

COURTOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN 2002



Adopted by Wexford County Council

11th March 2002

Introduction

Statutory Basis

The Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan has been proposed under sections 18, 19 and 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, in the context of the Rural Development Strategy (Small Towns and Villages) set out in the County Wexford Development Plan 2001. The Local Area Plan will remain in statute for a period of six years i.e. to 2007 notwithstanding any review of the County Development Plan. The Local Area Plan will cease to have effect in respect of the Courtown area where it is inconsistent with the provisions of the County Development Plan as reviewed. A Local Area Plan must be reviewed within or at least six years from the making of the previous plan. The Planning Authority may amend or revoke a Local Area Plan at anytime.

Planning Context

The Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan is consistent with the objectives of the County Wexford Development Plan 2001. Section 3.3 of the County Development Plan emphasises the importance of maintaining the role and vitality of the county's small towns and villages, while protecting their identity, character and setting and quality of life of local communities. The County Development Plan includes objectives to prepare Local Area Plans as a means of guiding new development and of ensuring the proper planning and sustainable development of such areas.

Content

The Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan includes a written statement, maps and information on the environmental impact of implementing the plan.

1. Development Strategy

1.1 The Council's Strategy for Courtown Harbour, Riverchapel and their environs is to ensure that these areas develop as sustainable balanced settlements with appropriate amounts of residential, commercial and tourism development. This will be achieved through:

- The consolidation and preservation of the scale, character and identity of the villages and the reinforcement of their mixed use natures.
- The sustainable use and management of the area's natural resources, assets and amenities.
- The direction of future development to indicated use zone areas with an emphasis on the infilling of existing built up and developed areas and limited, phased expansion in accordance with the availability of necessary infrastructure.

1.2 The strategy will be implemented by means of a range of land use policies and objectives which will provide for:

- Existing built up village centre areas where there will be a presumption in favour of most forms of compatible mixed-use development including residential, commercial and infill.
- The accommodation of infill development in the undeveloped areas and pockets created in the existing overall linear development pattern; priority will be given to permanent residential development to meet local need helping to consolidate the villages and build on their character.
- Areas set aside for limited village expansion to accommodate residential development carried out sequentially including lands between Riverchapel and Seamount Hill, to the west of the existing built up area and south of the woodlands and the Gorey Road (R742)
- The retention and preservation of the woodland area to the north of Courtown providing a barrier to Courtown's development, a natural edge to the settlement and a natural amenity in close proximity to the village; this area to be maintained free from any further development.

- The strict control of development along the Regional Road (R742) to Gorey so as to limit the likelihood of sprawl which would detract from the rural character of the area.
- Structural open space and natural amenity areas particularly in the coastal zone including the Burrows, sand dune areas and cliffs, small woods and woodlands including areas given statutory protection under proposed Natural Heritage Area designation; these areas to be maintained free from further development.
- Areas set aside for recreation and open space use.
- Lands in the vicinity of the harbour designated for Harbour and Marine Amenities.
- Areas set aside for Continuing Agriculture and the maintenance of rural character.
- Areas protected by the Landscape and Coastal Development Policies set out in the County Development Plan 2001.

2 General Policy on New Development, Design and the Built Environment

2.1 All new development in the Development Area must have regard to the general planning and environmental standards and criteria set out in the overall County Development Plan and to any planning guidance which the Planning Authority may produce over the plan period. New building designs must respect existing village character, scale and streetscape. Residential development must have regard to the Design Guide for Residential Areas to be provided by the Council.

3 Residential Development

3.1 The provision and development of housing in Courtown must have regard to the Council's Housing Strategy contained in the County Development Plan. Compliance with the Housing Strategy will necessitate the transfer

of up to 20% zoned land, sites or units to the local authority for the provision of social and affordable housing.

