The SPPS defines the three pillars of sustainable development planning authorities should deliver on in formulating policies and plans. On the environment pillar, the SPPS sets out the need to protect and enhance the built and natural environment, including landscape character. It states that, in formulating policies and plans, planning authorities will be guided by the precautionary approach in that, where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, its protection will generally be paramount, unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. The SPPS further states that our environment must be managed in a sustainable manner in accordance with the Executive's commitment to preserve and improve the built and natural environment and halt the loss of biodiversity.
- 2.2 In directing 'other types of development' in the countryside, beyond those for which the SPPS sets out specific Regional Strategic Policy, it states that where there are areas of the countryside which exhibit exceptional landscapes, and visual amenity value such as lough shores, and certain views and vistas, development should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Where appropriate these areas should be designated as Special Countryside Areas (SCA) in the Local Development Plan (LDP) and appropriate policies brought forward to ensure their protection from unnecessary and inappropriate development. Local policies may also be brought forward to maintain the landscape quality and character of Areas of High Scenic Value.
- 2.3 Paragraph 6.76 of the SPPS states that the LDP process has an important role for councils in identifying key features and assets of the countryside and balancing of the needs of rural areas and communities with the protection of the environment. This paper, along with the Development Pressure Analysis (Paper 15) and the Environmental Assets (Paper 5), will provide the evidence

base for the purposes of bringing forward an appropriate policy approach to development in the countryside.

3.0 The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000

- 3.1 All of the Northern Ireland landscape has been classified by the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA 2000) which was compiled by Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). The NI landscape has been subdivided into 130 different landscape character areas, each with a distinctive character, based upon local patterns of geology, land form, land use, cultural and ecological features. The Fermanagh and Omagh District contains 26 Landscape Character Areas, some of which are shared with neighbouring districts (Appendix 2, Map1).
- 3.2 On 28th April 2015, NIEA published the draft Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) for consultation. It identifies 26 regional landscape character areas, and is intended to form a framework for updating of local-scale assessments which will replace the NILCA 2000. Of the 26 regional landscape character areas 7no are located within the Fermanagh and Omagh District (Appendix 3, Map 2).
- 3.3 NILCA 2000 also identified Areas of Scenic Quality (ASQ) and defined them as landscapes of regional or local importance for their scenic quality, i.e. important landscape resources in their own right, regardless of location or setting. They represent a second tier (below AONBs) in the hierarchy of landscape classifications. There are 4 Areas of Scenic Quality within Fermanagh and Omagh District - Lough Melvin, Derrin Mountain, Colebrooke Estate and Bessy Bell.
- 3.4 In addition to NILCA 2000, NIEA Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes; Supplementary Planning Guidance (2010) (SPG) provides a broad, strategic guidance in relation to the visual and landscape impacts of wind energy development. It contains an assessment of each of the 130 LCAs by referencing the characteristics and values associated with each LCA. Although this guidance is specifically concerned with wind energy development it is considered a useful source for identifying those landscapes within Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area that are vulnerable to change.
- 3.5 Within the SPG each LCA is given an overall sensitivity level using a five point scale ranging from high to low. Of the 26 LCAs that fall within the Fermanagh and Omagh district, 23 have been given either a high or a high to medium sensitivity rating. Slieve Russel, Derrylin and Kinawley and Lough Bradan have been categorised as a medium sensitivity and Slievemore categorised as a medium to low rating. It is acknowledged within the guidance that there may be considerable variation in sensitivity level within each LCA, reflecting the fact that the LCAs are broad character or identity areas. The overall sensitivity level given is the level that prevails over most of the individual LCA's geographic area.

4.0 Development Plan Designations

- 4.1 The Islands Countryside Policy Area as identified in the Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 changed in title to Special Countryside Area (SCA) following the introduction of PPS 21. SCAs are regarded as exceptional landscapes such as mountains, stretches of the coast or lough shores and certain views or vistas. The quality of the landscape and unique amenity value is such that development should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. The Islands of Lough Erne, Lough Macnean and Lough Melvin are SCAs.
- 4.2 Local Landscape Policy areas (LLPAs) are areas considered to be of greatest amenity value or local significance within and adjoining settlements and therefore worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development. Within the Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 there are 235 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) within and adjoining the majority of the settlements.
- 4.3 The Omagh Area Plan 1987-2002 designated formal Landscape Policy Areas (LPAs). These are areas of especially high amenity or of local significance. They should remain in their present use and only schemes that add to the landscaping of these sites should be encouraged. There are a number of LPAs which have been designated within or adjoining a few of the settlements within the former Omagh District. These pre-date the LLPA definition as contained within the Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 and are therefore a slightly lesser type of designation. There are LPAs within the following settlements:-
- Fintona
 - Dromore
 - Carrickmore
 - Gortin
 - Loughmacrory
 - Sixmilecross
- 4.4 The features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of an LLPA/LPA are specific to individual settlements and differ from place to place. Details of the LLPAs/LPAs including maps indicating their boundaries are contained within the Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 and the Omagh Area Plan 1987-2002. As part of the plan preparation process, all existing LLPA and LPA designations will be reviewed and any additional LLPAs identified.

5.0 Other Landscape Designations

- 5.1 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area has the distinction of having the first UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation) European Geopark in the United Kingdom and Ireland with designation of the Marble Arch Caves Global GeoPark in 2001. The Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark, which straddles counties Fermanagh and Cavan, became the world's first cross border Geopark in 2008. It is jointly managed by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Cavan County

Council. The decision, announced by the UNESCO General Conference in Paris on 17th November 2015, saw the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark become Northern Ireland's second only UNESCO supported location alongside the Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site and puts it on a par with other UNESCO sites in Ireland such as the prehistoric monuments at Newgrange. UNESCO Global Geopark status is awarded to areas with internationally important geological heritage that also have a sustainable tourism strategy so that they benefit the local and regional economy.

- 5.2 The Sperrin AONB covers a substantial area of the northeast of the District. Lying in the heart of Northern Ireland the Sperrin AONB encompasses a largely mountainous area of great geological complexity. Designated first in 1968 under the 1965 Amenity Lands Act, and latterly in 2008 under the 1985 Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands Order (NCALO) with a revised boundary, it covers an area of 118,206 hectares and stretches from the Strule Valley in the west to the perimeter of the Lough Neagh lowlands in the east. This area presents vast expanses of moorland penetrated by narrow glens and deep valleys. In its south the Burren area is noted for its lakes, sandy eskers and other glacial features. The area is rich in historic and archaeological heritage and folklore. The NCALO designation is much more orientated towards positive management. NIEA's aim is to develop and facilitate partnerships that deliver conservation of the natural and built environment and enhanced recreation provision, in an efficient, effective and inclusive manner.
- 5.3 The Fermanagh and Omagh Council area has a rich variety of archaeological sites and monuments, buildings and other structures such as Devenish. The council area also contains a wealth of remains of industrial heritage, all of which are reminders of economic development in the area. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency is responsible for the identification, recording, updating and protection of all known archaeological and sites of historical importance.

6.0 Key Findings

- 6.1 The 26 LCAs within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area identified within the NICLA 2000 were reviewed and analysed to enable the sensitivity of each LCA and its ability to absorb further development to be ranked as high, medium and low. In doing so it was recognised that some types of landscapes have a greater ability to absorb development than others. For instance, a rolling, drumlin landscape with small field patterns will generally make new development less intrusive in the landscape compared to a flat, open landscape with large field patterns. Some areas will also be more sensitive due to their high quality or scenic landscape such as in an AONB.
- 6.2 This paper provides a broad strategic picture of those parts of the district that are considered to be particularly vulnerable to change. It is acknowledged

that even within identified areas there may be considerable variation in the levels of vulnerability which reflects the strategic overview provided. The characteristics were scored for each LCA through an analysis of the descriptions in the NICLA 2000 reports and SPG for Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes. The suggested score values are as follows:-

High – where a landscape characteristic has a high or dominant presence within the LCA.

Medium – If it is unclear if a characteristic is dominant or not.

Low – where a landscape character has a low presence in the LCA or is absent.

- 6.3 The NICLA 2000 reports do not indicate the level of sensitivity to change for all LCAs. In some instances the clues to the ability to absorb further development may be contained under the heading '*Principles for Accommodating New Development*'. If no such information is found, it may be inferred that the landscape has a strong capability of accepting change and therefore a score of 'low' in terms of sensitivity should be recorded.

High sensitivity – where the landscape is very vulnerable to change and would be adversely affected by new development which would result in a significant change in landscape and visual characteristics and values.

Medium sensitivity – where the landscape is moderately vulnerable to change and would only be adversely affected by new development in localised areas.

Low sensitivity – where the landscape is not vulnerable to change and where new development would not adversely impact on the landscape and visual characteristics and values.

- 6.4 Taking into account the key landscape characteristics, level of scenic quality, principles for accommodating new development and sensitivity to change of each LCA (Appendix 4), a conclusion may be drawn on:-

1. The overall capacity of a landscape to absorb further development;
2. The identification of areas of countryside of special landscape quality where any development would be undesirable; and
3. The identification of areas where rural character is not under threat from excessive development pressure.

- 6.5 Areas identified as being vulnerable to change include the following:

- The **Garrison Lowland LCA 1** has a high scenic quality. It is located in west Fermanagh, bounded by Lough Melvin to the south and River Erne to north. It forms part of Lough Melvin Area of Scenic Quality which was identified within the NICLA 2000. Its sensitivity to change is also high as Lough Melvin is a designated ASQ and SAC. There are numerous ASSIs and Rathes within the

LCA. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.

- **Lower Lough Erne LCA 2** has a high scenic quality. It includes the northern Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh. The interaction between the lake and land is a defining characteristic. The Cliffs of Magho contribute also to the high scenic quality of the area. There are various ASSI designations for limestone at the western end of the Cliffs of Magho. The LCA is rich in monuments and ecclesiastical sites. The overall sensitivity to change is considered high. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.
- **Croagh and Garvaghy River LCA 3** which lies to the north of Lower Lough Erne has a high scenic quality. It is an isolated area of barren Pettigoe Plateau which has a remote and isolated character. The extensive moorland and blanket bog are largely intact and contribute to landscape character. The sensitivity of this LCA to change is considered high. Part of the LCA is within Derrin Mountain ASQ. There is an ASSI, SAC and Ramsar nature conservation designations. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low to medium.
- The **Lough Navar and Ballintempo Upland LCA 4** has a high scenic quality. It is bounded by Cliffs of Magho to the north and Ora More to the south. It lies within the highly scenic Fermanagh karst landscape. The overall sensitivity to change of the LCA is considered medium to high. Within the LCA there are several SACs, Glennasheever ASSI and much of the landscape is part of the UNESCO Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low to medium.
- The **Lough MacNea Valley LCA 5** is located in south west Fermanagh, bordering County Leitrim and has a high scenic quality. It lies within the highly scenic Fermanagh karst landscape and its valley sides adjoining the lough are also considered scenic. Its overall sensitivity to change is considered medium to high. Lurgan River Wood ASSI is located within this LCA. Part of the area is in the UNESCO Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low to medium.
- The **Knockmore Scarpland LCA 6** is located west of Enniskillen and Sillees valleys and has a high scenic quality. It is within the highly scenic Fermanagh Karst landscape with a wealth and diversity of landscape features. The landscape has a high sensitivity to change. There are a number of designated ASSIs and SACs within the LCA. The southern part of the LCA is part of the UNESCO Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. According to the SPG the

overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.

- **Cuilcagh and Marlbank LCA 9** is located in south west Fermanagh and adjoining Counties Leitrim and Cavan. It has a high scenic quality and is located within the open karst landscape. Cuilcagh Mountain is located within this LCA. There is a large number of earth science, ecological and cultural heritage features including Cuilcagh Mountain ASSI and Ramsar site. It is located within the UNESCO Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. The landscape would be highly sensitive to change. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.
- **Upper Lough Erne LCA 11** is located in south Fermanagh and adjoins Co. Cavan. It has a high scenic quality. The landscape comprises of rolling low drumlins and flooded hollows. The landscape is dominated by water as the channel of the River Erne splits and joins, widens and narrows around the islands of various shapes and sizes. The natural habitats, bird life and wealth of archaeology within this LCA are vulnerable to change. Most of the lough is designated as ASSI, SPA and Ramsar. The area also has a wealth of archaeology. The sensitivity to change within this LCA is considered high. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.
- **Enniskillen LCA 13** is located at the southern part of Lower Lough Erne which has a high scenic quality and lies within the Fermanagh Lakeland landscape. Enniskillen town is located within this LCA. The interaction between the lough, islands, shoreline and drumlins contribute to the scenic quality. There are a number of features within this LCA such as estates and associated woodlands, islands, and many archaeological sites. The overall sensitivity of this LCA to change is considered medium. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be medium to high.
- The south western section of **Clogher Valley LCA 17** from Lisbellaw to Clabby lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. It has a high scenic quality. An area around Lisbellaw lies within the highly scenic Erne Lakeland landscape. The Colebrooke Estate is an ASQ. It has a rich historic heritage and landscape pattern. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The sensitivity to change is considered medium as a strong sense of enclosure is provided by trees and hedgerow which will accommodate development. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low-medium.

- The south western part of the **South Sperrin LCA 24** lies within the Fermanagh Omagh and District Council area. It is within the Sperrin AONB designation and is considered to be of a high scenic quality. This LCA has an unspoilt character and many features that make it highly sensitive to change. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.
 - The eastern section of the **Bessy Bell and Gortin LCA 26** lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. It is partially within the Sperrin AONB and is of high scenic quality. Bessy Bell is an ASQ. The upland summits, steep slopes and river corridors are particularly sensitive due to their open and exposed nature. It should be noted that within this area is the Strule River Valley which was recognised in the Omagh Area Plan as an area of high landscape value and merited additional protection. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low.
- 6.6 In addition to these, all Ramsar sites and European designated sites (Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)) as identified in the Environmental Assets paper are considered to be vulnerable to change (Appendix 5, Map 3).
- 6.7 Areas within Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area with a medium sensitivity to change include the following:
- **Sillees Valley LCA 7** is located within Co. Fermanagh, south of Lower Lough Erne. It is a distinct and well defined low lying area with drumlins and has a moderate scenic quality. Whilst most of the LCAs landscape is broad, open and exposed to view the undulating landscape and overgrown hedgerows provide a sense of enclosure and potential screening therefore it has the potential to accommodate additional development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be low-medium.
 - **Newtownbutler and Rosslea Lowlands LCA 12** is located in Co. Fermanagh, south of Slieve Beagh. The scenic quality of this undulating landscape is quite good and is enhanced by the many small lakes, estates with woodland and remnants of parklands. Much of the landscape has a low sensitivity with its drumlins, strong field patterns and individual trees and parkland which could lend itself to appropriate scaled development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity of the landscape to absorb development is considered to be medium-high.

- **Lough Bradan LCA 14** which is situated on the borders of Counties Tyrone and Fermanagh, has a varied scenic quality with attractive open upland areas and lower, farmed drumlin areas. The broad convex rounded summits of the upland areas has extensive forestry and other man-made features which would lend itself to appropriate scaled development. Other areas of heather moorland and bog would be more sensitive to development given its more exposed nature. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be medium.
- **Irvinestown Farmland LCA 15** lies to the north of Enniskillen, with Lower Lough Erne lying to the south west. The LCA is moderately scenic with a strong rural character over most of its area. This LCA offers a high degree of enclosure and potential screening and has relatively few distinctive skylines, settings, views or major natural or cultural interests which lends itself to being able to absorb additional development into the landscape. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be low-medium.
- **Brougher Mountain LCA 16** lies on the borders of counties Tyrone and Fermanagh and to the north of the Clogher Valley lowlands. The south west end of this LCA which lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh council area, is highly scenic forming part of the Erne Lakeland landscape. The LCA is classified as having a medium sensitivity to change and with careful siting with the natural features, development could be absorbed into the landscape. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be medium.
- **Slieve Beagh LCA 18** is situated on the borders of counties Tyrone and Fermanagh with a medium scenic quality due to its landscape condition with abandoned farms, piecemeal afforestation and peat cutting having affected its quality. This broad convex upland area is relatively sensitive. However, large areas have been planted out in forestry hence reducing its sensitivity. The presence of man-made influences such as forestry, the LCA is able to absorb additional development with careful siting into the landscape. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be medium.

