



Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council

2018

Local Development Plan 2030

Preferred Options Paper

Discussion Paper 2: Environment

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction 5**
- 2.0 Planning Policy Context..... 7**
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035..... 7
 - Planning Policy Statement 2 : Natural Heritage (PPS2) 8
 - Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and The Built Heritage (PPS6)..... 9
 - Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in The Countryside (PPS21) 9
 - Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI) 10
 - Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPSS) 10
 - Local Development Plan (LDP) - Key Legislation..... 10
 - Development Management Issues..... 11
 - Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) Regulations..... 12
 - Protected Species..... 12
- 3.0 Built Heritage 13**
 - Conservation* 13
 - Built Heritage Assets*..... 14
 - Conservation Areas (CAs)..... 14
 - Areas of Townscape and Village Character..... 15
 - Listed Buildings 16
 - Archaeological Sites and Monuments* 16
 - State Care Sites 16
 - Scheduled Monuments..... 17
 - Areas of Archaeological Potential and Area of Significant Archaeological Interest*..... 17
 - Areas of Archaeological Potential..... 17
 - Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) 18
 - Historic Parks, Gardens And Demesnes 18
- 4.0 Natural Environment 19**
 - Biodiversity* 19
 - International Designations* 20
 - World Heritage Sites (WHS) 20

RAMSAR sites	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<i>European Designations (European Union)</i>	22
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	22
Special Protected Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<i>National Designations</i>	23
Areas of Special Scientific interest (ASSI's).....	23
National Nature Reserves (NNRs).....	24
Areas of Scientific Interest (ASIs)	24
Sites of Community Importance (SCIs).....	24
<i>Local Designations</i>	25
Nature Reserves (NRs)	25
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).....	25
Sites of Local Conservation Importance (SLNCIs).....	26
Ulster Wildlife Reserves (formerly Ulster Wildlife Trust).....	26
<i>Landscape designations</i>	27
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)	27
Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs).....	27
<i>Trees</i>	28
Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 28
<i>Rivers</i>	29
<i>Landscape Character</i>	30
5.0 Access to the Open Countryside	32
Public Rights of Way.....	32
The Ulster Way.....	32
The National Cycle Network.....	32
Waterways Ireland	33
Parks and urban wildlife corridors	33
6.0 Conclusion	34

Appendices

- Appendix 1: List of Historic Parks, Gardens And Demesne
- Appendix 2: List of Sites of Local Conservation Importance (SLNCIs)
- Appendix 3: List of Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)
- Appendix 4: Maps 1-4: Map of Environmental Assets within each legacy Council Area

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Key baseline information is required for the preparation of a Local Development Plan (LDP). This includes Population, Housing, Economy and Environment. This information is used to inform the Council's Growth Strategy for incorporation in its Development Plan. Plan production is subject to scrutiny under the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) regulations which examine the likely effects the LDP will have on sustainability issues identified for the area.

1.2 This is the second of four papers aimed at providing an overview of issues relating to the Built and Natural environment within the Borough. This paper seeks to identify key information in relation to the Natural and Built environmental features and assets. This includes the current protection afforded through the local development plan and planning policy. This will help inform members for their role in the decision making process, with a responsibility to protect, conserve and enhance the environment within the council area.

1.3 Within the Borough we have a rich and diverse environment both in terms of our Built Heritage and Natural Landscape. This is evident through a significant number of listed buildings, Conservation Areas, a World Heritage Site and various other sites of international, national and regional designation. These environmental features have created important economic assets providing revenue to the economy through environmental activities, tourism and recreation.

1.4 It is the Council's responsibility as custodians of our district to protect and conserve, for our own and future generations, to enjoy and experience. Development can potentially and adversely impact on our environment and it is therefore important that all those involved in the planning process are fully aware of the environmental assets within the council area and what planning policies exist to ensure that any potential environmental impacts are carefully and fully considered.

1.5 The development plan process plays an important role in this regard helping to identify key features and assets of the area, set bespoke policies and help balance the protection of the environment against current and future needs of the community.

1.6 Key outputs of this paper are to:-

- Provide an overview of the built, natural and landscape heritage within the Borough.
- to inform of existing policy context affecting the environmental assets and features.
- to inform and provide a background to the statutory and policy framework affecting the environmental assets in preparation for the Council's Local Development Plan Strategy.
- to identify if there are particular assets in the environment that require further protection, conservation or enhancement through bespoke policies.

2.0 Planning Policy Context

Regional Development Strategy 2035

2.1 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 provides the Regional Policy Context and aims to protect and enhance the environment for current and future generations. It recognises that Northern Ireland's environment is one of its greatest assets which has benefits in terms of the economy and quality of life. Regional Guidance seeks to reduce our carbon footprint, facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst managing waste sustainably. Key Guidance in terms of our environment is RG11 which seeks to “*Conserve, protect, and where possible, enhance our built heritage and our natural environment.*”

2.2 In terms of **Built Heritage** the Region has a rich and diverse built heritage which contributes to our sense of place and history and is viewed as being a key tourism and recreational asset making a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society. It is important to note that once lost it cannot be fully replaced and therefore it is important to:-

- Identify, protect and conserve the built heritage, including archaeological sites and monuments and historic buildings;
- Identify, protect and conserve the character and built heritage assets within cities, towns and villages;
- Maintain the integrity of built heritage assets, including historic landscapes.