3.2 The Council recognises the need to ensure balance between accommodating local need through the provision of social and affordable housing and meeting the increasing demand for second and holiday home development. Implementation of the Housing Strategy will help to consolidate and increase the permanent resident population thereby fostering a greater sense of place and community spirit and providing the population base to support the introduction of a range of services and facilities.

3.3 Strategic Aims

- To provide for adequate housing to meet local need within the Development Area
- To limit the number of holiday homes
- To consolidate the existing settlement pattern

3.4 To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council: -

- RP1** To implement the Housing Strategy
- RP2** To accommodate new housing development on lands zoned Residential and Village Centre (Mixed Use) as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Objectives Map.
- RP3** To encourage future residential development in the area to the west of Courtown and in areas where services and infrastructure are available.
- RP4** To encourage the consolidation of the existing spatial pattern through infill development having regard also to the need to provide for adequate open space, car parking and other appropriate planning and environmental criteria
- RP5** To balance the demand for holiday homes with the need to maintain

a year round population.

- RP6** To encourage cluster type development in groups of approximately eight (8) to fifteen (15) units in order to avoid extensive areas of suburban style housing which would detract from the character, identity and amenity of Courtown and Riverchapel.
- RP7** To promote a mix of house types to strengthen the vitality of the village particularly during the winter months.
- RP8** To encourage well-designed and co-ordinated housing schemes rather than one-off dwellings.
- RP9** To discourage ribbon development.
- RP10** To provide and upgrade pedestrian linkages into existing and new residential developments where they can afford safe access for the community.
- RP11** To ensure that new housing development is designed to enhance the appearance of the area and to provide an attractive living environment in accordance with the Design Guide for Residential Areas to be prepared by the Council.
- RP12** To maintain coastal areas/headlands free from development having regard to the overall Coastal Development Policy.

3.5 Specific objectives

- RO1** To undertake the construction of social housing at the location indicated on the Specific Objectives Map and at other locations as appropriate in accordance with the County Council's Housing Programme.
- RO2** To provide social and affordable housing in accordance with the Council's Housing Programme and to provide a range of other policy options/solutions to meet housing need in Courtown.
- RO3** To require that, where a person applies for residential development on land subject to a zoning requirement to reserve lands for social and affordable housing, as a condition of planning permission agreement must be reached between the planning authority and the developer

regarding the reservation of land, houses or sites for social and affordable housing with provision for appeal or arbitration in default of agreement.

RO4 To require the preparation, in conjunction with developers and designers of Residential Site Design Statements, in respect of particular sites setting out the main considerations, design principles and quality objectives which a proposed development should address.

RO5 To encourage the development and promotion of “best practice” advice for new and infill development.

4 Conservation – Protecting Village Form, Character and Built Heritage

4.1 Strategic Aims

- To conserve and protect Courtown and Riverchapel’s townscape, built heritage and spatial character
- To seek to reconcile the needs of conservation with the social and economic needs of the community.

4.2 To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council

CNP1 To secure through the planning process the protection and preservation of structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value in Courtown and Riverchapel.

CNP2 To encourage and assist individuals, voluntary organisations, commercial enterprises and others in the conservation of structures.

CNP3 To secure the protection of existing village streetscapes and their

extension into new infill developments.

- CNP4** To ensure that all new and infill development is compatible with the scale and character of Courtown and Riverchapel.

4.3 Specific Objectives

- CNO1** To secure the protection of the structures set out hereunder in the Record of Protected Structures for Courtown and Riverchapel and to protect their settings from incongruous and inappropriate development (Refer to Specific Objectives Map).

1 Ardamine Church of Ireland

L2 Star of the Sea Church

L3 Ballinatray Bridge

L4 Victorian Cottages (No. 1-4), Seamount Road

L5 Maryville House, Courtown

L6 Coast and Cliff Rescue Headquarters, Riverchapel Road

L7 Lifeboat House, RNLI, Courtown Harbour

L8 The old well/fountain and post box adjacent to the Riverchapel Community Centre

L9 Farmhouse and out buildings on the main Ardamine-Pollshone Road

L10 Kiltannel Church

- CNO2** To provide advice and guidance to the community, designers and developers with regard to the Design Guide for Residential Areas to be prepared by the Council.