- **Omagh Farmlands LCA 22** is situated in Co. Tyrone at the foothills of Bessy Bell. Omagh town is located within this LCA. The scenic quality of the area is relatively good with its distinctive drumlins and river valleys (Strule, Drumragh and Camowen). A small portion of the LCA to the north lies within the highly scenic area of the Sperrin AONB. Whilst this area within the AONB is highly sensitive, other areas within the LCA have a reduced sensitivity due to a high degree of enclosure afforded by landform and vegetation. Thus, the area to the south of the AONB where there is a strong settled character and high degree of enclosure, has the ability to absorb additional development through careful siting. A precautionary approach to development should be applied to areas which lie within the flood plains of the river valleys. Within the AONB, whilst there is an ability to absorb additional development, consideration should be given to the scale, design and massing. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be high-medium.
- **Beaghmore Moors and Marsh LCA 25** lies within counties Tyrone and Derry/Londonderry to the south and east of the South Sperrins. Most of this LCA lies within the Sperrin AONB of which the western half lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh Council area. It has a distinctive character and many important landscape values with irregular ridges and mounds throughout the area. The area is generally open and exposed in character with a number of sand and gravel quarries particularly on the southern edges of the LCA. Extensive conifer plantations have taken place throughout the LCA which provide opportunities for development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be low.
- The western section of the **Carrickmore Hills 43** lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. This LCA, located on the edge of the Sperrin AONB, is an area of high scenic quality with its small loughs and views from Mullaghcarn. Although the distinctive rocky skylines are sensitive to change the lowland fringes, due to the rolling landform and tree cover, provide opportunities for further development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is medium.

6.8 Areas within Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area with a low sensitivity to change include the following;

- **Arney Lowlands LCA 8** is located in south Fermanagh bordering the Cuilcagh and Marlbank LCA. This is a broad, river valley floor distinguished by wide, flat spaces between the low hills. Its sensitivity relates primarily to the landform of low hills which could be overwhelmed by inappropriately scaled development. There is some degree of screening and enclosure offered by

the hedgerows, scrub woodland and raised bogs. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be high.

- **Slieve Russel, Derrylin and Kinawley LCA 10** is located in south Fermanagh adjoining Co. Cavan. It has no areas designated as scenic quality. This is a relatively open upland area with limited natural and cultural heritage interests. There are areas degraded and affected by mineral development and other intrusive influences which detract from the landscape character. Its sensitivity to change is within the medium range and with appropriate scaled development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be medium.
- **Fairy Water Valley LCA 21** is situated in west Tyrone is an area of relatively low scenic value with the exception being the Drumquin valley. There is a sense of remoteness within the LCA with its inaccessible waterlogged landscape in poor condition. The overall scenic quality is considered low. There are some extensive blocks of conifers on the upper slopes and stands of mixed woodland on the steep escarpment have medium sensitivity to change. Development is mainly scattered along the minor roads where sensitivity is lower in the undulating foothills to the south and south west. The open flood plain areas are sensitive to development and should be avoided. In general the LCA would be able to absorb additional development in the more sheltered and the non-exposed areas. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be high to medium.
- **Camowen Valley LCA 23** is situated in Co. Tyrone, south of the Sperrin Mountains. This LCA is not particularly high in scenic quality other than a small portion to the north west that lies within the setting of the Sperrin AONB. The undulating topography has been influenced by man-made features of extensive woodland which provides good opportunities for development. However, the rocky outcrops such as those at Crocknashinnagh would be highly sensitive to development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered high to medium. The overall capacity to absorb development is considered to be high.
- **Slievemore LCA 44** is situated in an upland area in Co. Tyrone between Pomeroy and Garvaghy. It is an area of low scenic quality with broad ridge tops, extensive heather moorlands and conifer plantations. Much of the landscape is relatively low-lying and not visually sensitive and as a result, it is

well suited to development. According to the SPG the overall sensitivity of this LCA for wind energy development is considered medium to low. The overall ability to absorb development is considered to be high.

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 7.1 This paper reflects the current position of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area as of November 2015.
- 7.2 From the key findings, it is evident that Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area has a variety of contrasting landscapes, some of which are particularly sensitive to change due to the quality of their landscape features and have therefore a low capacity to absorb new development. These include Lough Melvin, Lower and Upper Lough Erne, Lough Macnean, the higher summits of the Sperrin AONB, the Cuilcagh Mountain which lies mainly within the UNESCO Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark and the Strule River Valley. It is therefore recommended that these areas are afforded greater protection from development so that their natural environments are sustained and enhanced.
- 7.3 Thus, it is recommended that policy options for greater policy control should be explored for the following areas:-
- The shores and islands of upper and lower Lough Erne, the shores and islands of upper and lower Lough Macnean and the shores and islands of Lough Melvin – for all types of development.
 - The High Sperrins in relation to high structures such as wind turbines and telecommunication masts.
 - The Cuilcagh Mountain – for all types of development.
 - The Strule River Valley – for all types of development.

It is also recommended that this paper should be sent to NIEA to establish whether the forthcoming Regional Landscape Character Assessment NI would raise any additional factors that would require consideration as part of the LDP process.

- 7.4 This Landscape Assessment forms part of the Countryside Assessment and will be taken into account when formulating the LDP. It will also form part of the **Sustainability Appraisal** and should be used to inform the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**.
- 7.5 The appraisal of sustainability must be carried out for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan respectively (Sections 8 (6) and 9 (7) of the Planning Act 2011). As the sustainability appraisal (SA) for each of these development plan documents will incorporate an assessment of environmental effects, it must

also comply with the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of effects of certain plans and programmes of the environment (the SEA Directive).

- 7.6 The purpose of SA is to promote sustainable development through integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of plans and programmes such as local development plans. It must be carried out in conjunction with, and parallel to, the development of the LDP and integrated with the plan process and will involve an iterative process of collecting information, appraising reasonable alternatives and identifying likely significant effects on the environment.

Appendix 1

Abbreviations

Abbreviations

AONB	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASAI	Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest
ASI	Areas of Scientific Interest
ASQ	Areas of Scenic Quality
ASSI	Areas of Special Scientific Interest
LCA	Landscape Character Areas
LDP	Local Development Plan
LLPA	Local Landscape policy Areas
LPA	Landscape Policy Area
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
RAMSAR	Convention for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SCA	Special Countryside Areas
SEA	Strategic Environmental Appraisal
SPA	Special Protection Areas
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WHS	World Heritage Site

Appendix 2

Map 1

Landscape Character Areas and

Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA 2000)



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Map 1 Landscape Character Areas

Legend

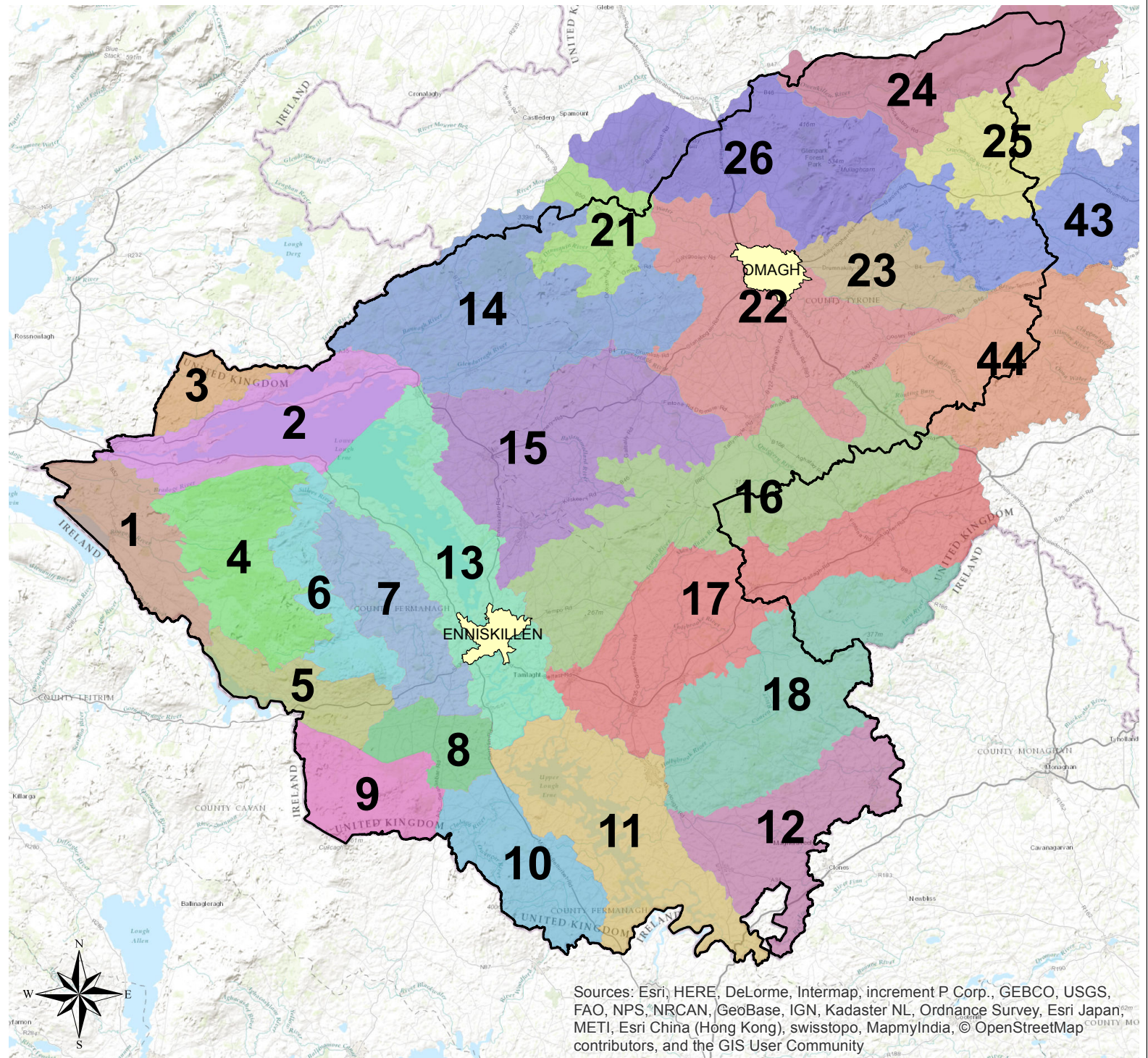
- Main towns
- Fermanagh and Omagh Council Boundary

LCA NAME

- 1 The Garrison Lowlands
- 2 Lower Lough Erne
- 3 Croagh and Garvary River
- 4 The Lough Navar and Ballintempo Uplands
- 5 The Lough Macnean Valley
- 6 The Knockmore Scarpland
- 7 The Silles Valley
- 8 The Arney Lowlands
- 9 Culcagh and Marbank
- 10 Slieve Russel, Derrylin and Kinawley
- 11 Upper Lough Erne
- 12 Newtownbutler and Rosslea Lowlands
- 13 Enniskillen
- 14 Lough Bradan
- 15 Irvinestown Farmland
- 16 Brougher Mountain
- 17 Clogher Valley Lowlands
- 18 Slieve Beagh
- 21 Fairy Water Valley
- 22 Omagh Farmland
- 23 Camowen Valley
- 24 South Sperrin
- 25 Beaghmore Moors and Marsh
- 26 Bessy Bell and Gortin
- 43 Carrickmore Hills
- 44 Slieveamore

Not to scale

Author: Development Plan - NIMA CS
& LA156. Development Plan Section,
Planning, Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council.



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA 2000)

LCA 1 Garrison Lowlands

The Garrison Lowlands, in the far west of Fermanagh, are bounded by Lough Melvin and the County River. The land rises to the east, and a mixed geology has resulted in poorly drained lowland soils, with exposed sandstone on ridges. Long rounded ridges of glacial deposits, becoming flatter further west, are separated by small rivers which head west in narrow wooded gorges, through circular lakes, bogs and wet meadows. Land use is dominated by small, enclosed rush-infested pastures. Herb-rich hay meadows are common, due to traditional, low intensity farming methods. Fields are separated by overgrown hedgerows or, higher up, by earth hedge banks with low trees and shrubs and some post and wire fencing. There are modest scale blocks of coniferous planting, but only low native tree cover which is seen around farms and along river valleys. Small scale settlement, a mixture of modern bungalows and old thatched cottages, is dispersed along roads or clustered at junctions. The village of Garrison lies in a picturesque setting at the head of Lough Melvin, where views southwards are dominated by distinctive 'ladder farms' on pronounced slopes. Numerous raths are scattered throughout the area.

LCA 1 Garrison Lowlands



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 2 Lower Lough Erne

Lower Lough Erne is the more dramatic of the Lakeland loughs, with extensive open waters, offshore islands and the bold escarpment of the Magho Cliffs to the south. This character area covers the northern part of the lough, which stretches for 20 miles from Enniskillen to Rosscar. The lough lies in a deep glacial trough, the alignment of the shores and islands reflecting the direction of ice movement. On the southern shores ice-scored limestones and ancient quartzite rocks form prominent scarps, the Magho Cliffs, but further north the low streamlined ridges, bays and promontories of Boa Island and Castle Caldwell are less pronounced. Below the Magho Cliffs a narrow strip of farmland and alder woodland borders a boulder strewn shore. The lough fringes are a mix of rushy farmland and small fields, with larger improved fields on the drained ground of the drumlins. Wooded islands are attractive features. Settlement is scattered with Belleek, an old estate town, being the main centre, now popular with tourists. Elsewhere a mixture of traditional, often derelict, dwellings and tourism development is scattered along the main roads.

LCA 2 Lower Lough Erne



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 3 Croagh and Garvary River

This small area to the north east of Belleek has a rough and rugged appearance lying on the edge of the Pettigoe Plateau, and is underlain by ancient metamorphic rocks. The plateau is scoured with many small loughs and rocky knolls, with the rounded summits of Croagh and Mallybreen Hill rising above. Blanket bog covers much of the landscape. The two principal rivers, the Garvary and the Woodford Rivers, have cut through small rounded glacial hills and terraces of sand and gravel. Lough Scolban and Keenaghan Lough lie on the southern boundary of the area and mark a change in the underlying geology between schist and limestone. Farming is concentrated on

the boulder clay soils of the lower slopes and valleys, where there is a dense pattern of hedged fields and small farms. Many farms continue to be worked at low intensity, with a predominance of rough grazing and small hay meadows. Beyond the enclosed fields, moorland is worked for turf. In more remote areas however, blanket and raised bog remain intact and form important habitats.

LCA 3 Croagh and Garvary River



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 4 Lough Navar and Ballintempo Uplands

These exposed uplands of west Fermanagh lying between 150 and 300 metres, have been carved out of a broken and undulating sandstone plateau. Different layers of grits, shales and limestones form escarpments, lough basins, rock ridges and the distinctive rock pinnacles of Big Dog and Little Dog. Limestone forms steep escarpments to the north, east and south, cut by deep glens, but to the west the land slopes gently. Conditions have favoured the formation of extensive blanket bog, which now covers much of the area. Much of this is planted with forestry in regular blocks of uniform age, masking the underlying features and varied terrain and enclosing farms. Unplanted areas are crucial in the appreciation of the landscape. These include turbary plots, nature reserves and hilltops unsuitable for the planting of trees. During the 19th century a significant farming population occupied sheltered valleys and patches of better soils. Many of these farms are now abandoned and the former field boundaries lost within forestry. Some continue to be worked, but overall the uplands are empty. The area has a concentration of Neolithic megaliths, standing stones, passageways and court tombs.

LCA 4 Lough Navar and Ballintempo Uplands



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 5 Lough Macnean Valley

The Lough Macnean valley is in the south-west of Fermanagh. Upper and Lower Lough Macnean, were formed as glaciers excavated deep basins in varied carboniferous rocks, creating impressive steep valley sides and rocky scarps, notably at Hanging Rock. To the east the valley opens out into the flat Arney Valley and to the north-west it connects with the Garrison lowlands. Limestone outcrops along the slopes of Belmore Mountain form a craggy escarpment, divided from the rest of the uplands by an attractive wooded valley, with waterfalls marking the harder rock strata. To the south of Lower Lough Macnean is the limestone escarpment of Marlbank.

The loughs have contrasting characters. The larger Upper Lough Macnean has a shoreline which is broken by wooded promontories and sheltered bays with fringing reed swamps, fen and carr woodland. Surrounding fields tend to be rush infested with overgrown hedges. Lower Lough Macnean is confined by a steep limestone

escarpment and has an outstanding landscape setting. It has a more developed agricultural shoreline, with open wet meadows contrasting with occasional thick woodlands. Limestone soils produce good quality grassland and the southern shores and lower slopes are farmed intensively. Farm units are smaller to the north of the loughs, but there is also intensive sheep and cattle grazing. Farmhouses on the higher slopes lie derelict, but in the valley, small farms with gardens are loosely clustered on low hills. The valley has some significant archaeological sites, including raths and crannogs.