2.3 The **Natural Environment** directly supports all life and is essential to social well-being and therefore is important to:

- Sustain and enhance biodiversity;
- Identify, establish, protect and manage ecological networks;
- Protect and encourage green and blue infrastructure within urban areas;
- Protect and manage important geological and geomorphological features;
- Protect, enhance and manage the coast
- Protect, enhance and restore the quality of inland water bodies;
- Recognise and promote the conservation of local identity and distinctive landscape character;
- Conserve, protect and where possible enhance areas recognised for their landscape quality; and

- Protect designated areas of countryside from inappropriate development (either directly or indirectly) and continue to assess areas of designation;

Planning Policy Statement 2: Natural Heritage (PPS2)

2.4 PPS 2: Natural Heritage sets out regional planning policies for the conservation, protection and enhancement of our natural heritage, which is defined as ‘the diversity of our habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features’.

2.5 PPS2 advises that the policy objectives for natural heritage are to;

- seek to further the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the region’s natural heritage;
- further sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, economic and environmental development;
- assist in meeting international (including European), national and local responsibilities and obligations in the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage;
- contribute to rural renewal and urban regeneration by ensuring developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment;
- protect and enhance biodiversity, geo-diversity and the environment; and
- take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change.

2.6 LDPs should seek to protect and integrate certain features of the natural heritage when zoning sites for development through the use of ‘key site requirements’ (KSRs) and identify and promote green and blue infrastructure. Natural heritage features and designated sites should be identified as part of the plan-making process and where appropriate, policies brought forward for their protection and/or enhancement. A hierarchy of designations is available under European and local legislation and designation is primarily the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). Generally sites are selected for their rarity value or for the diversity of species and habitats they contain, or as a representative example of their habitat type on a local, national or international scale. Some designations are brought forward under the LDP process.

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage (PPS6)

2.7 PPS6 advises that the policy objectives of the planning system for archaeology and built heritage are to:

- secure the protection, conservation and, where possible, the enhancement of our built and archaeological heritage;
- promote sustainable development and environmental stewardship with regard to our built and archaeological heritage; and
- encourage the link between conservation and economic prosperity.

2.8 In preparing LDPs, councils should take into account the implications of local policies and proposals on all features of the archaeological and built heritage and their settings, and the implications of proposed land use zonings, locations for development and settlement limits on natural heritage features within or adjoining the plan area. LDPs should identify the range of built and archaeological heritage features within the plan area and bring forward policies or proposals for their protection and conservation and enhancement.

Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside (PPS21)

2.9 PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside, sets out planning policies for development in the countryside. It aims to manage development in the countryside which strikes a balance between the need to protect the countryside from unnecessary or inappropriate development, while supporting rural communities.

2.10 This PPS 21 recognises the importance of:

- managing growth in the countryside to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development that meet the essential needs of a vibrant rural community;
- conserving the landscape and natural resources of the rural area and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development and from the actual or potential effects of pollution;
- facilitating development necessary to achieve a sustainable rural economy, including appropriate farm diversification and other economic activity; and
- Promoting high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development in the countryside.

Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI)

2.11 The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland contains regional planning policies for the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and community woodlands. This Strategy also includes regional policies to protect and to guide development in the coastal zone.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPSS)

2.12 It is important to note that in the near future the above documents will be replaced by the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPSS), a Draft of which was issued for consultation in February 2014. Under the provisions of the draft SPSS, in plan-making and decision-taking, Councils will apply the precautionary principle 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. Councils are also required to ensure that potential effects on landscape and natural heritage, including the cumulative effect of development, are considered when preparing LDPs and policies. With careful planning and design the potential for conflict can be minimised and enhancement of features brought about.

Local Development Plan (LDP) - Key Legislation

2.13 It is a legal requirement on any planning authority to ensure that plans, programmes and projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are made subject to an environmental assessment, prior to their approval. Public Consultation is a key feature of environmental assessment procedures. The level of environmental assessment is proportionate to the scale of the plan, programme or project proposed.

2.14 The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 now places a statutory duty on those planning authorities producing a LDP to undertake a *Sustainability Appraisal (SA)*. This incorporates the principles of sustainable development when preparing such plans and assesses not just the potential environmental impacts of the plan but any economic and social impacts as well. To assess the environmental implications, the SA will incorporate a *Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*. European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment', commonly referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, is transposed into Northern Ireland law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (NI) 2004 (EAPP (NI) 2004). The objective of SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental consideration into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

2.15 SEA must be carried out in conjunction with, and parallel to, the development of any plan and integrated with the plan process. Under the provisions of the SEA Directive and the Regulations, an Environmental Report is published with the draft plan and must be taken into account before the adoption of the LDP.

2.16 Under the provisions of the *Habitats Regulations*, plan-making authorities are required to undertake an *Appropriate Assessment* for any development plan (or development proposal) which either individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to significantly affect a European Site such as a SPA or SAC.

2.17 The purpose of an Appropriate Assessment is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of a European site. The purpose of an appropriate assessment is to ascertain whether the plan is likely to adversely affect site integrity. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potentially damaging effects.

2.18 The Shared Environmental Service, managed by Mid & East Antrim Borough Council, will provide assistance in carrying out the Habitats Regulations to support the preparation of the Local Development Plan.

Development Management Issues

2.19 Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and / or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect upon the integrity of European or Ramsar sites as these are afforded the highest form of statutory protection.