- CNO3** To facilitate pre-submission discussions with developers and designers with regard to the preparation of Residential Site Design Statements in respect of individual sites.

- CNO4** To co-operate with and facilitate the Tidy Towns Association and other voluntary groups and associations in improving the appearance and environmental quality of Courtown and Riverchapel.

5 Tourism

5.1 The Council's aim is to focus on the Courtown area as a prime, quality tourist destination. The interdependence between the villages, the harbour area and the hinterland of beaches and woodlands will be promoted and maximised. The policies and objectives of this plan are designed to strengthen the tourism role of Courtown while protecting and improving the quality of all available resources.

The growth in the demand for holiday homes has highlighted the need for additional facilities and for greater balance in the type and quality of future development in the area.

While the beaches and natural environment are and will remain the principal tourism resources, there is a need to extend the range of facilities, both indoor and outdoor and to tackle the problem of seasonality.

A comprehensive tourism package needs to be established through partnership with the various agencies and the local community including the development of sustainable projects in the area. As part of this package and in order to upgrade the quality of the tourism product, further provision of traditional facilities and accommodation such as amusement arcades and caravan/mobile home parks will be discouraged.

5.2 Strategic Aims

- To support the development of sustainable tourism while avoiding conflict between tourism uses and other village uses and amenities.
- To seek to extend the holiday season in the area
- To ensure that the carrying capacity of the area is not exceeded and that the genuine tourism attractions of Courtown are not supplanted by artificial ones.

5.3 To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:

- TP1** To maximise the tourism potential of the Courtown area and extend the holiday season.
- TP2** To encourage the development of the tourism industry as a major source of employment and income in the Courtown area.
- TP3** To encourage the provision of additional high quality tourism accommodation and facilities while maintaining and enhancing the residential function of Courtown and Riverchapel.

Appropriate facilities might include:

- Good quality restaurants
- New four star hotel

- TP4** To encourage the provision of touring caravan/camper sites in the area.
- TP5** To seek the upgrading of existing caravan/mobile home parks and encourage their redevelopment where appropriate as more permanent accommodation.
- TP6** To strictly control the development of further caravan/mobile home parks in the area.
- TP7** To protect the natural and built environment as important tourism resources from insensitive and inappropriate tourism development.
- TP8** To improve the visual quality of the village centre of Courtown and the Riverchapel area.
- TP9** To improve the amenity value of the harbour including the south pier area.
- TP10** To encourage the provision of additional indoor recreational/leisure facilities to assist in addressing the problem of seasonality.
- TP11** To examine the feasibility of developing a marina and marine based activities in the harbour.

TP12 To facilitate other tourism activities including eco-tourism, health centres, horse-riding, walking and cycling and facilities relating to the outdoors and natural environment so as to encourage year round use.

TP13 To require compliance in all new development with the Design Guide for Residential Areas to be prepared by the Council.

5.4 Specific objectives

TO1 To improve access to the beaches, particularly at Ardamine and Pollshone.

TO2 To investigate the provision of additional car parking facilities at the main beaches

TO3 To seek the development of mixed unit sizes in holiday home developments

6 Commercial Development

6.1 Strategic Aim

- To ensure the continuation and consolidation of Courtown and Riverchapel's commercial role in meeting the needs of both the community and visitors.

6.2 To achieve this aim, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council

CP1 To maintain and foster the role of the villages of Courtown and Riverchapel as local retail/service centres

CP2 To encourage and provide for mixed use developments in village centre areas provided they do not adversely affect village and residential amenities

CP3 To encourage short – frontage uses that support vibrant activities in

the village centre.