LCA 5 Lough Macnean Valley



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 6 The Knockmore Scarpland

The Knockmore Scarpland limestone escarpment dominates the skylines in west Fermanagh. The rugged karst relief has been emphasised by glacial action and includes limestone pavements, cliffs, potholes, sink holes and gorges. At Knockmore, 100m cliffs descend into a fringe of ash and hazel woodland. To the south, Belmore Mountain has a broader landscape pattern and is capped by conifer plantations. The more enclosed, intimate glen landscapes have a mixture of small loughs, patchy fields, scrub woodland and scattered houses. Small streams disappear into the limestone at potholes, emerging at springs on the lower slopes. Larger rivers cut through the rock to form waterfalls, spectacular gorges and caves. A number of loughs lie along the scarp edge, fringed with reeds and alder. On the lower clay soils, wet meadows and flushes are common; many are rich in flowers or overgrown with alder.

At higher elevations, native hazel woodland contrasts with the pale grey rock faces of the overhanging limestone cliffs. On the upper slopes, soil cover is thin and the short limestone grassland supports a wide diversity of lime-loving plants; acid grassland and heath is associated with sandstone outcrops. Fields are bounded with drystone walls and earth banks on higher slopes and overgrown hedges and ditches lower down. Tortuous roads and tracks link the clusters of houses which are at sheltered locations along the scarp. New development in the open landscape is often out of character with the traditional dwellings.

LCA 6 The Knockmore Scarpland



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 7 The Sillees Valley

In west Fermanagh, the Sillees Valley is a distinct and well defined lowland area. It is separated from Lough Erne by a ridge of limestone which rises to 200m at Cullen Hill and is bound to the west by the dramatic cliffs of the Knockmore Scarpland. The lowlands are choked with steep-sided drumlins which rise higher and are packed tighter towards the north-west. The Sillees River winds around between the hills through Carran and Ross Loughs to Upper Lough Erne. The drainage pattern is intricate. The striking pattern of the drumlin hills creates a strong sense of enclosure which is emphasised by the small fields, tall hedges and abundant trees; gaps between drumlins reveal views over flat wet areas to hills beyond. Forest plantations and woods are dispersed across the area adding variety to the landscape pattern.

Settlement are generally dispersed along winding roads and occupies the higher ground of the drumlin tops and sides. Traditional single storey houses are often associated with groups of farm buildings.

LCA 7 The Sillees Valley



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 8 The Arney Lowlands

The Arney River meanders through a wide, flat glacial trough between the uplands of Fermanagh, Belmore and the Cuilcagh Mountains. The steep sided drumlins of the Silles Valley are to the north and the wetlands of Upper Lough Erne lie to the east.

The valley is characterised by wide flat lowlands enclosed by low hills. Much of this lowland has damp peaty soils and is farmed or covered with scrub woodland and raised bogs. The shallow hills form islands of small rushy fields and hay meadows surrounded by thick overgrown hedgerows.

The hills accommodates a dispersed group of small farmhouses linked by straight roads which are often raised above the level of the surrounding wetland. The tiny hamlets of Arney and Macken are the principal settlements; most housing is concentrated at crossroads or dispersed as ribbon development. More remote sites, up lanes away from the roads, are often unmodernised or derelict.

LCA 8 The Arney Lowlands



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 9 Cuilcagh and Marlbank

The south-west corner of Fermanagh includes the only true mountain in the area (Cuilcagh at 665m) and has some of the most dramatic countryside in the district. Underlying carboniferous strata dip to the south and west and the Upper Limestone forms a magnificent escarpment, riddled with potholes and caves. There are also dry valleys, limestone pavements and gorges, with prominent rounded hills known as 'reef knolls' rising above the land surface. Impermeable flagstones and shales form the long broken slopes of the Cuilcagh Mountain.

There is a rich variety of vegetation, with montane grassland and blanket bog on the grits and fine species-rich dry grassland on the limestone. Poorly drained hollows on the limestone reflect the presence of boulder clay. Hazel scrub grows in irregular patches on steeper limestone slopes but there is a more luxuriant woodland cover at sink-holes. Heather, cotton grass and sedges predominate on the peat uplands and extensive areas of blanket bog have been cut mechanically.

Field enclosures are traditionally small but most have been enlarged to incorporate the existing prehistoric boundaries. Broken dry stone walls subdivide the limestone slopes, with hedgerows lower down and open fenceless moors above. The area is sparsely populated with a number of farms on the lower scarp slopes.

LCA 9 Cuilcagh and Marlbank



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 10 Slieve Russel, Derrylin and Kinawley

This is a complex landscape unit on the southern boundary of Fermanagh. It has contrasting elements of upland and lowland landscape. The area is dominated by Slieve Russel, a small flat-topped isolated block of limestone, sandstone and shales. Its steep slopes are dissected by small glens which run down to glacial deposits on the lower slopes. The two major summits of Slieve Rushen and Molly Mountain are separated by the Owengarr River. The area also includes the drumlin lowlands and lowland bog to the east and the glacial trough occupied by the Cladagh River. The summit of the mountain is covered by blanket bog, which has been disturbed by peat cutting and erosion. There is a transition from open moor to rush infested rough grazing, which in places has been improved.

Ladder farms are a striking feature of the hillsides and the steeper slopes retain fragments of scrub woodland which blend into the larger conifer plantation of Derrylin Wood. On the lower slopes there is a mosaic of small fields and bushy hedgerows; some are improved and others are cut for hay. Intervening bogs have suffered widespread modification although some, including Moninea Bog, remain intact. The slopes of the uplands are quarried for limestone and sand and gravels are extracted and processed in the Gortmullan area, giving this area an industrialised and degraded character.

The settlement pattern varies with topography; the upland farms often have small modern buildings and are strung out along roads which run perpendicular to the slopes; newer housing is concentrated on the foot slopes around main roads and in the small settlements such as Derrylin, Kinawley and Teemore. Lowland farms are typically small, with groups of farms clustered on each hill. Thatched cottages are a notable feature. There are a number of archaeological sites, including raths, cashels and cairns which are associated both with the uplands and the drumlin hills.

LCA 10 Slieve Russel, Derrylin and Kinawley



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 11 Upper Lough Erne

Upper Lough Erne is a small scale intricate landscape in the south of Fermanagh. The landscape is dominated by water as the channel of the River Erne splits and joins, widens and narrows around islands of varying shapes and sizes. Low lying interconnected drumlins stretch across the lough from west to east providing linkages between the shorelines.

The shores are thickly wooded and the surrounding drumlins are divided by a dense patchwork of fields and hedges. Between the drumlins are many small loughs, each fringed with reed beds, carr woodland and the occasional crannog.

The only prominent landmark in this vast and intricate network of wetlands is the hill of Knockninny which rises from the drumlin plain and commands excellent views of the lough. There is a limestone quarry on its western side. Small settlements are scattered throughout the area along disorientating narrow twisting roads and on the

higher ground of drumlin tops and sides. There are traditional small farms and cottages throughout. The grand buildings (some derelict) of large wooded and parkland estates such as Crom Castle, are important local landscape features.

LCA 11 Upper Lough Erne



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 12 Newtownbutler and Roslea Lowlands

This belt of lowland lies between the Finn and Lacky Rivers and the Carnock and Mullaghfad Hills. Lines of drumlins form undulating ridges which extend across the area from west to east, influencing the pattern of rivers, lines of communication and settlement.

The drumlins form low rounded hills or ridges rising above wet intervening hollows which often have small loughs. Open views in all directions are bounded by low drumlin hills but the River Finn to the south, has an extensive floodplain. North of the B36 the drumlins increase in height and are more tightly packed together with steep intervening valleys. The relatively wooded character of the thorn hedges gives the landscape a well vegetated appearance.

At the foot of the Carnrock Hills, there is a more pronounced valley and a chain of small loughs, with fringing reed beds, carr woodlands and wet meadows. Uninterrupted pastures, tall overgrown hedges, small farms and winding roads give this landscape a rural character.

LCA 12 Newtownbutler and Roslea Lowlands



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 13 Enniskillen

This landscape unit includes the southern end of Lower Lough Erne, the town of Enniskillen and the winding rivers and wetlands in the northern part of Upper Lough Erne. It is a landscape of open water, wooded islands and richly vegetated shorelines, which is often invisible from the main roads which pass around the lough. The lough and river sides are dominated by grassy drumlins, with fields separated by bushy hedgerows and hedgerow trees and numerous wooded off-shore islands. There are several large wooded estate landscapes including Castle Archdale on the north shores of Lower Lough Erne and Lisgoole Abbey to the south of Enniskillen on the banks of the River Erne. Settlements are scattered along the main roads, with a variety of traditional dwellings, as well as individual prestigious new roadside houses. Enniskillen has an exceptional landscape setting at the main crossing point along the Erne River Corridor. The Erne splits and winds around the steep drumlins which provide defensible hill-top sites for the historic town. Enniskillen has many prominent landmarks, including castles, churches, a cathedral, monuments and the Portora Royal School. The main street retains its 17th century settlement pattern with a single main street running the entire length of the island linking bridges at both ends.

LCA 13 Enniskillen



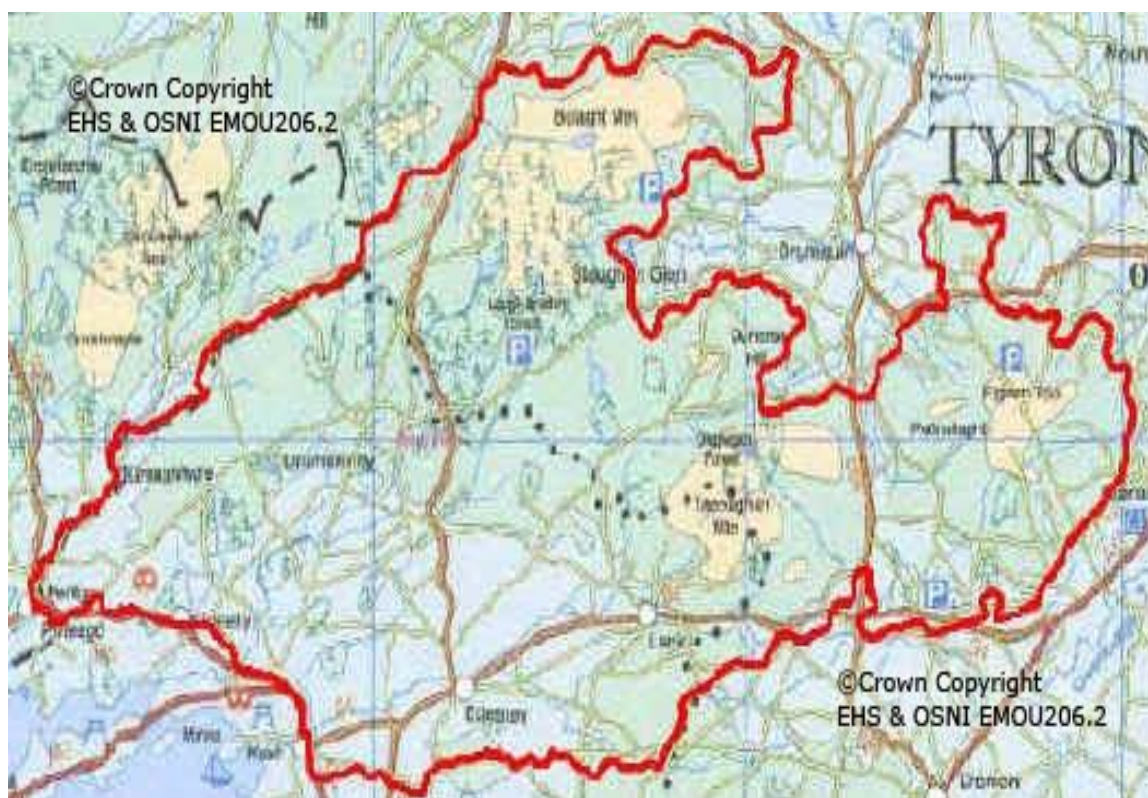
Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 14 Lough Braden

Lough Bradan extends from NE Fermanagh to the Lough Bradan Forest in West Tyrone. The area is characterised by valleys and steep drumlins on the lowlands, with a transition to an undulating sandstone plateau. In lowland areas, there is an alternating pattern of forest and marginal pastures, dissected by small rivers which link the areas of bog, damp woodland and meadow which lie between the drumlins. The patchwork of small, angular field's breaks down to scrub and open grazing on the fringes of the moorland. The upland has a simpler landscape pattern, with rough grazing, peat cutting and large forestry plantations such as that of Lough Bradan Forest.

Land quality in the lowlands varies considerably. The well drained land around the Glendarragh Valley is intensively farmed as grassland; however; the sandstone soils are of poorer quality and forestry has become increasingly important, taking over former land uses. Settlement in the area is closely related to the alignment of local valley roads.

LCA 14 Lough Braden



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

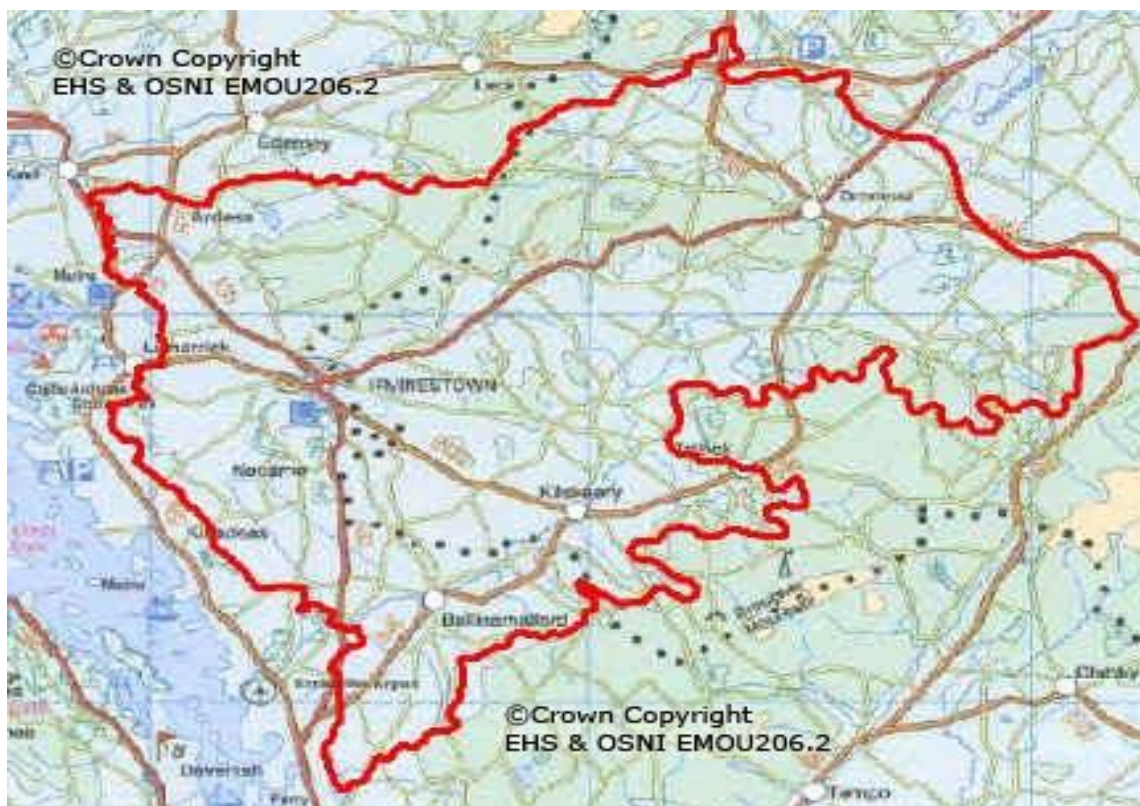
LCA 15 Irvinestown Farmland

Surrounding the small towns of Ballinamallard and Irvinestown, is a broad area of lowland farmland. The shores of Lower Lough Erne lie to the west and to the east the lowland stretches as far as the foothills to the south of the Sperrins. The lowlands are underlain by beds of Old Red Sandstone.

To the north of Irvinestown, ice movement has exposed harder limestone crags and eroded small lough basins, for example at Parkhill and Maghera. The landform is broadly aligned along a NW-SE axis, with elongated drumlin ridges divided by narrow stream valleys. The main channel and numerous tributaries of the Ballinamallard River link the linear hollows in a complex drainage pattern and the river valley is a local landscape feature.