2.20 Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect (either alone or in combination) or reasonable scientific doubt remains, council will be required by law to carry out an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, can the planning authority agree to development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions. A development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European or Ramsar Site may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) Regulations

2.21 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process by which information about the environmental effects of a project is collected, assessed and taken into account in reaching a decision on whether the proposed development should be granted planning permission. The EIA (2012) Regulations Schedules I and II cover certain types of development proposals that will either automatically be required to submit, or will be subject of a determination by the planning authority to ascertain whether they need to submit, an EIA.

Protected Species

2.22 The presence or potential presence of legally protected species (Bats, Badgers, Otters etc.) under the Wildlife Order 1985 is also an important consideration in decision making. If there is evidence to suggest that a protected species is present on site or may be affected by a proposed development, steps must be taken to establish whether it is present and any likely impact on the species must be fully considered prior to any determination.

3.0 Built Heritage

3.1 The built heritage forms an integral part of our environment. Human activity has played an important role in creating our distinctive landscapes and townscapes, with each generation shaping and adding to the environment around them, leaving us with a rich and diverse built heritage. This is evident through the range of built heritage features within the Borough. It consists of a variety of archaeological sites, monuments and buildings representing the aspirations and achievements of past societies.

3.2 The council area includes evidence of built heritage through a range of historic periods with the earliest dating from 9,000 years ago, with the Mountsandel Mesolithic Site being the oldest archaeological site and known human settlement in Ireland with carbon dating indicating a date of 7000B.C. This built heritage continues through to the development of our present day towns and villages with the historic core and buildings within some of our settlements designated as Conservation Areas, and listed buildings. Therefore the quality of the built environmental heritage in parts of the Council Area is high and with this comes the need and responsibility to protect and conserve for our own and future generations to enjoy and experience. Key policies for the control of development which affect our built heritage assets are provided within PPS6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage.

Conservation

3.3 Conservation can generally be considered as the action taken to prevent decay and to prolong the life of our national built heritage. Conservation aims at ensuring the long term survival of our heritage for the enjoyment of our own and future generations. Recent years has seen a significant growth in public awareness of our built heritage, however the past 50 years has seen more changes to the landscape and to the built heritage than in any other period of history. Unfortunately much our built heritage has been lost during this period but much still remains which requires ongoing care, maintenance and protection. There is a significant responsibility on all involved in the planning process to ensure its protection and that legislative obligations in relation to our built environmental assets are fully considered.

Built Heritage Assets

3.4 The following is a summary of the built heritage assets within the Borough:-

Conservation Areas

3.5 Conservation Areas (CAs) are areas of special architectural or historic interest. The Planning Act (NI) 2011 (Section 104) provides the Council with the power to designate an area of special architectural or historic interest as a Conservation Area.

3.6 There are 5 CAs within the Borough, each with an individual townscape and related design advice contained in the accompanying designation booklets, as follows;

- **Cushendall Conservation Area** – Designated as a CA in 1975. It includes the historic core of the village on the west bank of the river, together with the extensive wooded grounds of The Cottage and Court Mcmartin, with the older parts of the settlement on Kilnadore Road and Coast Road also included. The Cushendall Conservation Area Design Guide was published in November 1993.
- **Cushendun Conservation Area** – the village and surrounding lands were designated as a CA in 1980 due to a unique architectural inheritance and picturesque setting. The Cushendun Conservation Area Design Guide was published in December 1996.
- **Ballycastle Conservation Area** – Designated as a CA in 1990, the area includes the historic upper town around the diamond and part of the lower town and connecting tree and villa lined mall of Quay Road. The Ballycastle Conservation Area Design Guide was published in June 1990.
- **Bushmills Conservation Area** – Designated as a CA in 1992. The central diamond of the village includes a large grouping of listed buildings with the CA including them along with other heritage features and older parts of the Distillery and remains of mill races. The Bushmills Conservation Area Design Guide was published in June 1992.
- **Ballymoney Conservation Area** – The Historic core of Ballymoney was designated as a CA in 1994 through the publication of the design guide. The CA includes the historic core of the town radiating out to include Charlotte Street, High Street, Church Street, Victoria Street and Main Street.

3.7 The designation of the above Conservation Areas and accompanying design guides along with associated funding and grants have helped deliver a significant number of development schemes. These have contributed to the overall enhancement of the areas and has resulted in the sympathetic restoration and physical regeneration of many buildings, many of which had lost part of their original character. The aesthetic reasons for retaining the best of the built heritage has helped grow public awareness of conservation. Many environmental and economic benefits can also be derived from Conservation Area designations, such as tourism and heritage related leisure activities, making them desirable places to live, work, shop and do business

3.8 As part of the plan preparation process, all designations and design guides will be reviewed.

Areas of Townscape and Village Character

3.9 Areas of Townscape and Village Character are areas of unique identity within settlements designated by the Council through the local development plan, with accompanying local policies for the control of development within these areas.

3.10 There are currently 6 Areas of Townscape and Village Character within the Borough, as follows:

- Coleraine Town Centre
- Coleraine Lodge Road
- Portballintrae
- Portrush
- Limavady
- Armoy

3.11 All settlements have their own identity and character, derived from the sense of place that comes from human activity, which over time has shaped the present built form. In some places, the variety or consistency of the overall character, including style of construction and in some instances landscaping, is particularly distinctive or pleasing, and merits specific protection from inappropriate change.