- CP4** To ensure that new retail/commercial outlets are designed to the highest standard and located to ensure safe and convenient access
- CP5** To maintain and upgrade the quality of existing shop fronts
- CP6** To prohibit further amusement arcade type developments within the area covered by the Local Area Plan.
- CP7** To prohibit the casual introduction of temporary amusements and/or recreational facilities in any part of the area covered by the Local Area Plan.
- CP8** To ensure that all-existing developments, particularly amusements, are assessed and monitored in terms of noise levels and that appropriate standards for noise emissions are established for all new developments.

6.3 Specific Objectives

- CO1** To seek and encourage the environmental improvement of the villages through the provision of off-street parking, traffic calming and management and hard and soft landscaping works as appropriate
- CO2** To assess new development proposals in the context of “Shopfronts and Streetscapes in County Wexford- A Design Guide” published by Wexford County Council.

7 Community Facilities

7.1 Strategic Aim

- To provide a range of facilities and services to meet the needs of the community

7.2 To achieve this aim it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:

- CFP1** To provide for additional community facilities in the Courtown/Riverchapel area in line with future population trends
- CFP2** To encourage and accommodate new community facilities on lands zoned for this purpose as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Map.
- CFP3** To improve the availability of community facilities for both residents and visitors to the area
- CFP4** To encourage and facilitate the provision of community facilities convenient to residential areas
- CFP5** To support attempts by local communities and organisations to improve and expand existing community facilities.

7.3 Specific Objectives

- CFO1** Reserve/Zone lands as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Map as option sites for the provision of community facilities and examine the acquisition of the most desirable site for the development of a playing field, sports/recreation ground or other community facility
- CFO2** To work with appropriate agencies, including funding organisations to assess and meet local community needs in the Courtown/Riverchapel area.

8 INFRASTRUCTURE – WATER AND SANITARY SERVICES

8.1 Strategic Aims

- To provide an adequate level of water and sanitary services infrastructure to accommodate current need in the area covered by the Local Area Plan.

- To provide an adequate level of water and sanitary services infrastructure to accommodate in the future a limited amount of sustainable development.

8.2 To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council

IP1 To upgrade water and sanitary services infrastructure to serve the area covered by the Local Area Plan.

IP2 To ensure that lands designated for development are serviced or serviceable with water supplies and sewerage facilities prior to the granting of planning permission

IP3 To seek financial contributions from or the provision of infrastructure by developers to service development where existing capacity cannot accommodate the proposed development provided such development is otherwise acceptable, is appropriate in scale and does not detract from village form, character and identity.

8.3 Specific Objectives

I1 To provide a sewerage treatment facility at the location indicated on the Specific Objectives Map.

9 Infrastructure – Traffic and Communications

9.1 Strategic Aim

- To provide for the development of an appropriate hierarchy of roads and communications within and around Courtown and Riverchapel to accommodate:

- A range of users including the residential and commercial needs of the area
- Local and seasonal traffic
- The safe and convenient movement of vehicles and persons

9.2 To achieve this aim it will be the policy of Wexford County Council: -

- TRP1** To carry out road improvements to facilitate the implementation of the development strategy for the area.
- TRP2** To ensure that all development proposals meet traffic safety and parking requirements
- TRP3** To implement suitable traffic calming measures and to require the incorporation of similar measures in new development
- TRP4** To seek the segregation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic where possible and the elimination of traffic hazards at road junctions
- TRP5** To promote and accommodate walking and cycling and to carry out road improvements to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists
- TRP6** To adopt car parking management standards in Courtown and Riverchapel that reduce on-street parking in favour of off-street parking
- TRP7** To ensure that all existing and future housing developments are satisfactorily completed in terms of roads, footpaths, parking and turning areas and serviced with adequate public lighting systems.