Most of the farmland is managed for silage and grazing. On higher ground, farms are smaller and fields are often infested with rushes. Throughout the area, field boundaries are marked by hedges; they are often thick and uncut, giving the countryside a well wooded appearance. In bogs and damp hollows, there are areas of scrub which contrast dramatically with the grassland. Within Necarne Estate, a derelict castle is enclosed by a designed parkland landscape, dominated by mature deciduous woodland.

LCA 15 Irvinestown Farmland



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 16 Brougher Mountain

Brougher Mountain is an upland area of broad sandstone ridges which extends from Cloghtogle Mountain (near Enniskillen) to Slievedivena near Omagh. The landform of the ridges is complex with Brougher Mountain (316m) the highest point, with deeply undulating slopes and rounded summits. The upland is dissected by two straight, deep valleys, which follow this same alignment, relating closely to fault-lines. The escarpment has steep plummeting slopes and long views out over the Clogher Valley to the south and east. The lower slopes have a more convoluted landform, with broken ridges of glacial moraine in valleys and at the foot of slopes Blanket peat covers the summits, with a transition to marginal pastures on lower slopes.

There are some extensive blocks of conifers on the upper slopes and stands of mixed woodland on the steep escarpment. Recent reclamation has extended improved fields at higher elevations and there is a strong contrast between the bright green improved fields and areas of rough grassland, heath and bog. On lower slopes, field boundaries are varied with locally occurring sandstone walls, earth banks with gorse and low hedges. There are scattered trees in the valleys, with woodland (including some conifer blocks) on the steeper valley sides, along streams and around farms.

Farms are scattered along narrow roads, with concentrations on south facing slopes.

There are a number of important archaeological sites, including megalithic tombs, cairns and standing stones on higher ground and raths on the lower slopes, particularly those overlooking the Tempo Valley.

LCA 16 Brougher Mountain



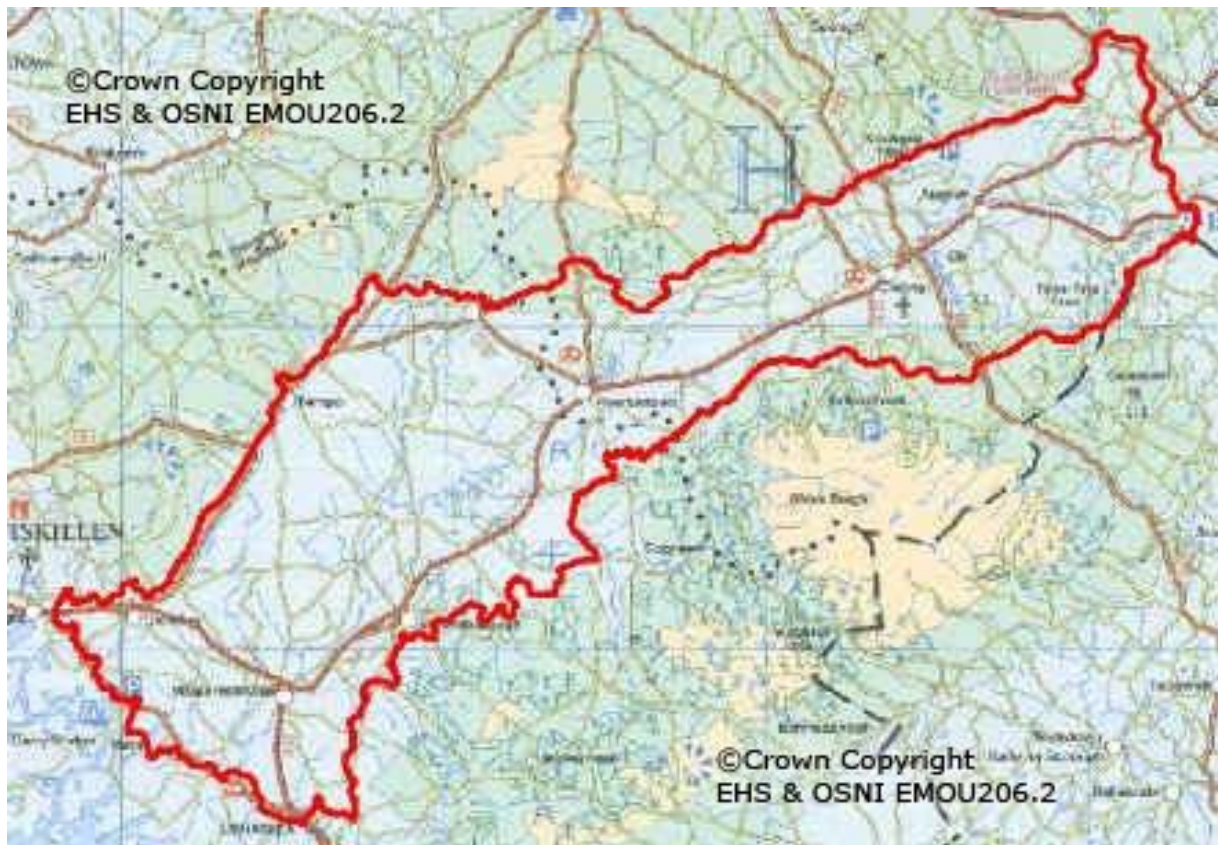
Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 17 Clogher Valley Lowlands

The Clogher Valley Lowlands are confined between the sandstone ridges of Brougher Mountain to the north, and Slieve Beagh to the south. It is a broad distinctive corridor of undulating lowland, including a low watershed between the Colebrooke and Tempo river valleys and the Clogher Valley. The lowland is covered with boulder clay drumlins of varying sizes and long winding eskers of sand and gravel. There are also occasional solid rock outcrops. Between the drumlins and ridges are areas of flatter land, linked by streams and rivers. Most are pastures but some have pockets of bog and small loughs, such as Lough Eyes and Screeby Lough.

Farming is progressive, dominated by medium sized farm businesses, producing silage and hay for cattle rearing and dairy herds. Fields are relatively large and are bounded by hedges which are often overgrown with tall, mature trees. Tree groups occur around farms and at the hilltop raths. The lowland has many notable estate landscapes, including the Colebrooke, Clogher and Tempo Manor estates. All are distinctive and attractive landscapes, with a mix of woodland, parkland and historic estate buildings. Housing is associated with farms and with older houses on the top or sides of drumlins and ridges. Most have been modernised but elements of traditional design still remain. Some of the larger dwellings have small parkland settings. The lowland is criss-crossed with minor roads connecting into the principal A4 route from Belfast to Fermanagh.

LCA 17 Clogher Valley Lowlands



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

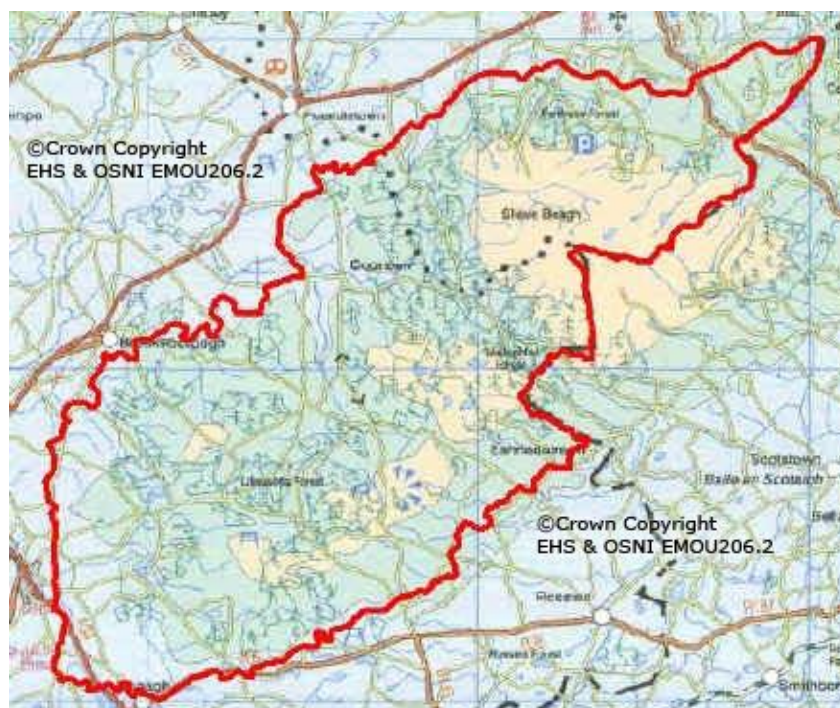
LCA 18 Slieve Beagh

Between Fivemiletown and Rosslea there is an extensive area of rolling sandstone uplands, rising to the rounded summit of Slieve Beagh (380m). To the south of the summit, there is a prominent escarpment of Upper Limestone capped by gritstone, which outcrops below the sandstone.

The northern edge of the uplands has a broken surface, with flat-topped hills and rounded ridges separated by deep valleys and punctuated by attractive small rounded lakes. The southern escarpment comprises a long line of hills and summits. Steep, south facing slopes are interrupted by small streams in steep wooded glens.

The southern escarpment slopes were historically in agricultural use, with fields extending from the lower valleys up the slopes. Ladder field patterns on the escarpment are a local feature. However, some of these small farms are now derelict and lie within rushy fields at the end of green lanes. The extensive blanket bog on the summit hills and flat ridges has been subject to agriculture, peat cutting and afforestation. The plantations become more extensive to the north, where they completely clothe the slopes of Slieve Beagh. Forestry now accounts for two fifths of the area. Active farming continues on the slopes around the uplands, with newly drained land juxtaposed with rush infested grassland. Peat cutting remains evident. Prehistoric monuments are located around the edges of the area, with raths on prominent sites. Housing is dispersed on farms, along the valleys and on lower slopes. On the southern slopes, houses are traditionally distributed along lanes which run parallel to the slopes.

LCA 18 Slieve Beagh



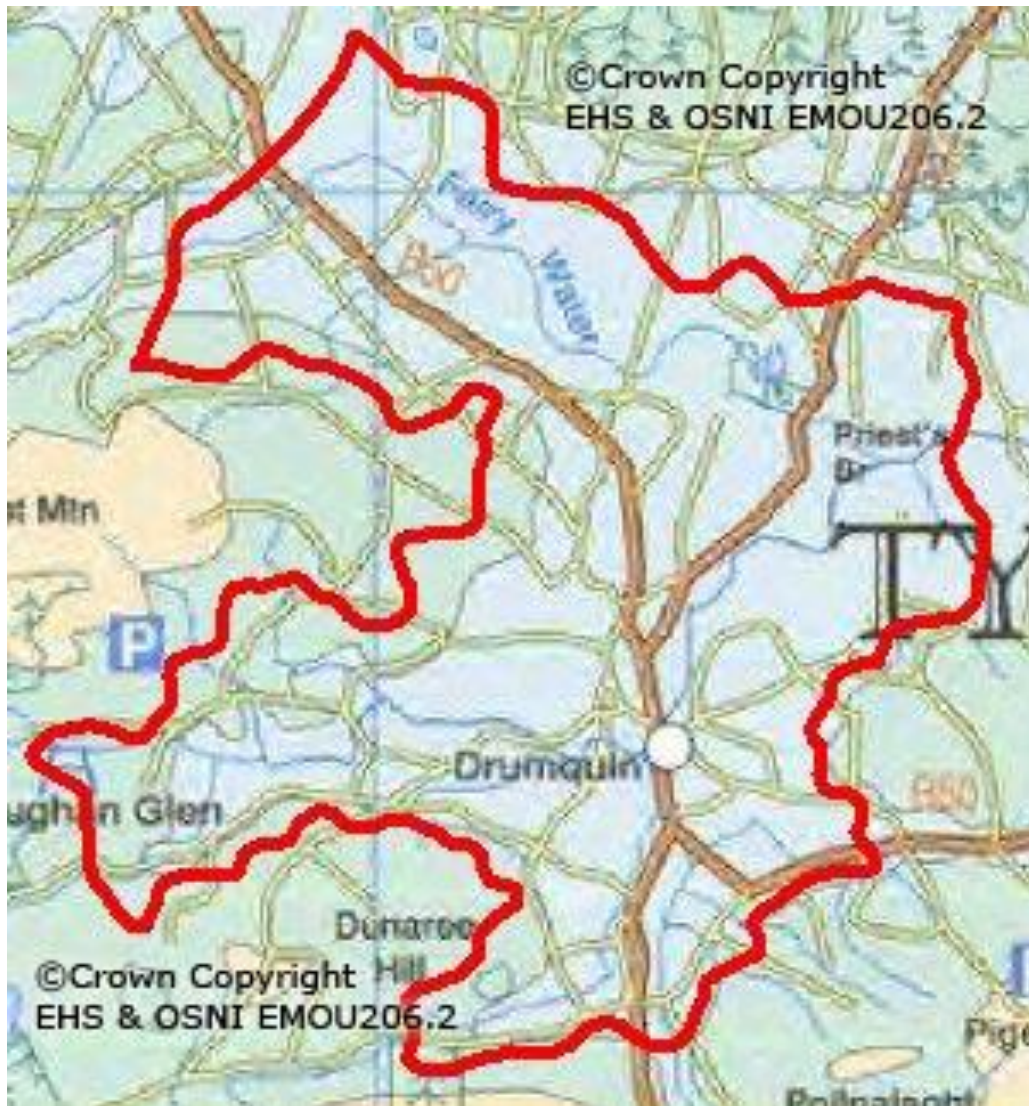
Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 21 Fairy Water Valley

The Fairy Water Valley is an expanse of peaty marsh which extends right across the valley floor whose landform is hummocky and irregular. Fragmented remnants of the geometric patchwork of small pastures remain on the outer margins of the valley floor but the field pattern breaks down in poorly drained areas to form a random, irregular mosaic of peaty marsh and woodland. Former field boundaries - hedgerows and earth banks - are sometimes visible on slightly elevated land within the floodplain. Many of the hedgerows contain clumps of gorse and wire fencing controls stock grazing on the edges of the marsh. Patches of woodland on the valley floor are a dense mixture of birch, willow and hawthorn. There are also areas infested with rushes and open patches of bog. The river and its many tributary streams, flows within gullies and branching channels on the valley floor. Small round loughs are found within the marsh, although they are often hidden from view by damp woodlands.

To the south, the Drumquin Valley has a flat valley floor and undulating valley slopes, with a small-scale, irregular patchwork of pastures. It is on the margins of the drumlin lowlands and the rounded landforms reflect this influence. Fields are enclosed by a mixture of hedgerows and stone walls. The landscape in the valley and on the upland margins has numerous hedgerow trees, as well as copses and more extensive woodlands. Settlement is sparse in the Fairy Water Valley and there are derelict cottages on some edges of the marsh, surrounded by the remnants of small pastures. There are few roads. The village of Drumquin is on the edge of the drumlin lowlands and has developed at a river crossing. The surrounding valley has scattered farmsteads and many narrow, branching roads.