3.12 The designation of Area of Townscape or Village Character ensures that new development respects the distinctive character and appearance of the townscape in the designated areas. The characteristic built forms in these areas can inform developers in preparing development proposals elsewhere in these settlements to reinforce local identity. Future proposals for alterations provide the opportunity to restore architectural features which

have been lost, and to rectify inappropriate alterations that detract from the character of the streetscape. Areas of Townscape Character are designated in accordance with PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage and PPS 6 (Addendum): Areas of Townscape Character.

Listed Buildings

3.13 There are approximately 931 listed buildings currently included in the statutory list within the Borough. Full details of Listed Buildings can be viewed on the Built Heritage section of the NIEA website <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea>.

3.14 The Department of Environment; NIEA is required under the provisions Section 80 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to compile a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, important for their value and contribution to the character and quality of settlements and the countryside. This exercise is carried following consultation with the Historic Buildings Council and the relevant Council. It is anticipated that over the next Plan period further buildings will be added as the process of building survey and resurvey is ongoing

3.15 The term 'building' is defined broadly and can include, for example, walls and bridges as well as structures falling within the more usual understanding of the term. Protection also extends to the interior of listed buildings and to most buildings within the curtilage of the listed structure.

Archaeological Sites and Monuments

State Care Sites

3.16 There are approximately 22 State Care Sites within the Borough. Full details of these can be viewed on the Built Heritage section of the NIEA website <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea>.

3.17 Archaeological sites and monuments are taken into the care of the department under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. State care sites and monuments represent all periods of human settlement in Ireland from 8000 BC to the 20th Century.

3.18 They are protected and managed as a public asset by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), which takes the lead in advising on and implementing the Government's environmental policy and strategy in Northern Ireland. NIEA is an agency of the Department of the Environment.

3.19 All are presented for public access, education and enjoyment. Some sites have staffed visitor facilities and may have entrance charges. It is worth noting that it is intended that state care monuments and sites shall move from being managed by NIEA (on behalf of the DOE) to the new Department for Communities.

Scheduled Monuments

3.20 There are approximately 282 scheduled monuments within the Borough. Full details of these can be viewed on the Built Heritage section of the NIEA website <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea>.

3.21 The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 provides protection for archaeological sites and monuments.

3.22 When a monument is scheduled, written consent is required for works that would alter or break the ground surface or disturb the historic fabric of the monument within its statutorily protected area.

3.23 When a monument is scheduled, the owner or occupier is responsible for its good maintenance. NIEA advise that the sites will be visited every four years by a Field Monument Warden, who will check the condition of the monument and provide advice on how best to look after it. Often a little basic advice or maintenance can help to avoid some of the most common problems, such as ploughing too close to a monument or cattle erosion, which can damage buried archaeological remains.

Areas of Archaeological Potential & Area of Significant Archaeological Interest

3.24 There are 20 settlements identifying Areas of Archaeological Potential in the Borough, as follows:

- Ballymoney
- Cloghmills
- Dervock
- Coleraine
- Garvagh
- Kilrea
- Macosquin
- Portrush
- Portstewart
- Limavady
- Ballykelly
- Dungiven
- Drumsurn
- Feeny
- Ballycastle
- Ballintoy
- Bushmills
- Cushendall
- Lisnagunogue
- Waterfoot

3.25 PPS 6 Archaeology and Built Heritage indicates that where it is likely that archaeological remains will be encountered in the course of continuing development and change, such areas will be highlighted in local development plans. These areas are referred to as Areas of

Archaeological Potential. They indicate to developers those areas, that on the basis of current knowledge, it is likely that archaeological remains will be encountered in the course of future development or change. Planning Policy for the control of development is contained in PPS 6. It should be noted that NIEA Historic Environment Division are currently undertaking a review of the Areas of Archaeological Potential.

Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI)

3.26 Dunluce Castle is the only site of Significant Archaeological Interest within the Borough.

3.27 The single ASAI designated in the Plan area focuses on Dunluce Castle, one of the most recognised and iconic monuments in Northern Ireland, and its associated historic landscape. The ASAI contains a range of regionally important archaeological sites, though not all of these are presently in the care of the Department of Environment or scheduled under the provisions of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. The inter-relationship between the surrounding landscape and upstanding remains often heightens the appreciation of an archaeological site. The preservation of such sites and their settings is of the highest priority.

3.28 Within the designated Area of Significant Archaeological Interest, planning permission will not be granted for proposals for large scale development, unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant impact on the character and appearance of this distinctive historic landscape.

Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes

3.29 There are currently 22 registered and 9 supplementary historic parks, gardens and demesnes within the Borough (see Appendix 1). They reflect planned and managed landscape enhancement carried out since the 17th century. Some have public access, courtesy of their owners. They provide not only an historic reference but also an informative visitor attraction.

3.31 It is important that these features of the built heritage are protected from development that would harm their historic character. Policy relating to these is contained in PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage. Information on the register of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes of special historic interest in Northern Ireland may be found on the NIEA website: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea.