9.3 Specific Objectives

- T1** To investigate the provision of public car parking facilities.
- T2** To examine the potential to develop some delineated and landscaped parking facilities at the South Pier area.
- T3** To delineate individual car parking spaces in the existing public car park and provide internal landscaping so as to minimise random parking and thereby increase capacity.
- T4** To upgrade footpaths and provide new footpaths with delineated

cycle lanes along the following routes

- The road from Courtown village centre, through Riverchapel and Ardamine to the Local Area Plan boundary to the south;
- The Courtown/Ballinatravay Road/Gorey Road (R742) to the Local Area Plan boundary to the west.

- T5** To upgrade road surfaces on all public roads within the Local Plan Area and ensure completion of roads in housing developments.
- T6** To implement a road improvement/widening scheme from Riverchapel to the Local Area Plan boundary to the south.
- T7** To improve the Gorey/Ballinatravay Road and Riverchapel Road junction in Courtown village and investigate the provision of a roundabout with key feature such as a public monument or public art to act as a focal point at the entrance to the village.
- T8** To improve road junctions.
- T9** To reserve a route for possible relief road to the west of the area covered by the Local Area Plan.
- T10** To delineate public car parking spaces beside the harbour and include provision of spaces for people with disabilities
- T11** To seek to establish cycle paths and walking routes and to investigate the provision of cycle parking facilities near the harbour and Courtown village centre.
- T12** To provide additional signage and information at car parking facilities
- T13** To investigate the provision of day-time public car parking at the Beacon Night Club.
- T14** To provide a designated bus/coach set down area in Courtown village centre in conjunction with public and private providers/operators
- T15** To investigate the extension of the speed limit from Ardamine to the Local Area Plan boundary to the south.
- T16** To investigate the provision of traffic management schemes in Courtown and Riverchapel to include facilities for pedestrian movement and cycling

- T17** To reserve access to backlands immediately north and west of the Breanoge River in Riverchapel and investigate provision of public car parking facilities.
- T18** To seek the under grounding of all new service cables and the under grounding of existing service cables as part of traffic calming and management and general environmental improvement works.
- T19** To seek to extend public lighting to the built up parts of the villages.

10 Amenity, Recreation, Open Space

10.1 Strategic Aims

- To ensure the provision of adequate public and private open space in and adjacent to the Courtown and Riverchapel areas to meet the current and future social, educational and recreational needs of the community.
- To protect structural open space, the woodlands, the coastal zone, views and prospects.
- To facilitate the improvement in opportunities for passive and active recreation.
- To ensure the protection and maintenance of amenity areas.

10.2 To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council: -

- AP1** To provide a variety of public open spaces to accommodate a variety of functions including meeting amenity, recreation and environmental needs.
- AP2** To ensure that all new housing developments allow for recreational opportunities by encouraging the provision of useful open space
- AP3** To ensure that existing landscape and site features such as stands of mature trees, hedgerows, streams and watercourses are properly identified and retained in site layouts and open space plans where

appropriate.

- AP4** To improve existing open space areas through hard and soft landscaping and where practicable create additional opportunities for recreation
- AP5** To secure the conservation and protection of the proposed Natural Heritage Area and woodlands to the north of Courtown.
- AP6** To carry out visual improvements to the approach roads to the villages in the area covered by the Local Area Plan.
- AP7** To secure the protection of significant views in the area through the strict control of development along the coastline.
- AP8** To prohibit any development within 50m of soft shorelines, with the exception of coastal protection works initiated by the local authority or other public agencies.
- AP9** To prohibit the reclamation of estuary lands and the removal of sand dunes, beach sand, builders gravel or other material on coastal lands.
- AP10** To prohibit the development or siting of structures so close to beaches or coastline as to intrude on the enjoyment of the beach by the public or which detract from views, prospects and the special amenity value of the coastline.
- AP11** To preserve public rights of way to coastal areas/beaches.
- AP12** To develop all year round recreational and tourist facilities which do not detract from the natural amenities of the area.
- AP13** To encourage the development of boating and other water based activities in the harbour area.
- AP14** To provide assistance, technical or otherwise and to co-operate with individuals, community groups and organisations who wish to improve the appearance of the area covered by the Local Area Plan.