LCA 21 Fairy Water Valley



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 22 Omagh Farmland

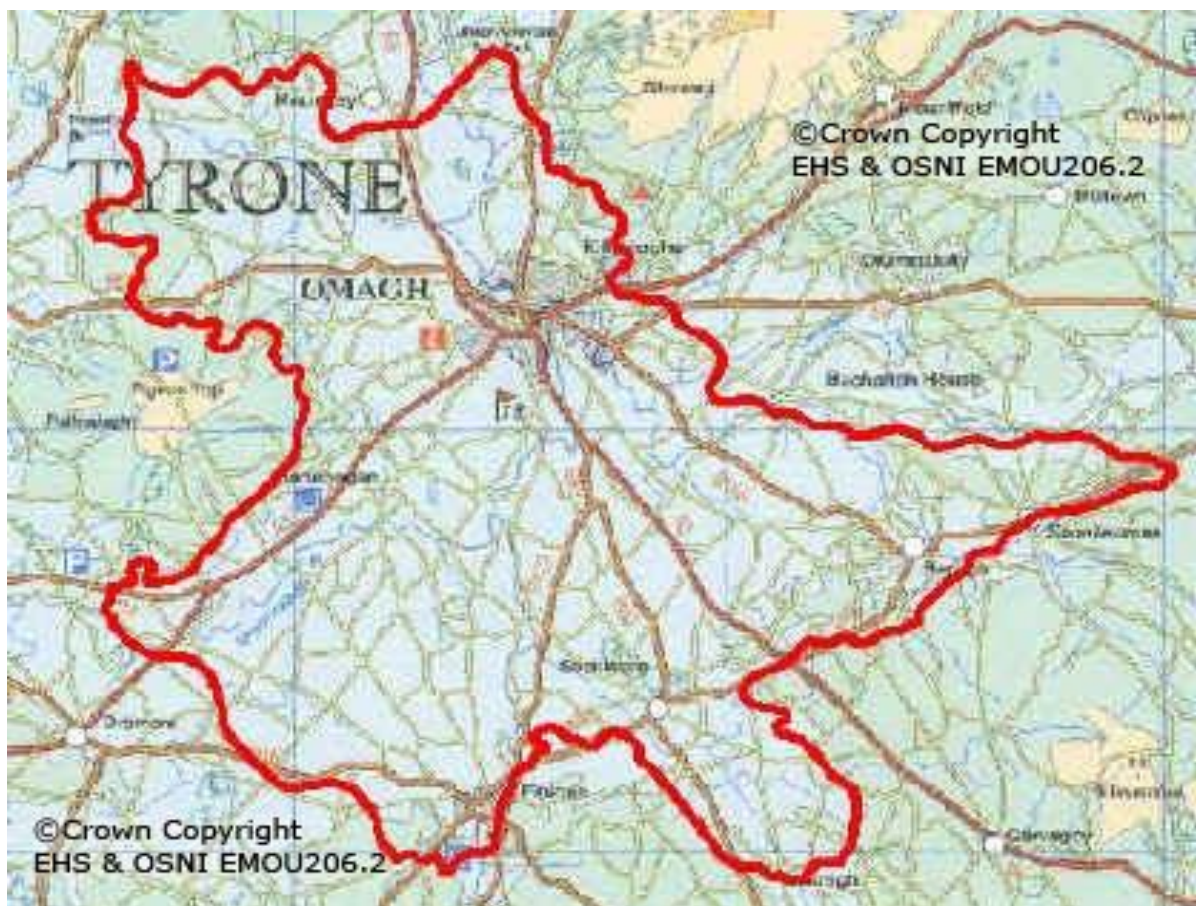
The Omagh Farmland landscape is a drumlin lowland landscape which extends from Omagh to Fintona and includes the river valley landscapes of the Camowen River to the north and the branching river systems of Drumragh River, Ballynahatty Water and Quiggery Water, which wind amongst the drumlins, to the south. The regional town of Omagh is sited at the confluence of the Camowen, Strule and Drumragh Rivers, within a natural bowl-shaped valley which is enclosed to the north by the summit of Mullaghcarn. The landform in this area is relatively broad, with the rivers flowing close to the foot of the Sperrins.

To the south of Omagh, the drumlins become the dominant influence on landform, with the sandstone ridges to the east of Fintona and the uplands of West Tyrone forming a distant backdrop. The drumlins are packed quite densely to form a deeply undulating

lowland landscape with a distinctive character. Narrow river valleys tend to follow and widen slight gaps between the drumlins and minor tributaries wind around the small hills. There are often patches of marsh in low-lying areas between the drumlins. The drumlins are predominantly pasture but have a diverse, small-scale landscape pattern. Typically, each drumlin is divided evenly by straight hedgerows which continue right over the ridge of each hill. This pattern is repeated on most drumlins but is complicated by many small copses, isolated trees and woodlands. These form varied patterns giving each drumlin an individual identity and the landscape as a whole, a dynamic, secretive character.

Farms generally nestle in sheltered sites halfway up the slopes of the drumlins and are linked by tortuous narrow winding lanes. However, the principal communication routes are often straight and deeply undulating as they cross the grain of the landscape.

LCA 22 Omagh Farmland



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 23 Camowen Valley

The broad valley of the Camowen River and its tributaries lies to the south of Mullaghcarn and to the west of the granite outcrop of Cregganconroe. Much of the valley is underlain by sandstones, minor outcrops of granite and Quartz Porphyry where rounded deposits of glacial moraine form minor ridges within the lowland. The valley is enclosed, to the north and east, by higher land which provides an overall sense of containment. The crinkly silhouettes of the granite outcrops of Cregganmore are a local landmark.

The landscape is a complex, patchy mosaic of conifer plantations, marsh and pastures. There are numerous branching streams and peaty marsh extends across the low-lying parts of the valley floor. There are extensive conifer plantations on the shallow slopes just above the marsh and pastures on the ridges of glacial moraine. Small-holdings and farms are confined to these shallow ridges. Parts of the valley with a more undulating character, such as the Drumnakilly area, have a higher proportion of pasture, while conifer plantations and marsh predominate in the flatter, low-lying areas to the south. Areas of marsh are a finely-grained, irregular mosaic of bog, water, rushes, scrub and carr woodland. The conifer plantations, by contrast, have straight edges and blocky, angular shapes. Most of the pastures are small and rectangular, they tend to fit with the landform and those on steeper slopes may have irregular shapes. There are typically straight roads along the margins of the valley and across the marshes but the lanes linking the farms and hamlets are tortuous. Roads crossing the low-lying marshes and streams are raised on embankments. In low-lying areas, many of the lanes end in dead ends as there are relatively few river crossing points.

LCA 23 Camowen Valley



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 24 South Sperrin

South Sperrin includes the upland river valley of the Owenkillew and Owenreagh Rivers and the broad ridges to the south of the Glenelly valley. The broad upland ridges of the Sperrins in this area form a backdrop to the valley landscapes. The mountain skyline is open, with upland grasses and rocky screes on the slopes leading to the summits. The valley slopes are deeply undulating and dissected by tributary burns flowing in rocky, open channels. The lower slopes of Spaltindoagh and Mullaghmore, in the remote eastern parts of the uplands, have conifer plantations with bold, dark shapes. Elsewhere, the river valleys have a diverse pattern of hedgerow trees, small copses and woodlands, with the largest deciduous woodlands, such as Drumlea Wood, on the margins of the Owenkillew River floodplain. Small blocks of conifers have often been planted to shelter farmsteads. Tree cover becomes progressively sparser and more stunted towards the upper slopes, where patches of scrub and coarser grasses form a textured, open mosaic on the edge of the moor.

The character and pattern of the landscape changes gradually from the valley floor to the upper moorland slopes. The slopes of the upper Owenkillew and Owenreagh River valleys are characterised by a patchy mosaic of derelict pastures and scrub, with broken stone walls, earthbanks and gappy remnant hedgerows marking the former pattern of fields. Poorly-drained land is often infested with rushes. The lower river valleys, to the west of the confluence of the Owenkillew and Owenreagh Rivers, have a more secluded, pastoral character. There is a linear settlement pattern, with small farmsteads strung out at regular intervals along the valley roads. The slightly larger settlements, such as Greencastle and Scotchtown are typically sited at the junctions of roads and near to river crossing points. There are prominent raths, and standing stones on the margins of the river floodplains. The small stone bridges at river crossing points are also important local landscape features.

LCA 24 South Sperrin



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 25 Beaghmore Moors and Marsh

A relatively elevated, rolling plateau of wide shallow valleys and broad, rounded ridges to the south and east of the Sperrin Mountains. Extensive glacial deposits form irregular ridges and mounds throughout the area. Slopes typically have shallow, smooth profiles, although some quarried outcrops have an irregular skyline. Broad, peaty marsh extends across the shallow valley floors. The pastures on the lower slopes are divided by open, straight drainage channels; in more elevated areas they are often enclosed by low stone walls. Scrubby, stunted hedgerows and wire fences surround fields where stone walls are absent. Extensive conifer plantations on the shallow valley slopes often mask the landform.

The plantations have hard, geometric edges and sometimes form an abrupt transition at the edges of the valley marsh. There are some deciduous woodlands in gullies on valley sides and the incidence of woodland increases towards the slopes of the Sperrins to the North West. Roads crossing the valley marshes are generally straight and raised on embankments, crossing the many streams at stone, hump-backed bridges. There are no large villages, only scattered farmsteads, and occasional groups of cottages on higher land. The buildings are typically white-washed and stand out clearly against the dark green backdrop of the shelterbelts. Farm buildings often have red roofs. The farmsteads are prominent and form a visual focus throughout the area.

LCA 25 Beaghmore Moors and Marsh



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 26 Bessy Bell and Gortin

The Bessy Bell and Gortin landscape is a distinctive, scenic and much visited part of the North West; the twin peaks of Bessy Bell and Mary Gray form a gateway to the south of the Sperrins. The high summits of Mullaghcarn (542m), Slieveard (419m) and Bessy Bell (420m) are outliers to the south west of the principal Sperrins range. They are divided by the scenic valley of the River Strule, which flows northwards from Omagh towards the Foyle.

In common with the rest of the Sperrins, the high summits of Mullaghcarn and Slieveard have a dramatic, mountainous appearance, with distinct, sharp ridges and rocky summits. The slopes are littered with grey scree and carved by steep, fast-flowing burns, which flow in deep gullies. A long ridge extends from the main mountain block to the North West, enclosing the undulating valley of Cappagh Burn and its branching tributaries. Its sequence of lower summits, Ballnatubbrit Mountain, Beauty Mountain and finally, Mary Gray, form a scenic backdrop to views along the Strule Valley. The lower slopes of the Mullaghcarn Mountains have a striking landscape pattern, with stone walls and earthbanks following the historic townland boundaries. The stone farmsteads on these slopes are an attractive element in most views. The western slopes of Mullaghcarn are covered by the extensive conifer plantations of the Gortin Glen Forest, which forms a prominent blocky pattern on the steep slopes.

To the west of the Strule, Bessy Bell, and the neighbouring smaller summits of Deer's Leap and Forster's Mountain, have a more rounded character, in common with the foothills to the north of the Sperrins. The open summits are capped with open moorland, with a transition to marginal pastures and richer farmland on the lower slopes. The wind farm on the slopes of Bessy Bell is a prominent local landmark. To the south the river Strule winds its between fertile fields and the woodlands of the Mountjoy Estate.

LCA 26 Bessy Bell and Gortin



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

LCA 43 Carrickmore Hills

The Carrickmore Hills are a distinctive upland landscape to the south of the Sperrins. The area is underlain by a variety of igneous rocks which form an elevated plateau, with numerous steep, rocky granite summits, including Evishanoran Mountain, Cregganmore and Loughmacrory Hill. Parts of the plateau are raised bog and there are numerous rounded loughs, particularly in an area known as The Murrins. The landform of the plateau is undulating, with ridges of glacial moraine and rocky outcrops giving the landscape an irregular pattern and scale. The summits have a more irregular, rocky landform and distinctive, crinkled silhouettes which are landmarks for miles around.

Fields on the fringes of the upland have a more even scale and form, but become increasingly irregular and deeply undulating on the steep slopes of the rocky summits. Most are partially enclosed by hedges and wire fencing, with rough stone walls made of large boulders in some areas. Gorse predominates in the hedgerows, giving them a distinctive, lumpy character. Scrubby, regenerating birch/alder woodlands give an irregular, patchy landscape pattern in poorly drained hollows. The uplands are

Many of the ridges of moraine have been carved by quarries, particularly on the edges of the plateau. Many of the quarries are small in scale, but nevertheless leave substantial scars and hollows.

©Crown Copyright
EHS & OSNI EMOU206.2

LCA 44 Slievemore

The landform near Pomeroy has a slightly different character. Here a high plateau, which is underlain by resistant igneous rocks, is deeply dissected by valleys such as that of the Upper Claggan River. The landscape has a diverse pattern, relating closely to the varied topography. The broad ridgetops are a large-scale mosaic of moorland

and conifer plantations, with smaller pastures on the marginal slopes. The conifers form prominent, geometric blocks in the landscape and there are strong contrasts in scale, colour and character between the landscape of the ridge tops and that of the undulating pastures and marshy hollows on the fringes of the moorland.

The lower slopes are a small-scale, diverse mosaic of pastures, woodland, patches of marsh and 'waste' in the hollows and spoil heaps of abandoned quarries. Pastures are typically enclosed by hedgerows, although these become increasingly scanty on higher slopes, where they are dominated by gorse. Most of the fields on the fringes of the moorland, and conifer plantations are enclosed by wire fencing.

LCA 44 Slievemore



Source: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/landscape

Appendix 3

Map 2



Draft Regional Landscape Character Areas



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

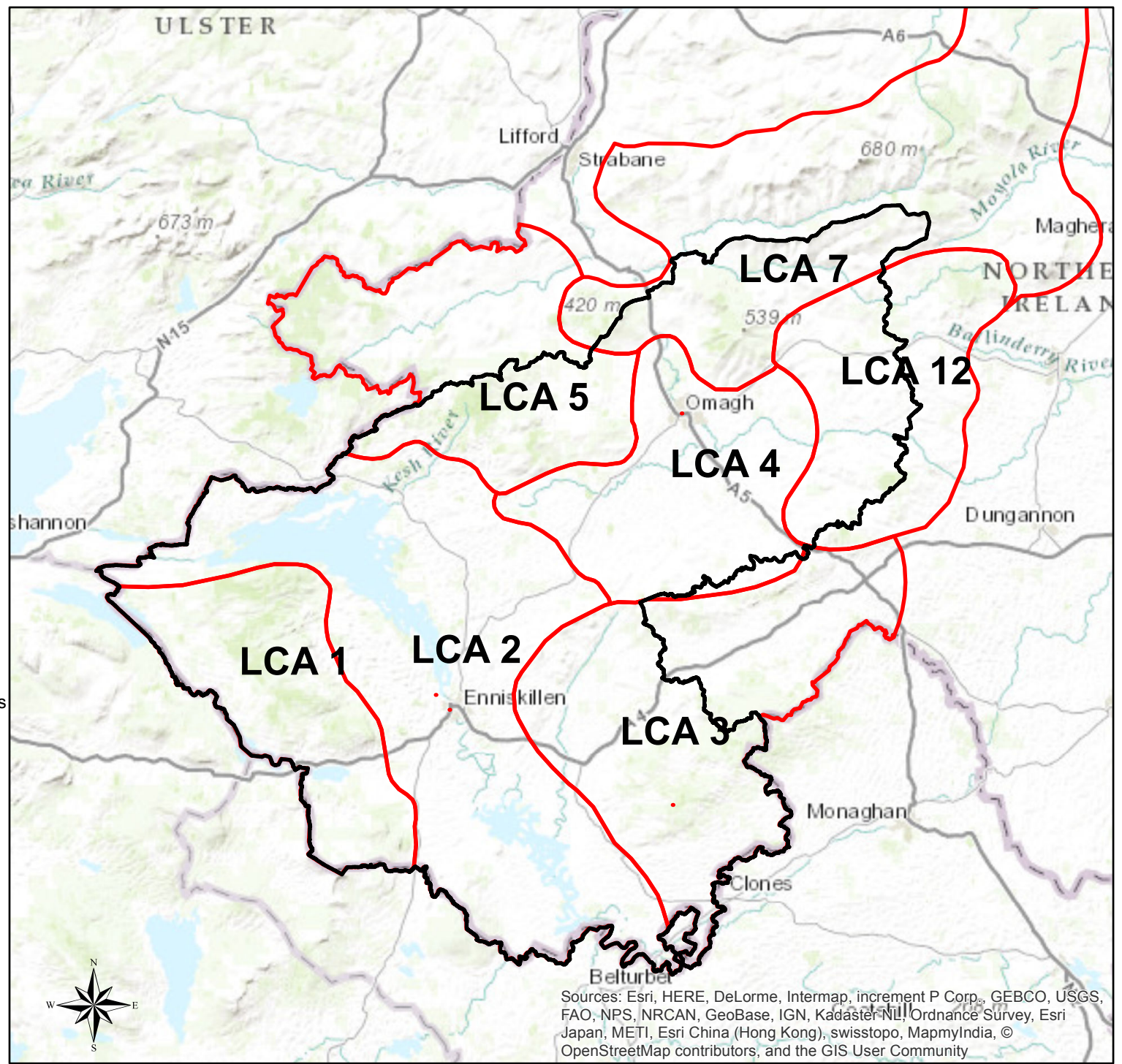
Map 2 Draft Regional Landscape Character Areas

Legend

-  Fermanagh and Omagh Boundary
-  Draft Regional Landscape Character Areas
- LCA 1 - The Fermanagh Cavelands
- LCA 2 - Lough Erne Lakelands
- LCA 3 - Clogher Calley and Slieve Beagh
- LCA 4 - Omagh Basin
- LCA 5 - West Tyrone hills and Valleys
- LCA 7 - Sperrins
- LCA 12 - Carrickmore Plateau and Pomeroy Hills