4.0 Natural Environment

4.1 The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area encompasses an extensive area of countryside rich and diverse in terms of its character, landscape, heritage and biodiversity value. The varied habitats and green spaces within the area provide environmental services to the local population such as clean water, carbon storage within peat bogs and providing forests and parklands in which to unwind and exercise. Many studies have concluded that green spaces are good for the health and wellbeing of people. Wildlife also provides significant economic benefits to local communities with the high visitor numbers to Rathlin Island seabird reserve an example.

4.2 The Borough contains an extensive coastline, approximately 237kms, enriching the area's biodiversity, attractiveness and economy. The landscape along the coast is ever changing, and includes fine sand beaches of Benone and Magilligan, the Giant's Causeway, the sea stacks at Ballintoy, the prominent cliff lines and the wild character of Fair Head, and the bays at the foot of the Glens. Large parts of the coast are designated natural sites, due to their productive and biologically diverse ecosystems – such as mudflats, sand dunes, reefs and cliffs. Rathlin Island is Northern Ireland's only inhabited offshore island and like other sites within the area has multiple habitat designations. The council area contains Northern Ireland's only World Heritage Site – the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast.

4.3 The Council area has two complete AONB's and part of two more. These areas have scenic remote upland areas with two mountain summits over two thousand feet in the Sperrins AONB. The Antrim Coast and Glens has an upland plateau dissected by glens and escarpments which tumble to the sea. Binevenagh AONB has a series of high cliffs extending from Mussendun Temple to Binevenagh Mountain. The Causeway Coast has striking cliffs and beaches. The Rivers Roe, Bann and Bush provide a natural corridor for wildlife and to tourism and recreation. The Borough contains beautiful forests and woodlands with Oakwood nature reserves at Breen and Banagher Glen providing the largest semi natural woodland in Northern Ireland.

Biodiversity

4.4 Biodiversity is the total variety of all living things and includes the number of species as well as their variety and abundance. At the larger scale, biodiversity relates to the variation in landscapes and habitats and at the smallest scale to genetic differences in plants and animals. Biodiversity is vital to the health of the planet and to our own quality of life. Human activity

within the landscape is the principal cause of decreasing biodiversity on land and in water in Northern Ireland.

4.5 It is important to recognise the biodiversity significance of Northern Ireland's habitats in the British Isles and beyond. As one of the most westerly outliers of Europe, many of our communities of plants and animals represent extreme oceanic (mild and wet) examples.

4.6 The Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy 2002 sets the framework for biodiversity action. The strategy describes the main features of biodiversity in Northern Ireland, identifies the main factors affecting it, and proposes a number of measures to support biodiversity conservation up to 2016.

4.7 The Strategy identifies 40 habitats as priorities for conservation action in Northern Ireland. This Plan has examples of 22 priority habitats including Coastal Sand Dunes, Maritime Cliffs and Slopes, Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh and Wet Woodland. The varied landscape of the Borough also contains a number of priority species including Red Grouse, Chough, Yellowhammer and Small White Orchid. The Council has published a Local Biodiversity Action Plan which details habitats and key species.

4.8 The most common means of conserving biodiversity is designation, protection and management of the best sites of nature conservation importance. There is a hierarchy of designations from International, European, National to a local level. Designation is primarily the responsibility of NIEA. Generally, sites are selected for their rarity value or the diversity of species and habitats they contain, or as a representative example of their habitat type on a local, national or international level. Sites of international importance comprise those listed under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, and European Sites (Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) designated under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (NI) 1995. Sites important in a national context include Areas of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves.

4.9 Sections of the coast and countryside protected by international and national nature conservation designations are detailed below (also see Maps 1-4 at Appendix 4). All current environmental designations are also available on the NIEA website www.doeni.gov.uk/niea.

International Designations

World Heritage Sites (WHS)

4.10 There is one WHS within the Borough and the only one in Northern Ireland - The Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast. The World Heritage Convention, adopted by UNESCO in

1972, was ratified by the United Kingdom in 1984. It provides the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value and established a World Heritage List under the management of inter-governmental World Heritage Committee. Individual governments are responsible for nomination of sites and their subsequent protection and monitoring if selected.

4.11 The Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast a spectacular area of global geological importance. The most characteristic and unique feature of the site is the exposure of some 40,000 large, regularly shaped polygonal columns of basalt in perfect horizontal sections, forming a pavement. The wider site including the cliffs and causeway headlands is designated primarily for the striking exposure of geological features, considered to be of outstanding universal value. Celebrated in the arts and in science, it has been a visitor attraction for at least 300 years and has come to be regarded as a symbol for Northern Ireland and underpins the economy of the area as one of the most visited tourist attractions in Ireland. In order to protect the approaches to the World Heritage site a buffer zone has been identified within DNAP 2016, where the scale and form of development is considered in the context of the need to protect the setting of this important asset from overdevelopment.

RAMSAR sites

4.12 There are 3 RAMSAR sites within the Borough, as follows;

- Lough Foyle
- Garry Bog
- Garron Plateau

4.13 The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. This recognises wetlands as ecosystems that are extremely important for biodiversity conservation in general and for the wellbeing of people.

4.14 Lough Foyle has an extensive intertidal area of mudflats, sand flats and saltmarsh recognized as an internationally important site for overwintering birds. The site supports internationally important numbers of Whooper Swan, Light Bellied Brent Geese and Bar Tailed Godwit and a further 20 species of national importance. There are Mussel and Oyster beds within Lough Foyle.