10.3 Specific Objectives

- A1** To seek the continued development and upgrading of the Wexford Coastal Path in the Courtown Area and investigate the possibility of making public rights of way with connections to existing paths/walkways.
- A2** To preserve the Courtown Woodlands and provide suitable pathways or trails within them and to provide picnic tables, water taps and other facilities at suitable locations near their periphery.
- A3** To carry out an Action Area Plan for the South Pier area of the Harbour
- A4** To maintain a set back distance of 6 metres from either side of streams and rivers identified in the plan so as to maintain riparian ecology and water quality.
- A5** To preserve the summit of Seamount Hill for amenity/recreation purposes.
- A6** To preserve the Breanoge River from Courtown Harbour through Riverchapel to the Ballycannew Road through to Parknacross as an amenity area for public use and to provide a public pathway along same.
- A7** To investigate the removal of unauthorised structures from the “Orchard” and “Potato Fields”.
- A8** To secure the protection of significant trees through the making of Tree Preservation Orders following survey and the development control process and encourage the planting of suitable species in landscaping works.
- A9** To develop the Breanoge River for amenity purposes by rebuilding embankment walls so as to accommodate small boats.
- A10** To ensure that all new development proposals incorporate adequate functional public and private open space areas.
- A11** To continue to seek funding for and to undertake coastal protection works as a matter of urgency.
- A12** To undertake planting of indigenous trees and shrubs in open space

areas and on approach roads in the area covered by the Local Area Plan where appropriate.

A13 To consult with Dúchas – The Heritage Service with regard to development proposals in proximity to the proposed Natural Heritage Area and to areas of archaeological importance/potential listed in the Record of Monuments and Places.

A14 To protect Courtown’s Blue Flag status.

A15 To investigate the placement of existing above ground electricity transformers at ground level with appropriate landscaping and screening.

11 Implementing the Local Area Plan – Significant Effects on the Environment

11.1 Section 19(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 states that a Local Area Plan shall contain information on the likely significant effects implementing the Plan. This requirement is in accordance with the EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment for plans and policies. By highlighting the significant effects of the Plan’s strategy, policies and objectives, it is possible in the plan making and implementation process to

- Avoid unnecessary harm to the local community and the natural and built environment
- Reduce the effects of harm where it cannot be avoided (mitigation)
- Identify positive benefits for the local community, the natural and built environment that can be provided
- Ensure that the Plan is moving towards sustainable development
- Make a major contribution to the future monitoring process by allowing resources to be focused on key areas of uncertainty.

11.2 In general terms the development strategy for the area covered by the Local Area Plan has incorporated the principle of sustainability as a central theme. In this respect the protection of the environment has been integral to the Plan's preparation and is in accordance with:

- The *Strategic Vision* for the planning and development of County Wexford as set out in the County Development Plan 2001 (Reference Section 3.1)
- Government policy as set out in '*Sustainable Development–A Strategy for Ireland*' (Department of the Environment 1997).

11.3. Change resulting from economic and social development will have inevitable effects, both positive and negative on the local communities in Courtown, and on their natural and built environments. It is the purpose of this Local Area Plan to manage this change and to ensure that adverse impacts on the integrity of the environment and quality of life are mitigated and minimised. The following sections set out in more detail the identified significant effects of implementing the Plan, and what measures are available to minimise and mitigate and adverse effects.