Not to scale

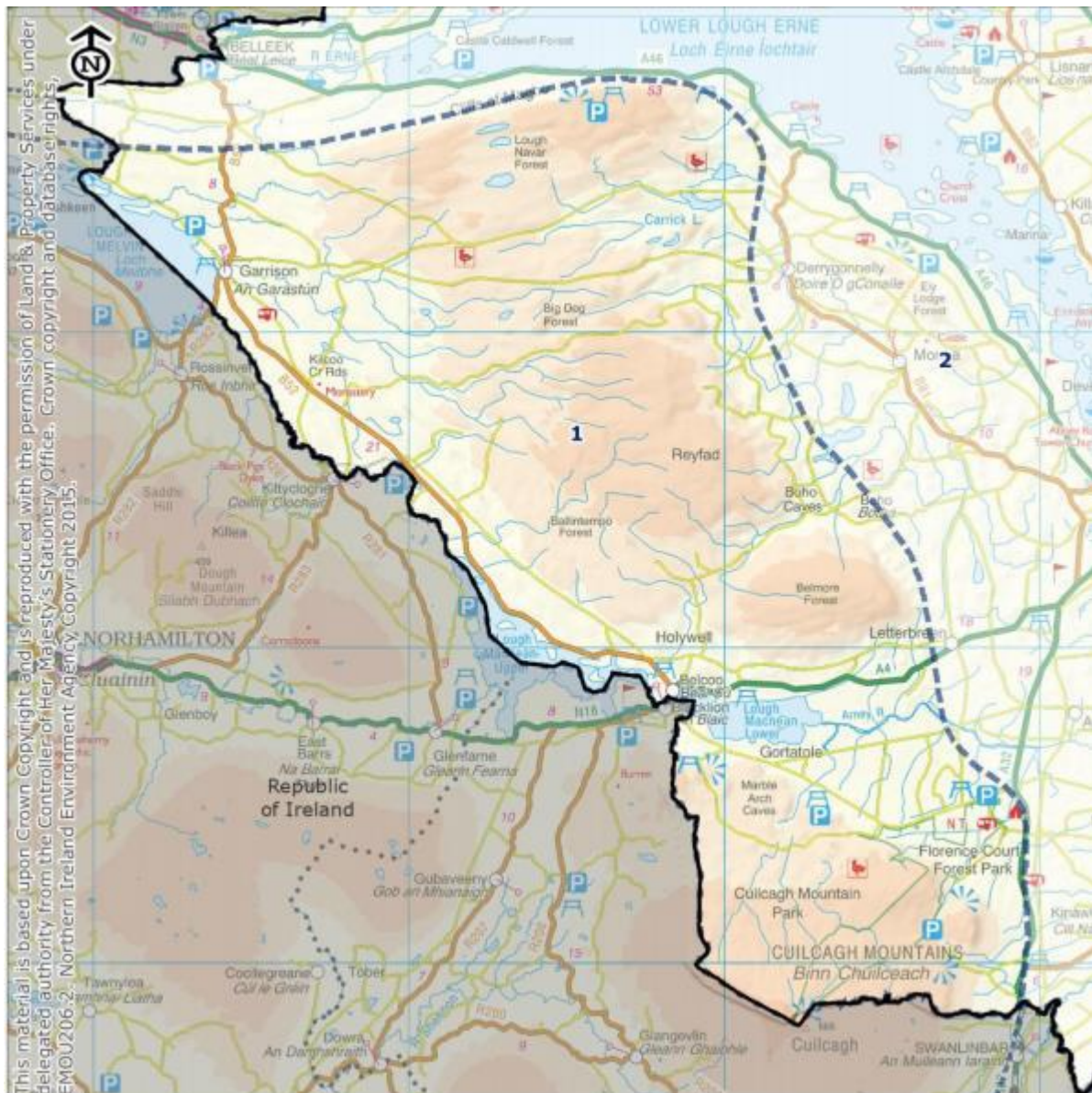
Author: Development Plan - NIMA CS & LA156.
Development Plan Section,
Planning, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council.



Draft Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) published 28th April 2015

LCA 1 The Fermanagh Cavelands

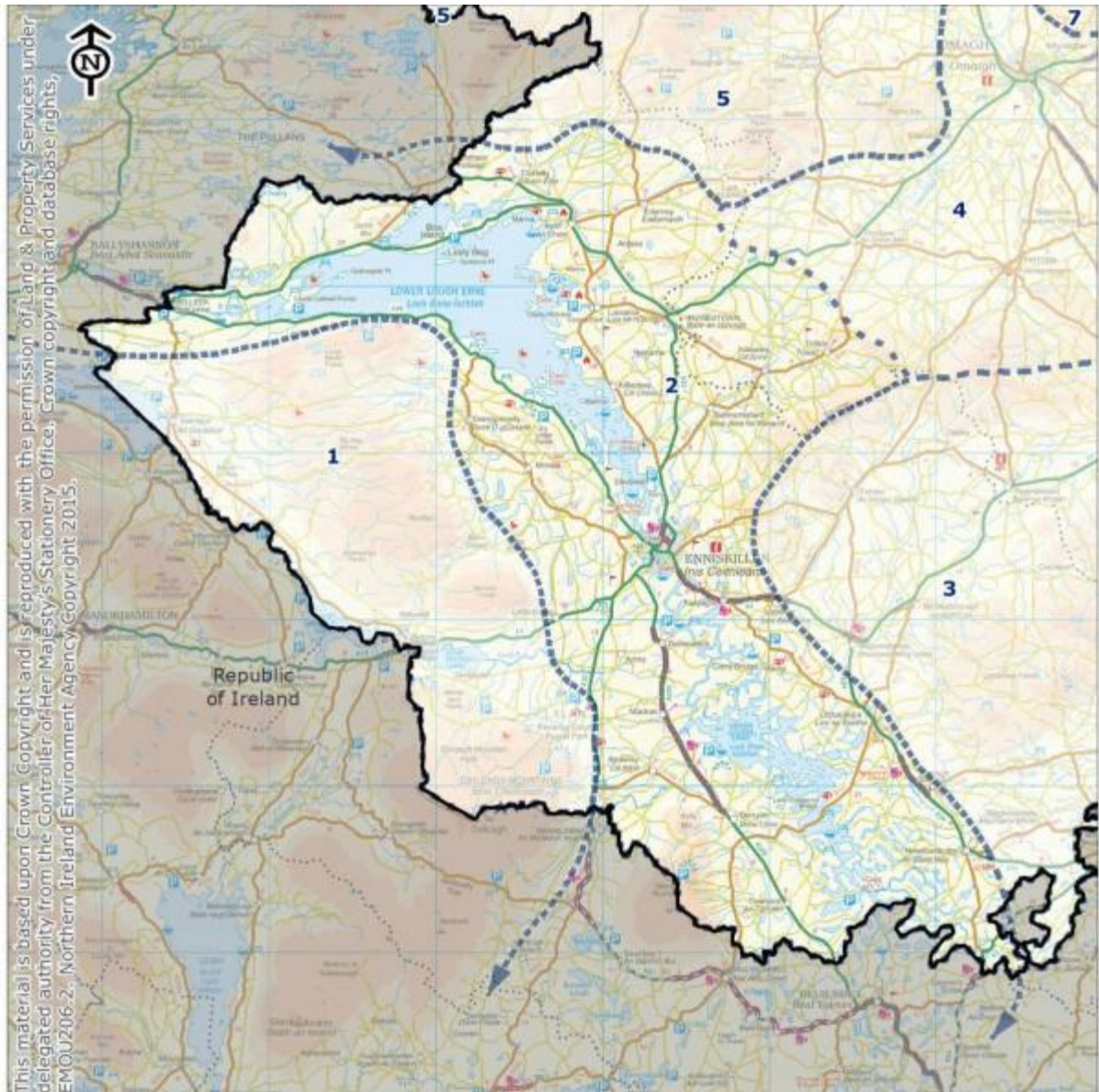
This extensively rural and undeveloped Fermanagh Cavelands lies to the South and West of the Erne Valley along the Leitrim border with the Irish Republic. The Landscape Character takes in forested limestone uplands and the valleys between them.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

LCA 2 Lough Erne Lakelands

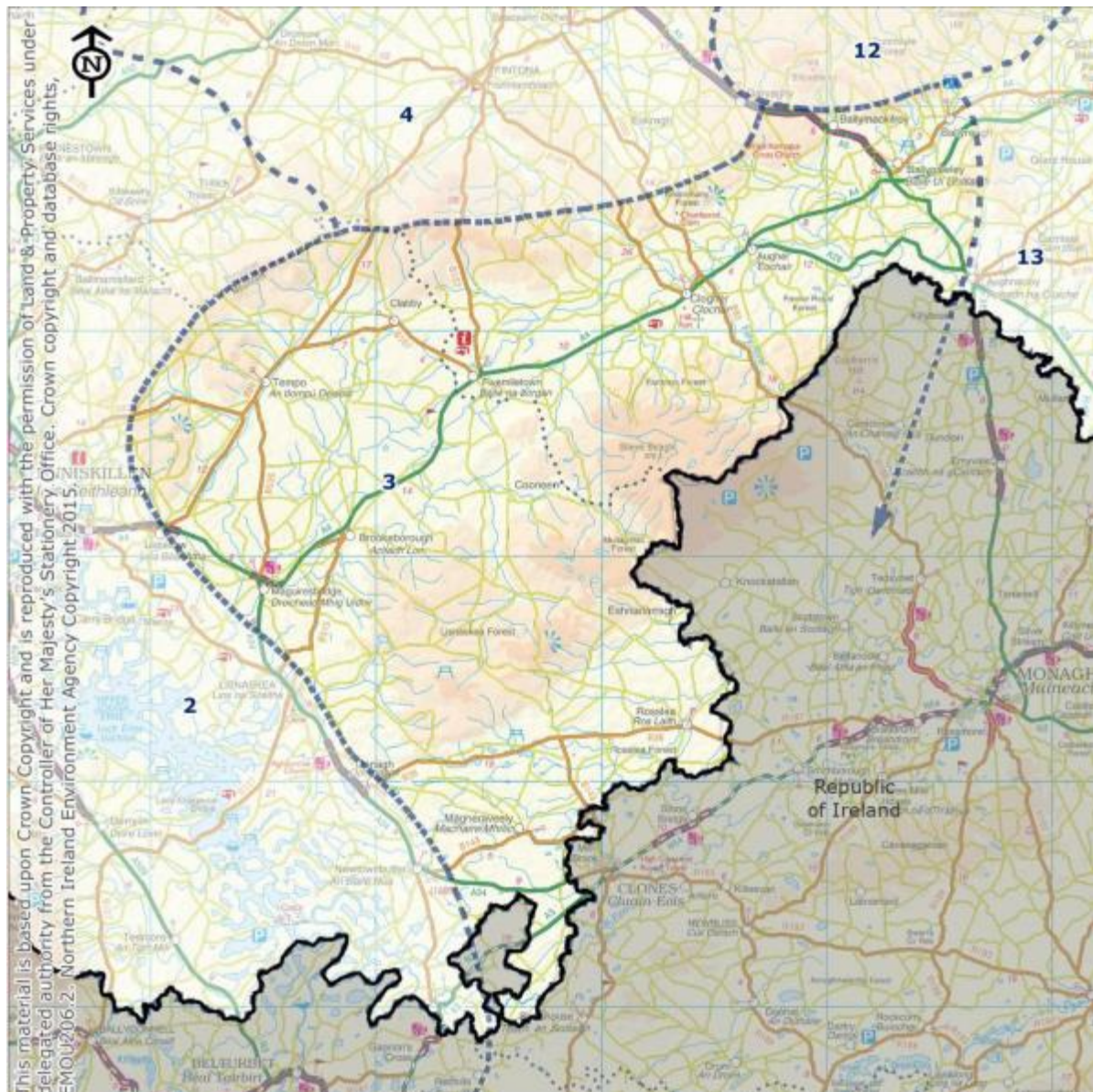
This scenic Erne Valley takes in the upper and lower Lough Erne as well as the lowlands and drumlins associated with the valley. The lough fringes are well wooded with ancient woodlands surviving on the many islands.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

LCA 3 Clogher Valley and Slieve Beagh

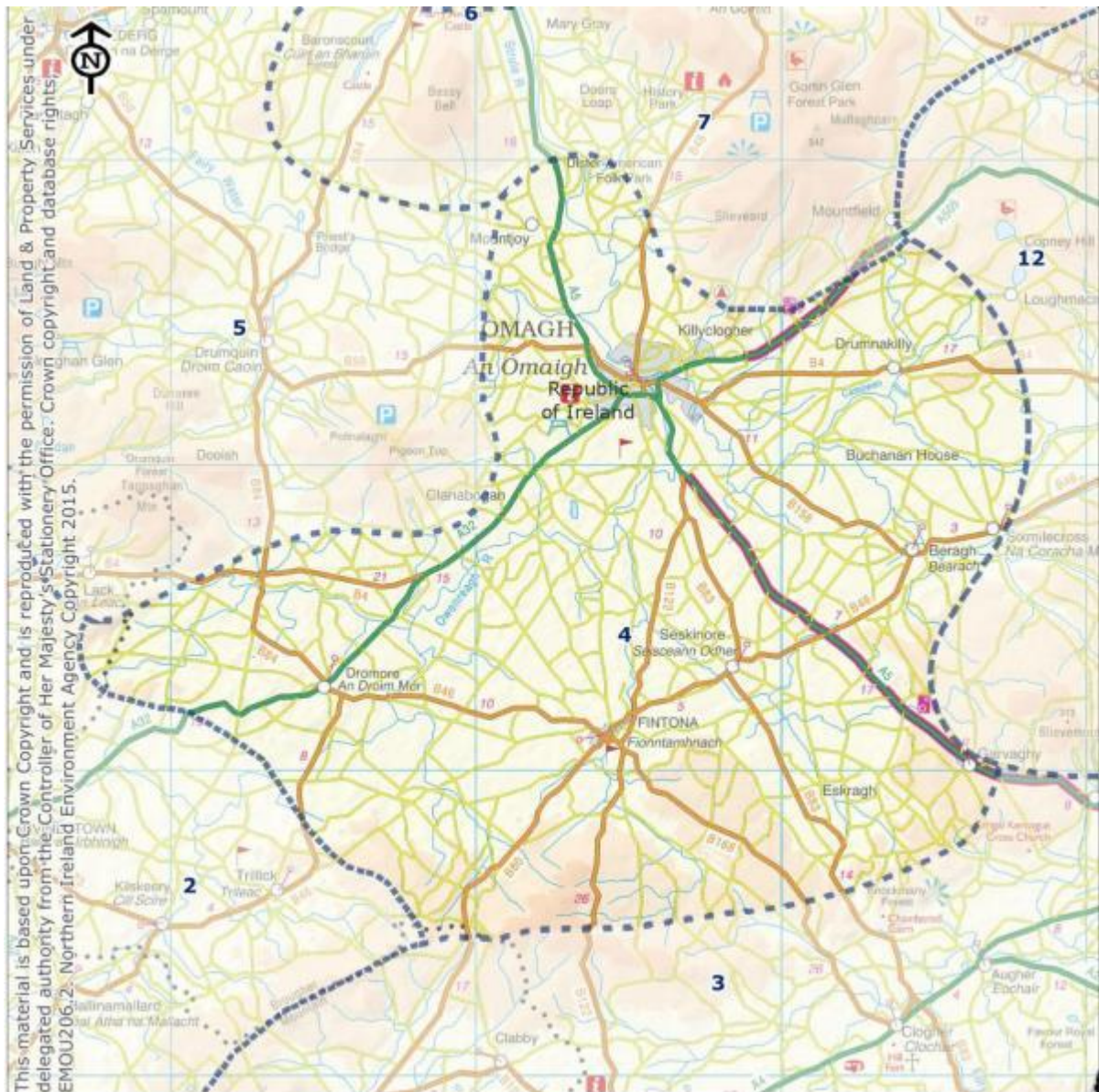
Approximately half of this zoning on the western flank lies within the district is made up of a relatively narrow valley which is framed by ridges to the north and south. Drumlins dominate the valley which are open and pastoral to the east with a field pattern that becomes denser and more wooded in the west. The hills give way to upland land cover and at the highest point at Lendrum's bridge a large wind farm exists. To the south the upland area around Slieve Beagh there is an extensive belt of coniferous plantations.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