4.15 The Garry Bog is one of the best examples of an active lowland raised bog within the UK. The bog contains some very unique plants and animals ranging from insect eating plants such as the Sundew plant to protected smooth newts. Garry Bog has a rare species of moss and is also a breeding ground for Damsel and Dragonflies. The bog is a habitat for Irish Hares and Curlews – two distinct species whose numbers have declined in recent decades.

4.16 The Borough has a portion of the Garron Plateau which is the largest area of intact blanket bog in Northern Ireland and one of the best examples of this habitat in the UK. The Plateau has well developed pools and quaking bogs. The peatland supports a rich diversity of plants and animal species, including rare species of bog orchid, Marsh saxifrage and breeding Golden Plover, Merlin and Hen Harrier

European Designations (European Union)

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

4.17 There are 14 SACs within the Borough, as follows:

- Banagher Glen
- Bann Estuary
- Binevenagh
- Breen Wood
- Carn-Glenshane Pass
- Garron Plateau
- Garry Bog
- Magilligan
- Main Valley Bogs
- North Antrim Coast
- Rathlin Island
- Red Bay
- River Roe and Tributaries
- Skerries and Causeway

4.18 The SACs are designated because they contain habitat types and/or species which are rare or threatened within a European context; protected under the Habitats Directive to address threats to the these special habitats or species and to provide increased protection to a variety of plants, animals and habitats of importance to biodiversity. They are collectively known as ‘Natura 2000’ sites. Active raised bogs, blanket bogs and European dry heaths are examples of priority habitats. Species such as the Otter and the Atlantic Salmon are examples of priority species. Further information of the priority habitats and species listed are available on the NIEA website.

Special Protected Areas (SPAs)

4.19 There are 4 SPAs within the Borough, as follows;

- Antrim Hills
- Lough Foyle
- Rathlin Island
- Sheep Island

4.20 Special Protection Areas (SPA's) are designated under the European Commission Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds to protect internationally important areas for breeding, overwintering and migrating birds.

National Designations

Areas of Special Scientific interest (ASSI's)

4.21 There are 61 ASSI's within the Borough, as follows;

- Aghanloo Wood
- Altikeeragh
- Altmore Glen
- Ballycastle Coalfield
- Ballymacaldrack
- Ballymacallion
- Ballyrisk More
- Banagher Glen
- Bann Estuary
- Binevenagh
- Bovevagh
- Breen Wood
- Brockagh Quarry
- Caldanagh Bog
- Capecastle
- Carey Valley
- Carn-Glenshane Pass
- Carrick-a-rede
- Castle Point
- Castle River Valley
- Church Bay
- Cloghastucan
- Craigs
- Craighulliar
- Dunloy Bog
- Errigal Glen
- Fairhead and Murlough Bay
- Garron Plateau
- Garry Bog
- Garry Bog Part 2
- Giants Causeway and Dunseverick
- Glarryford
- Glenariff
- Glenariffe Glen
- Glenballyemon River
- Galboly
- Gortcorbies
- Lough Foyle
- Loughermore Mountain
- Magilligan
- Portballintrae
- Prolusk
- Ramore Head and the Skerries
- Rathlin Island – Ballycarry
- Rathlin Island – Ballygill North
- Rathlin Island - Kebble
- Rathlin Island – Kinramer South
- Rathlin Island Coast
- River Roe and Tributaries
- Runkerry
- Sheep Island
- Slievanorra and Croghan
- Smulgedon
- Tievebulliagh
- Torr Head
- Tow River Wood
- Tircreven
- Tullyhill
- West Strand Portrush
- White Park Bay
- White Rocks

4.22 ASSI's are areas which have been identified as of high scientific interest because of their flora, fauna, geological, physiographical or other features' are designated under the Environment (NI) Order 2002 (as amended). Many ASSIs occur on private land and are subject to management agreements with NIEA. ASSIs are a fundamental element of site-based nature conservation legislation and most other legal nature/geological conservation designations in Northern Ireland are based upon them, including National Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation.

National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

4.23 There are 4 NNRs within the Borough, as follows;

- Altikeeragh
- Binevenagh
- Giant's Causeway
- Portrush

4.24 Nature Reserves are designated in areas where there are nationally important populations of plants, animals, birds or where the area is of outstanding geological interest. NIEA is responsible for declaring NNRs.

4.25 Altikeeragh NNR, situated on an elevated upland site within Binevenagh AONB, has a complex of pools and flows supporting a nationally important community of plants and animals. Some of the flows have been dammed to create and maintain this type of habitat which is threatened nationally through drainage.

4.26 The rocks at Portrush National Nature Reserve sparked a debate about the origins of basalt between two schools of thought over 200 years ago when geology was developed as a science. The site contains a number of fossils which helped to unlock the mystery and made the site famous for its contribution to geologic thought. The extent and boundaries of National Nature Reserves can be accessed on the NIEA website at the protected areas map viewer.

Areas of Scientific Interest (ASIs)

4.27 There are 2 ASIs within the Borough, as follows;

- Loughaveema
- Clontyfinnan

4.28 ASIs are designated primarily for their unusual geological features. These designations are now being superseded by the ASSI designations. Clontyfinnan is part of the Armoy Moraine which is of importance in understanding the complexity of glacial processes. Some aggregate extraction shows that many of the sediments within the moraine are of fine-grained sands and silts of lakebed origin. The pristine condition of the landform suggests that at least this part of the moraine should be protected with regard to controls on aggregate extraction.