11.4 Human Beings

The development of additional lands as outlined in the Local Area Plan will have significant effects on the local community in Courtown. The mix of land uses to cater for the needs of the existing and future population of the area including the provision of homes, jobs, shopping, tourism and recreational facilities will have significant effects in terms of the way the local community experience the area and on the spatial character of the villages. On the other hand, by providing an attractive place in which to live, work, visit and recreate, the Local Area Plan can help to create a positive impact on the future of the community. An increased year round population which the Plan seeks to achieve, will create the critical mass and vitality needed to give rise to investment in services and amenities which will benefit the whole community. The

provision of additional residential development in the context of the Council's Housing Strategy will provide for local residential need and contribute towards minimising the pressure for one-off housing on the approaches to the villages. The strategy of seeking to consolidate development in and around the village core with phased expansion outwards, using existing and proposed infrastructure will have less negative effects and is more sustainable than haphazard, uncoordinated development in the village environs where services and environmental capacity are limited. Negative effects resulting from new residential development can be further mitigated by careful layout and design, the sensitive use of existing site features, screening, landscaping and the planning control and enforcement system.

11.5 Flora

The Local Area Plan identifies the important habitats and amenity areas in Rosslare and its environs. As the important habitats including coastal amenity areas and the sand dune systems are to be maintained free from development, it is unlikely that there will be any negative impacts on the flora of the area. Those areas that have been identified for development consist almost exclusively of agricultural grasslands which are primarily used for grazing and are considered to be of least importance in terms of habitat.

11.6 Fauna

This is closely related to flora and the habitats referred to in Section 12.5 above and the likely impacts are as previously discussed.

11.7 Soil

No special or noteworthy soil conditions have been identified in areas designated for development. Soils in areas such as sand dunes or coastal amenity areas will not be impacted upon as these areas will be kept free from development. Impacts on soil will occur in development

areas due to removal construction work, excavation and re-profiling. Impacts will be mitigated in landscaping, screening and planting of developed sites.

11.8 Water

Primary Impacts on the area's water resources will result from demand created by new development. These demands are identified in the Local Area Plan which also contains detailed policies and objectives to meet this demand through the provision of infrastructure. Foul water treatment impacts will also be addressed through the provision of appropriate infrastructure identified in the Plan, i.e. the provision of treatment facilities to cater for existing and proposed development. While the rate of surface water run-off has the potential to increase in development areas, any adverse impacts will be addressed by the provision of appropriate storm water infrastructure and through careful design, siting and site development to be addressed in the development control process. In general terms water quality will improve benefiting the existing and proposed population through the upgrading and improvement of water infrastructure services.

11.9 Water

Increased levels of development will result in air quality changes from both vehicles and properties. However, increases in residential density, the provision of cycle and pedestrian networks, and the provision of local facilities and services and more energy efficient houses, will help reduce emissions over the longer term. Extensive tree planting will also assist in air purification.

11.10 Climate

There are no likely or significant impacts on climate anticipated from the Local Area Plan.

11.11 Landscape

Implementation of the Plan involves the urbanisation of land previously used for agricultural purposes, resulting in significant long-term changes to the traditional landscape of these areas. This is deemed to be acceptable as future growth in housing, jobs, services and facilities needs to be accommodated and the lands identified are as close as possible to the built up areas. Those lands and areas that represent the most important ecological habitats and sensitive or vulnerable landscapes have been reserved in the interests of bio-diversity, visual amenity and public open space. Significant change in proposed development areas can be mitigated through the planning control process by requiring sensitive landscaping of new development and the creation of new landscapes.

This includes both natural and man-made assets. Natural assets have been addressed in foregoing sections and some of the material assets that relate to heritage are addressed in the following section. Other material assets include the area's existing infrastructure e.g. roads, water supply, sewerage infrastructure and built fabric. No significant impacts which would affect these assets are anticipated, while improvements to existing infrastructure of the road network will benefit the area.

11.12 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is the term used to describe the combined components of archaeology, architecture, urban design, monuments and decorative features. It also includes sites or areas of religious or folklore interest. The Local Area Plan and the overall County Development Plan address the nature and extent of such cultural assets in the Courtown areas. The protection of these assets will be major objective through the development control process through its requirement for well-planned designed and sensitive development. Close consultation with Dúchas - The Heritage Service will also ensure that any adverse impacts on the cultural heritage are avoided or mitigated.