LCA 4 Omagh Basin

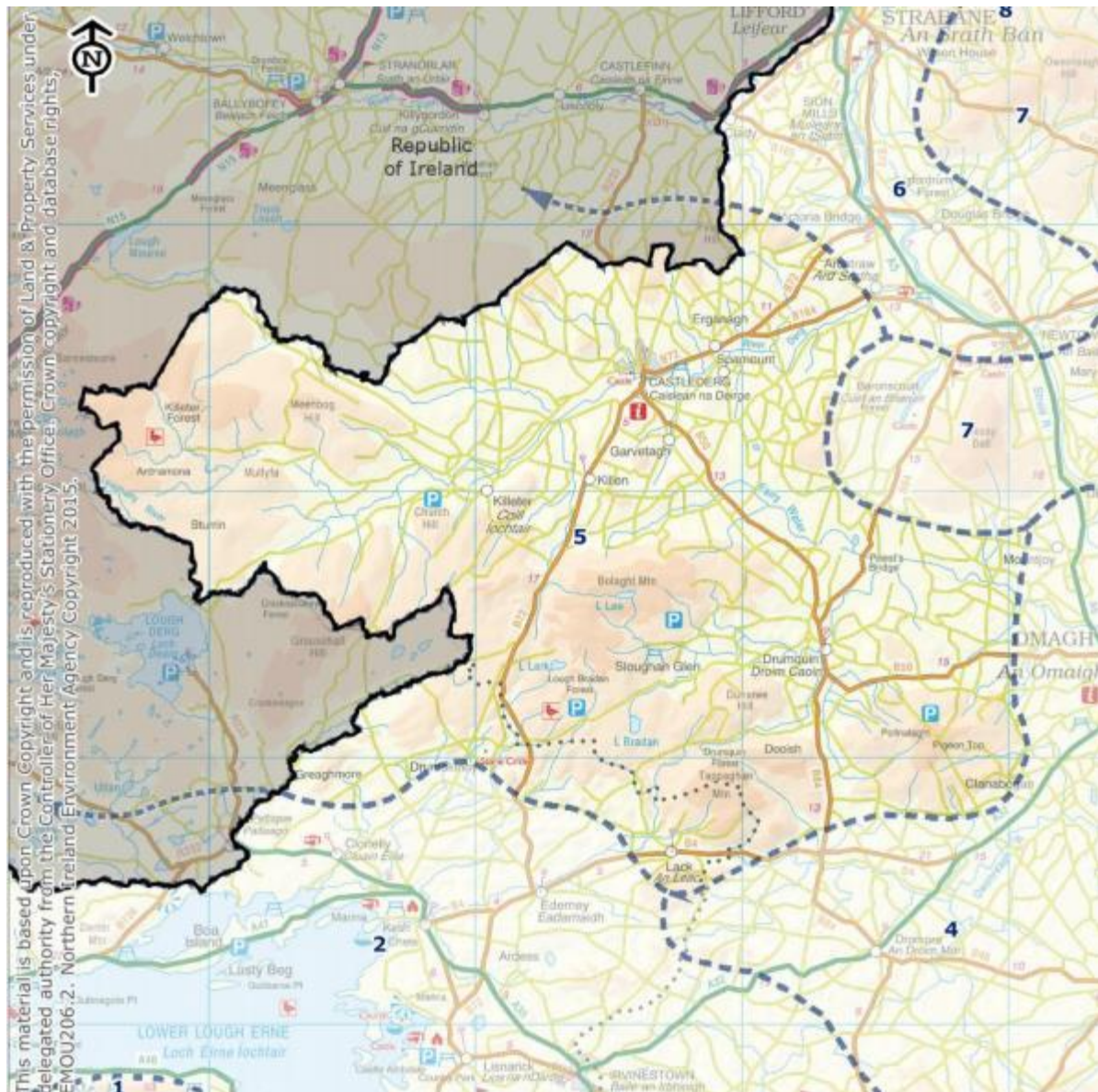
The Omagh Basin is framed by the outlying projections. It is a lowlying basin made up mainly of pastoral drumlin farmland at the heart of Co. Tyrone where three rivers meander through the rolling landscape converge to form the river Strule which then flows on to the Foyle Valley. Some of the marginal areas with loughs and peat bogs with other areas planted in conifer.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

LCA 5 West Tyrone hills and Valleys

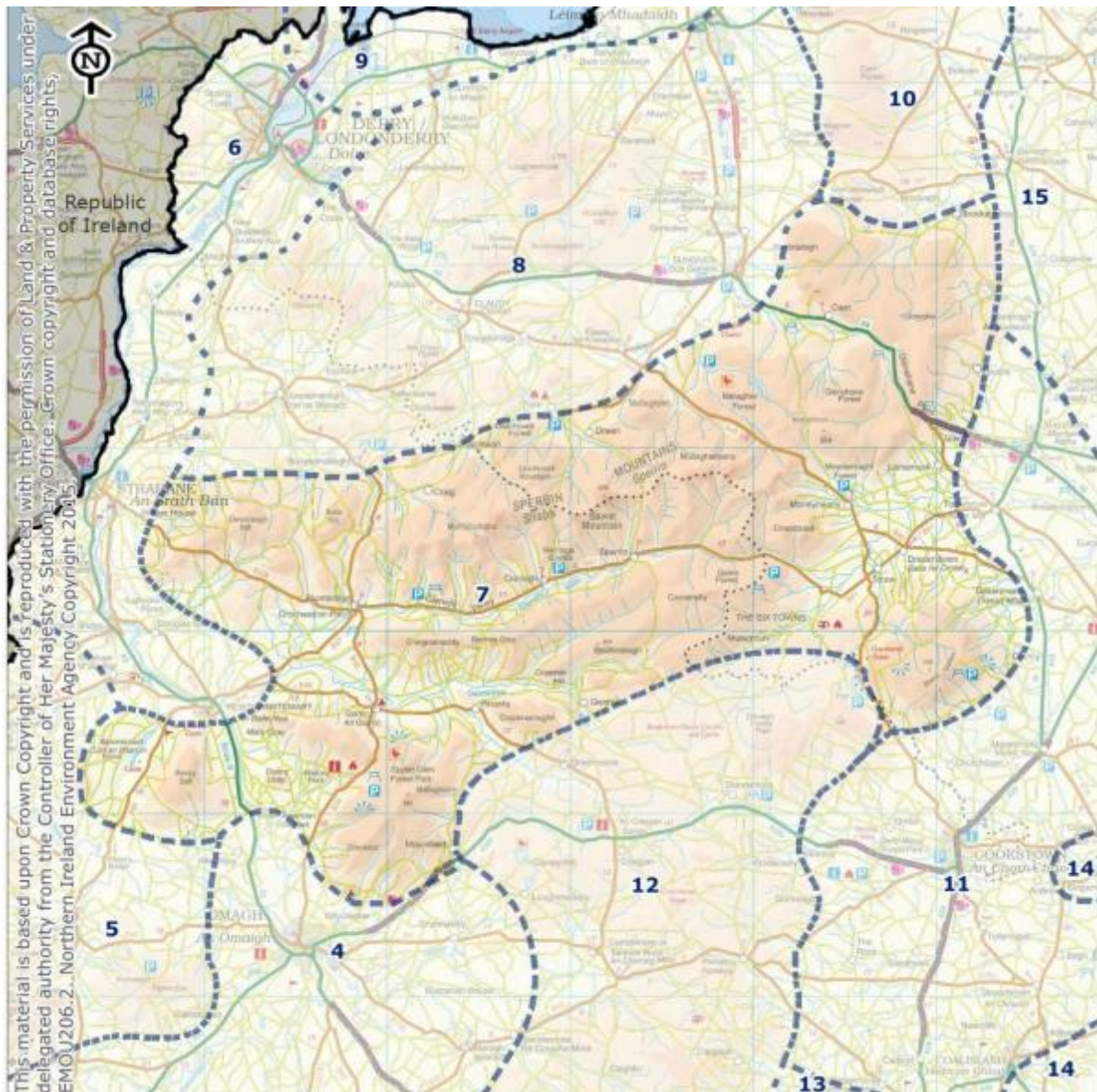
This distinct upland ridge extends into Northern Ireland from Donegal of which the southern half lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. The low hill which from the southern part of this landscape rise to gentle summits. Land cover is mainly rough grazing with conifer forests in the more marginal land. Open peat bogs also exist with a traditional pattern of small fields bounded by mature hedgerows branching out. Gold mining operations in the Cavanacaw area is also a feature creating a visual appearance in the landscape.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

LCA 7 Sperrins

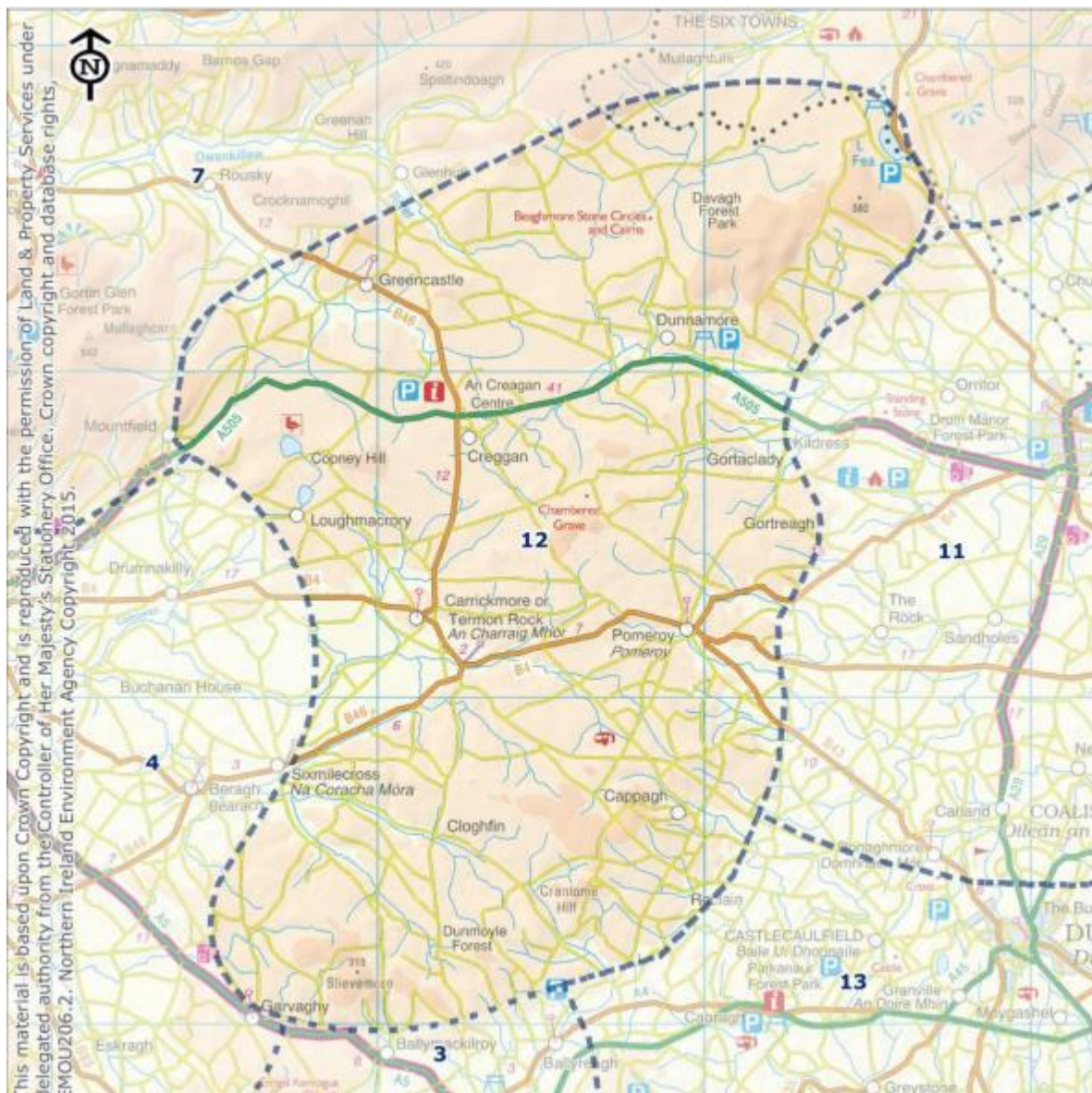
The Principle mountain range of the North West, the Sperrin's comprise of some of the wildest and most rugged landscape in N. Ireland of which the southern half of the range lies within the Fermanagh and Omagh council area. The Gortin glens and the surrounding upland area towards Mary Gray and the outlying Bessy Bell act as a gateway to the Sperrins in the south west with the A5 the key route to the North West. The more elevated Sperrin Mountains are characterised by expansive swathes of moorland with coniferous forest plantations contrasting harshly with the windswept broad summits which give an open character to these areas.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

LCA12 Carrickmore Plateau and Pomeroy Hills.

These plateau hills of which the western half lies in the Fermanagh and Omagh council area extend south from the Sperrins to separate the Lough Neagh and Omagh basins. The area has extensive peat bog, forest and upland pasture. Mineral extraction is ongoing in several locations throughout the landscape. A low ridge bounds the plateau north of Carrickmore, and the hills to the south form a relatively continuous block between Pomeroy and Ballygawley. These hills are more undulating in form, with open rough grazing and peat on high ground, and a fringe of enclosed pasture.



Source <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca>

Appendix 4

**Landscape Character Areas: capacity to
absorb development**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS: CAPACITY TO ABSORB DEVELOPMENT

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
The Garrison Lowlands – 1	HIGH Entire LCA has been identified as an Area of Scenic Quality.	HIGH Low lying with long, rounded glacial ridges, interspersed with valleys and bogs draining into Lough Melvin. There are numerous ASSIs and Ráths within this LCA. Lough Melvin is a SAC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development could be accommodated within groups of trees at former housing sites. • Restore traditional whitewashed stone and thatched cottages and red painted barns. • Careful management of tourism development would prevent damage to settlement character and water quality. 	LOW
Lower Lough Erne – 2	HIGH It is a highly scenic landscape with the interaction between lake and land being a defining characteristic. The Cliffs of Magho contribute greatly to the high scenic quality of this LCA.	HIGH Extensive open waters, offshore islands and the distinctive Cliffs of Magho. Various ASSI designations for limestone Western end of the Cliffs of Magho. Rich in monuments and ecclesiastical sites. The shores and islands of Lower Lough Erne SCA form part of the LCA. The overall sensitivity to change is considered high.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little capacity for further shoreline development. Sympathetic siting and design of recreation development and landscaping to prevent visual intrusion. • New housing should be modest in scale and sited away from the main roads. • Restore and reuse the existing white painted farmhouses cottages and red roofed barns. • New buildings should be finished with traditional materials and colours. No use of brick. • Conserve the historic character of Belleek to ensure its popularity as a tourist centre. 	LOW
Croagh and Garvaghy River – 3	HIGH Scenic Fermanagh Lakelands, which includes the area around Lough Scolban. Part of the LCA forms part of the Derrin Mountain ASQ.	HIGH Largely open in character and concave in landform and has little or no screening in views from Lower Lough Erne. It is characterised by numerous loughs and knolls. It has important nature conservation assets such as Pettigoe Plateau which is the only extensive area of lowland western blanket bog in Northern Ireland and supports ASSI, SAC and Ramsar nature conservation designations. This LCA is unspoilt in character with little development and is thus sensitive to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of traditional dwellings of white painted stone and the siting of new buildings within the former housing sites to help conserve the rural character. • All new development should be associated with native tree planting. 	MEDIUM

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
The Lough Navar and Ballintempo Uplands – 4	HIGH The scenic quality is high, particularly in open areas and where the terrain is broken by rocky outcrops, knolls, native trees and area of marsh and fen. The LCA lies within the highly scenic Fermanagh karst landscape.	Medium – HIGH The LCA is a relatively exposed escarpment with rocky outcrops and loughs. Its wild and remote character with its range of natural and cultural heritage interests heightens its sensitivity. There are several SACs, Glennasheever ASSI, and part of the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark and a concentration of Neolithic sites within this LCA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration or siting of housing on derelict farmsteads and abandoned housing sites. • Protection of the skyline in the upland area is important. • Car parks should be sited in sheltered and natural hollows amongst the native vegetation. 	LOW - MEDIUM
The Lough Macnean Valley – 5	HIGH This is a high scenic landscape with its valley sides adjoining the loughs. It lies within the highly scenic Fermanagh Karst landscape.	HIGH – MEDIUM This landscape forms the setting for two attractive loughs. The valley sides are characterised by a variety of distinctive landscape features such as Lurgan River Wood ASSI and significant archaeological sites. Sensitive to change. The shores and islands of Lower Lough Macnean SCA and part of the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark form part of this LCA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the lough side setting of Belcoo and the hills to the north from development. • Protect the fringes of the loughs from further ribbon development as this will detract from the scenic and sensitive landscape. • Careful siting and design of tourist infrastructure such as carparks and caravan sites careful consideration to avoid visual intrusion. 	LOW - MEDIUM
The Knockmore Scarpland – 6	HIGH The scenic quality is high within the Fermanagh Karst landscape. It has a wealth and diversity of landscape features such as waterfalls, caves and spectacular gorges.	HIGH The prominence of the escarpment skyline within Fermanagh makes this LCA extremely sensitive in both landscape and visual terms. Its rugged and highly varied landform, wealth of scenic, natural, cultural and heritage interest provide an unspoilt landscape. There are a number of ASSIs and SACs within this LCA. The southern part of the LCA forms part of the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development should be confined to sheltered sites and partially screened by native trees and hedgerows. • Restore derelict stone cottages and reuse of ruined/derelict sites. 	LOW