Sites of Community Importance (SCIs)

4.29 There are 2 SCIs within the Borough, as follows;

- Red Bay
- Skerries and Causeway

4.30 A Site of Community Importance (SCI) is defined in the European Commission Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as a site which, in the biogeographical region or regions to which it belongs, contributes significantly to the maintenance or restoration at a favourable conservation status of a natural habitat type or of a species and may also contribute significantly to the coherence of Natura 2000, and/or contributes significantly to the maintenance of biological diversity within the biogeographic region or regions concerned. SCIs are proposed to the Commission by the State Members and once approved, they can be designated as SACs.

Local Designations

Nature Reserves (NRs)

4.31 There are 8 NRs within the Borough, as follows;

- Ballymaclary
- Banagher Glen
- Breen Oak Wood
- Glenariffe Waterfalls
- Kebble
- Magilligan Point
- Roe Estuary
- Slievanorra Forest

4.32 Nature reserves are chosen as very good examples of our wildlife, habitats and geology. They contain a wide range of species, communities and geology and their designation is a public recognition by Government of their importance. The main aim of designation of these sites is to conserve their features now and for future generations through the development of experience and techniques in managing land for conservation. A secondary aim is to provide opportunities, where practical, for the public to experience these natural habitats and landscape features and to interact quietly with nature.

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

4.33 There is one Local Nature Reserve within the Borough at Benone. Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are areas that have been set aside for biodiversity where people can enjoy wildlife. In contrast to National Nature Reserves, which tend to be areas with high importance for plants and animals, or with features of great geological interest, LNRs do not have to contain rare or threatened species or habitats – they are usually areas with good wildlife content which are accessible to people and provide them with opportunities to be close to wildlife. Many LNRs in Northern Ireland lie within, or close to, urban areas. The principle objective is nature conservation, but where local people can have easy access and be involved, for example, in practical conservation measures taken on site.

Sites of Local Conservation Importance (SLNCIs)

4.34 In accordance with PPS 2: Natural Heritage, 184 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) are designated within the Borough (see Appendix 2). They are Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) established under the Wildlife (NI) Order 1995 and Local Nature Reserves that may be established by local Councils under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985. In addition, sites of local importance include non-statutory nature reserves managed by public agencies or voluntary conservation bodies these sites are of local nature conservation importance on the basis of their flora, fauna or earth science interest.

4.35. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would be liable to have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic nature conservation interest of a designated Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance.

4.36 In assessing development proposals on or adjacent to these sites, priority will be given to the protection of their intrinsic nature conservation interest. Exceptionally, where development is permitted which might significantly adversely affect the intrinsic nature conservation interest, effort should be made to ensure that such adverse effects are kept to a minimum and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

4.37 Planning permission, where granted, will be subject to conditions to guide developers on the necessary compensation measures such as the provision of new or enhanced habitats or features or for improved management.

Ulster Wildlife Reserves (formerly Ulster Wildlife Trust)

4.38 There are 2 Wildlife Trust sites within the Borough, as follows;

- Umbra
- Glendun Farm

4.39 These two sites are owned by Ulster Wildlife; a conservation charity which aims to restore, recreate and reconnect wildlife habitats. Umbra, located behind Benone beach, consists of dune grasslands, wetter dune slacks and a small hazel copse. There are many flowering plants in the meadows and sand dunes in summer which attract and support an incredible diversity of insect and bird life. Glendun farm is a hill farm which incorporates a variety of habitats from the wooded Glendun River up to the plateau. This reserve hosts an array of species associated with these habitats.

Landscape designations

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)

4.40 There are 4 AONBs within the Borough, as follows;

- Sperrins
- Binevenagh
- Causeway Coast
- Antrim Coast and Glens

4.41 The Borough contains four Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's). This includes all of the Causeway Coast and Binevenagh AONBs and significant portions of The Antrim Coast & Glens and Sperrins AONB's. These are areas designated for their special scenic value and a character of landscape which is distinctive to that area with rich cultural and architectural heritage. The AONB designation aims to protect and enhance the landscape quality of the area as well as to promote enjoyment of the landscape by the general public. The AONBs contain many of the sites designated for their importance to nature such as National Nature Reserves.

Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)

4.42 There are 148 LLPA's within the Borough (see Appendix 3).

4.43 In accordance with PPS 6 – Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage, LLPAs are designated to help protect the environmental assets within or adjoining settlements that are of the greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance, and are worthy of protection from over-development. LLPAs are shown on the relevant settlement maps in DNAP 2016, and where they extend beyond the settlement, on the relevant countryside maps. LLPAs may include:

- archaeological sites and monuments and their surroundings;
- listed and other locally important buildings and their settings;
- river banks and shore lines and associated public access;
- attractive vistas, localised hills and other areas of local amenity; and
- areas of local nature conservation importance, including areas of woodland and important tree groups.

4.44 LLPAs ensure that new development does not dominate areas of distinctive landscape and townscape character. They may be buffer zones between different land uses. LLPA designations protect features considered of value to the local landscape setting. Policy ENV

1 of DNAP 2016 regarding Local Landscape Policy Areas advises Planning permission will not be granted for proposals that would affect adversely those features that contribute to the environmental integrity and character of a designated LLPA. Where development is permitted, it will be required to comply with the requirements set out for individual LLPAs in the detailed District Proposals.