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
The Silles Valley – 7	MEDIUM Lowland area with drumlins contributes to the scenic quality and sense of place. The northern part of the LCA lies within the Fermanagh scenic landscape.	MEDIUM Most of the LCAs landscape is open and exposed with undulating landform and overgrown hedgerows which provides a sense of enclosure. This LCA may accommodate changes in land use and some scattered new development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old derelict houses could be restored or used for new housing sites. 	LOW - MEDIUM
The Arney Lowlands – 8	LOW This LCA has a low scenic quality as it is defined by a broad river valley floor and flat spaces between the low hills.	LOW This is a broad landscape interrupted by low hills, hedgerows, woodlands and raised bogs that provide a degree of enclosure and screening and has the capacity to accept change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-use of former housing for new development and restore traditional stone and thatch cottages where possible. Integrate new development with existing hedgerows on sites which are sheltered and undulating. 	HIGH
Cuilcagh and Marlbank – 9	HIGH High scenic quality and situated within the highly scenic karst landscape. It has one mountain in the area, Cuilcagh Mountain, cliffs, escarpments, dry valleys, limestone pavements, gorge and grassy knolls.	HIGH There is a wild and tranquil character particularly within the upland and summit area around Cuilcagh Mountain. The dramatic scenery and natural and cultural features associated with the landscape are of outstanding national and international importance. Cuilcagh Mountain is an ASSI and Ramsar site and forms part of the Marble Arch Global Geopark. The unspoilt character of this LCA is highly important and in good condition and thus sensitive to change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High structures would be visually intrusive in these prominent uplands and should be avoided. Siting of buildings should be accommodated on the lower slopes using the existing field boundaries or dry stone walls to provide integration. Restoration or reuse of derelict building sites. Careful consideration should be given to the siting and design of tourist facilities within this LCA. 	LOW
Slieve Russel, Derrylin and Kinawley – 10	LOW The LCA has contrasting characters between the open upland areas with small glens and the more enclosed lowlands with drumlins. The	MEDIUM This relatively simple open upland area of the LCA has extensive man made influences have damaged the landscape scenic quality and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development may be accommodated most easily if concentrated at villages like Derrylin rather than ribboning along the roadsides. 	MEDIUM

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
	landscape is in poor condition due to the complexity of conflicting land uses in a visually prominent area. There are quarries, processing industries, wind farms and radio masts within this LCA.	wildness. The sensitivity to change is considered medium.		
Upper Lough Erne – 11	HIGH The LCA has a high scenic quality and is part of the scenic Erne Lakeland landscape. The landscape of rolling low drumlins and flooded hollows are linked by streams and the River Erne as it widens and narrows around the varying sized islands. The	HIGH The landscape is in good condition and enclosure is provided by woodland, the drumlin topography and the island landform. The sensitivity is heightened by its strong wild natural character, its habitats, bird life and wealth of archaeology are very vulnerable to change. The shores and islands of Upper Lough Erne SCA. Most of Lough Erne is designated as an ASSI, SPA and Ramsar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development should be confined to the low drumlin area and associated with vegetation so that it does not intrude upon the quiet rural character of this landscape. • Tourist development requires careful siting so that it does not become visually prominent as the lough shores would be very sensitive to development. • Any new buildings associated with existing historic estate buildings and landscape settings should reflect their historic precedents. 	LOW
Newtownbutler and Rosslea Lowlands – 12	MEDIUM The scenic quality of this undulating landscape is quite good and is enhanced by the many small lakes and estates with woodland and remnants of parkland.	LOW Much of this landscape is small scale with drumlins, strong field patterns and individual trees and parklands. There are areas of simpler and broader scale landscape, particularly on the northern fringes of the LCA near Slieve Beagh. Acceptable to change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new buildings associated with existing historic estate buildings and landscape settings should reflect their historic precedents. • Restore or re use of existing established derelict sites for new development. • New development can be accommodated within robust framework of drumlins and trees. 	MEDIUM - HIGH
Enniskillen – 13	HIGH Scenic quality is generally quite high and this LCA lies within the highly scenic Fermanagh Lakeland landscape. The interaction between the lough, shoreline and drumlins	MEDIUM The scenic landscape supports a complex range of small scale features including estates, associated woodlands, hedgerows and many archaeological sites. Part of the LCA is located within the shores and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design, location and siting of marinas, caravan parks and other tourist infrastructure is important so that they are not prominent or detract from the quality of the lough side. • New development should be integrated with existing vegetation and new native planting. 	MEDIUM - HIGH

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
	contributes to the scenic quality.	islands of Lower Lough Erne SCA Acceptable to change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development should be sited within existing clusters or settlements. Derelict or established sites should be a priority for restoration or reuse. 	
Lough Braden -14	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>Scenic quality varies within this LCA. The open upland areas are attractive and the lower, farmed drumlin areas contribute to scenic quality.</p> <p>Quarry scars, forestry and peat cutting has left extensive areas in poor condition.</p>	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>This is a broad, convex upland area with rounded summits, steep drumlins, valleys and quarries with large areas covered with commercial forestry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep buildings small so are appropriate in rural setting. Traditional buildings painted white and associated with trees and usually linked to farms. Amalgamate telecommunication masts onto single masts. 	MEDIUM
Irvinestown Farmland – 15	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>Rolling drumlin lowlands with deep hollows, linear valleys and lowland farmland.</p> <p>The ridge tops and rounded summits are the most sensitive parts of this landscape as they form local skylines.</p>	<p>LOW</p> <p>The area is generally low lying with its river corridors and associated wetlands and loughs. It's deeply rural unspoilt character offers a high degree of enclosure and potential screening with very few skylines. Strong landscape structure capable of accepting change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect traditional styles and locations Possibly restore derelict houses. Consider surrounding views from valley sides when siting development. Tree planting important for integration 	LOW - MEDIUM
Brougher Mountain – 16	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>Upland areas of extensive blanket bog Prominent ridges and key views.</p>	<p>HIGH</p> <p>Prominent escarpment slopes and summits therefore sensitive to change. New development has eroded some character of area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentrate new development on lower slopes, reflecting existing patterns. Use existing vegetation and landforms for shelter. Utilise native planting 	MEDIUM

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
Clogher Valley Lowlands – 17	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>Lowland corridor with small rounded hills and long ridges. A small area around Lisbellaw in the south west lies in the highly scenic Erne Lakeland landscape. Colebrooke Estate ASQ is located within this LCA.</p>	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>A rich historic landscape heritage and complex landscape patterns are very sensitive to change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development should be integrated amongst the small hill – slopes and mature vegetation. • Restrict ribbon development. • Protect historic features such as raths and estate landscapes from development. 	LOW - MEDIUM
Slieve Beagh – 18	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>Extensive area of rolling hills deeply dissected by long river valleys and bounded by a prominent escarpment on the south, the massive rounded summit of Slieve Beagh is dominant.</p> <p>The scenic quality of the area is not particularly high due to the abandonment of farming, piecemeal afforestation and peat cutting.</p> <p>There are no villages within this LCA.</p>	<p>HIGH - MEDIUM</p> <p>This is a broad, convex upland area with rounded summits with large areas covered with commercial forestry.</p> <p>There is also the presence of large areas of intact blanket bog which is rich in habitat. This LCA is considered and vulnerable and sensitive to development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The siting of high structures requires careful visual analysis. • Buildings should be sited in valleys or on the lower slopes which provides the best integration. • Restoration of some of the older derelict dwellings would prevent their complete loss from the landscape. 	MEDIUM
Fairy Water Valley – 21	<p>LOW</p> <p>The Fairy Water Valley is an inaccessible waterlogged landscape, in a very poor condition. It is made up of patchy mosaic of scrub, bog, peaty marsh and carr woodland.</p> <p>The overall scenic quality of the LCA is considered low except for the Drumquin Valley.</p>	<p>MEDIUM</p> <p>This LCA is open in character with many small landscape features and its sense of remoteness. To the south and south west there are areas of coniferous plantations that provide some sense of enclosure, however open floodplain areas are relatively open and exposed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development should be restricted from spreading in a continuous line along the flat valley floor which would block views across the valley and detract from the clustered settlement form of Drumquin. • Development on the outer margins of the Fairy Water Valley would detract from the remote, wild character of the waterlogged land. • Development should be integrated in to the landscape using the existing vegetation, field boundaries and landform. 	HIGH - MEDIUM

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
Omagh Farmland – 22	MEDIUM Part of area to North is within the Sperrin AONB, many distinctive landscape settings. It is a lowland landscape with an undulating drumlin terrain.	MEDIUM Local skylines and ridges are often prominent and relatively sensitive. However development could be accommodated within lowlands close to Omagh due to undulating and well treed landscape. Lowlands close to Omagh under particular pressure for development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site new development away from rivers and stream corridors • Need sensitive design • Site houses away from roads • Avoid sky lining and overall integrate new development into landscape. 	HIGH - MEDIUM
Camowen Valley – 23	LOW Scenic value of this LCA is not particularly high. It adjoins and forms part of the setting of the Sperrin AONB to the north. It is a broad, shallow valley with winding rivers and streams.	LOW Extensive woodland and undulating landscape suggests that this landscape could accommodate further built development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep dwellings small- two storey houses are inappropriate. • New development should complement existing landscape and contribute to extension of hedgerows. 	HIGH
South Sperrin – 24	HIGH This area lies within the boundaries of the Sperrin AONB and is of high scenic quality. An upland river valley with broad rounded ridges.	HIGH Most of the area within this LCA has an unspoilt character and many valued characteristics and features that make it highly sensitive to change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of suburban character should be avoided within this prominent, scenic and historic landscape setting. • Small scale development associated with tourism e.g. car parks, picnic areas etc. should be sited should be sited in such a way as to minimise any negative impact on the landscape. 	LOW
Beaghmore Moors and Marsh – 25	MEDIUM Distinctive character and many important landscape values. Most of the area is located within the Sperrin AONB but most of landscape in poor condition.	MEDIUM In the Sperrin AONB and unsuitable/sensitive to large scale development due to low lying marsh in areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuitable for large scale development due to low-lying marsh land. • Opportunities for restoration of existing derelict buildings. • Need to integrate new buildings using broadleaf trees and conifers. 	LOW
Bessy Bell and Gortin – 26	HIGH	HIGH		LOW

LCA	Scenic Quality	Sensitivity to Change – ERM Report	Principles for Accommodating New Development - ERM Report	Overall Capacity of Landscape to Absorb Development – Planning Comments
	Highly scenic landscape. The majority lies within the Sperrin AONB. Bessy Bell forms part of an Area of Scenic Quality.	The landscape is in good condition and extremely sensitive to change. Upland summits, steep slopes and river corridor particularly sensitive. The river corridor is also extremely sensitive to change and its scenic character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siting new development within existing developments of Newtownstewart and Gortin, due to their distinctive landscape. Utilise undulating landforms and existing tree cover to shelter new development. Compact two-storey farms with red-roofed outbuildings are preferable. 	
Carrickmore Hills – 43	MEDIUM - HIGH Part of the LCA is located on the edge of the Sperrin AONB. The western part of the LCA is of high scenic quality with its small scenic loughs and views to Mullaghcarn.	MEDIUM The farmland is rough in character and in relatively poor condition. However on lowland fringes due to rolling landform and tree cover there are opportunities to accommodate further development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development must be of an appropriate scale to protect wild character and undulating upland landform. Substantial planting is encouraged with new development on lowlands. Whitewashed buildings and red-roofed barns could be imitated. 	MEDIUM
Slievemore -44	LOW The LCAs scenic quality is low with its broad ridge tops extensive heather moorlands and conifer plantations.	LOW Open rounded summits are sensitive to change but undulating lower slopes could accommodate development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentrate new development on lower slopes where it can be sheltered by undulating landform and existing trees. Amalgamate additional transmission masts with existing equipment. Encourage buildings set back from roads along driveways to reflect traditional pattern. Small white washed cottages are characteristic. 	HIGH

Appendix 5

Map 3





Environmental Assets



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

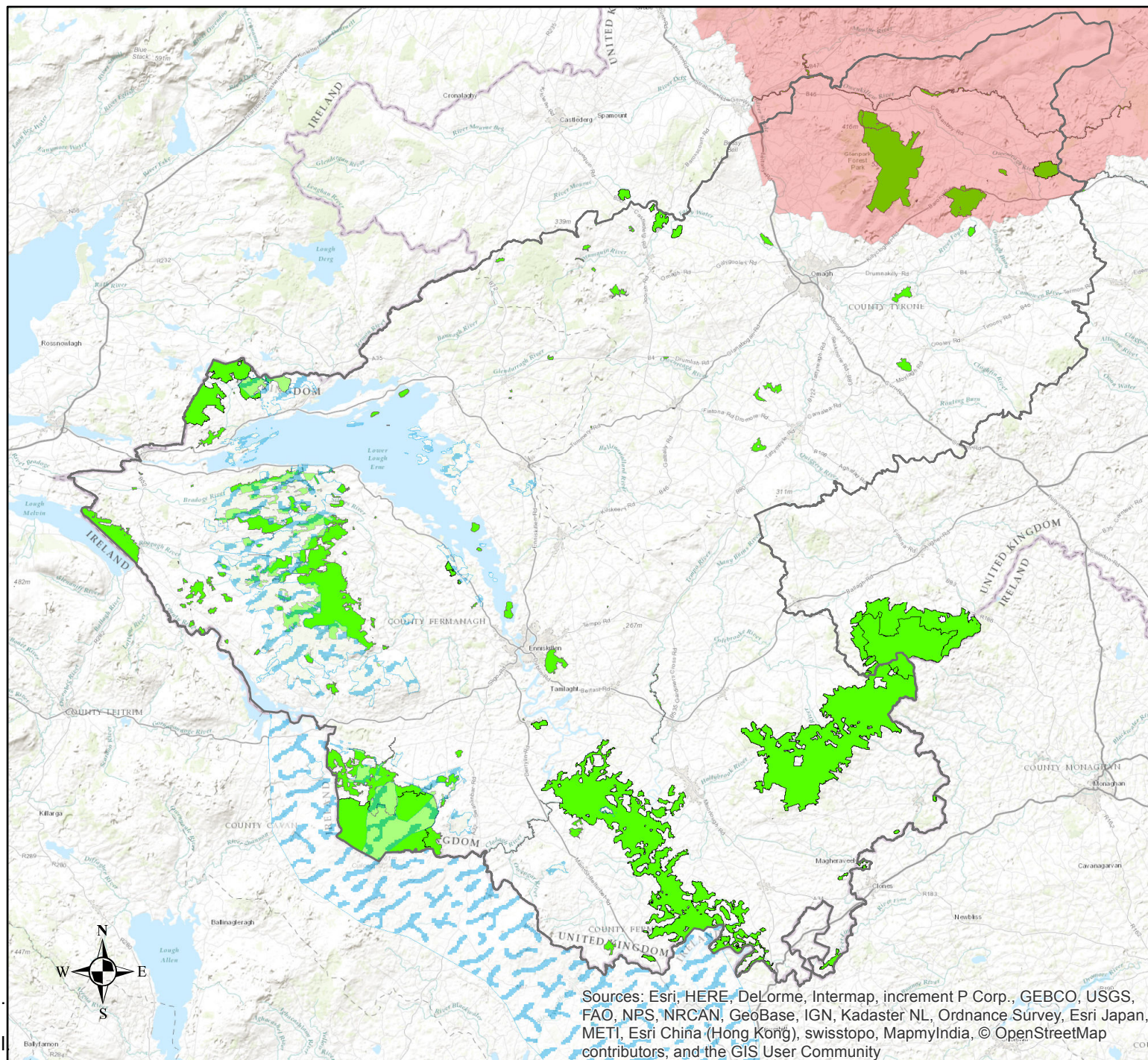
Map 3 Environmental Assets

Legend

-  Fermanagh and Omagh District Boundary
-  Sperrin AONB
-  ASSI, SPA, SAC, Ramsar sites
-  Marble Arch Caves
Global Geopark

NOT TO SCALE

Author: Development Plan - NIMA CS & LA156.
Development Plan Section,
Planning, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community