4.45 Where riverbanks are included within the LLPAs, access may be required to the river corridor as part of the development proposals. Access should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the integrity of this wildlife corridor. The use of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be considered for those LLPAs where trees contribute significantly to visual amenity, or where trees are considered under threat from development.

Trees

4.46 Trees make an important contribution to the environment, creating a varied, interesting and attractive landscape. They can help define the character of an area and create a sense of place. Trees screen and integrate development and add value to proposed housing schemes and existing residential areas. Trees provide wildlife habitat and contribute to the health and wellbeing of people. Trees remove significant amounts of pollution from the air within urban areas through the leaves which absorb gaseous pollution and trapping particulate pollution. Trees provide shade in summer and wind breaks in winter.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

4.47 There are 82 TPOs within the Borough. The Council has a specific duty in relation to trees under Section 122 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Council can make Tree Preservation Orders for the purpose of:

- Protecting trees considered to be of special value in terms of amenity, history or rarity, which may or may not be under threat.
- Ensuring the continuance of a woodland area which may be felled with consent, by securing the replanting of trees, where this is considered necessary.

4.48 To be considered for a TPO trees must be of high amenity value and in reasonable condition. TPOs are imposed in order to protect selected trees or woodland if their removal is likely to have a significant impact on the local environment.

DNAP 2016 – Policy ENV3 Trees

4.49 Trees and hedges in the landscape perform a number of functions. They are of aesthetic and amenity value, and act as landmark features in urban and rural areas. Trees also have

nature conservation, historic and recreational value. Other features, such as ponds and streams, also contribute to creating an attractive environment with wildlife interest. Trees in the Northern Ireland landscape are limited, therefore, where they do exist their contribution is valued. The Council is committed to conserve and retain existing trees and other features where these are of landscape or amenity value, and will use its powers to protect trees where necessary. Where features exist on or adjacent to a site, they should be highlighted in site appraisals and the measures to ensure their retention and long-term maintenance outlined. This will include their protection during construction. As a minimum, any activity, works or storage around trees should be kept away from the limit of the crown spread or a distance of half the height of the tree, whichever is the greater. Secure fencing shall be erected around this area prior to any activity, works or storage and maintained throughout until site completion. Further guidance on the protection of trees is set out the publication 'Trees and Development – A Guide to Best Practice, available from the Planning Office or the planning portal website.

4.50 Policy ENV3 of DNAP 2016 relates to trees and advises that development that would result in the loss of trees, hedges or other features that contribute to the character of the landscape, or are of nature conservation value, will not be permitted unless provision is made for appropriate replacement planting and the creation of new features.

Rivers

4.51 Rivers are a key feature in the Borough. They are important corridors for wildlife, tourism and recreation. There is scope to provide recreational features along rivers whilst protecting their ecological value. The River Roe and its tributaries is designated as an SAC and the Roe Valley Country Park provides a recreational facility for local people and visitors. The Rivers Bann, Bush and other rivers in the Borough also provide opportunities for recreation, fishing and water based tourism.

4.52 Rivers are valuable habitats for wildlife. The provision of a buffer strip establishes a green corridor, adjacent to the water, and provides an area of refuge and habitat for wildlife. Policy ENV 4 within DNAP 2016 advises of maintaining a buffer strip along river corridors in the consideration of development proposals. This policy applies to the following rivers: Agivey; Bann; Bush; Dun; Glenariff; Glenshesk; Margy; Roe; and Tow.

4.53 Some areas of land adjacent to watercourses will perform the function of providing for the storage and conveyance of flood-water during times of flood. It is essential that these floodplains and marshes are not lost or compromised as they may provide natural habitat and do not suit man made development such as housing. Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS 15)

Planning and Flood Risk, has a presumption against development within floodplains in Policy FLD 1.

Landscape Character

4.54 All of the NI landscape was classified and published in a document, The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000. This uses accepted systematic methods of landscape character assessment. The NI landscape was subdivided into 130 different landscape character areas, each with a distinctive character. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council comprises 24 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), some of these are shared with neighbouring districts. The Northern Ireland Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA) also identifies Areas of Scenic Quality. They represent a second tier (below AONBs) in the hierarchy of landscape classifications. The lower Bann Valley is the only Area of scenic quality within the Borough which has been incorporated into Binevenagh AONB.

4.55 Landscape Character Areas (identified under the 2000 document) are currently used in the consideration of planning applications for wind turbines and wind farms through the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes. Significant numbers of wind turbines have been approved within the Borough and these turbines provide the benefits of clean energy, however, this must be balanced with the need to protect the Borough's natural and scenic assets on which the tourism industry relies. Regional policy contained within Planning Policy Statement 18; Renewable Energy (PPS18) does not protect scenic areas such as AONBs in the Borough from wind energy development which could have the potential to damage the visual qualities for which they were designated. Wind turbines may also have the capacity to impact on wildlife with bats, whooper swans and upland birds of prey being susceptible to turbine collision.

4.56 NIEA published a Northern Ireland's Landscape Charter in January 2014. At that time the Minister for the Environment, Mark Durkan, stated that he attached "*considerable priority to increasing the value and enjoyment we derive from our surroundings*". He also gave a commitment to produce the Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) to underpin the new suite of Local Development Plans to be prepared by the 11 Local Planning Authorities.

4.57 NIEA published the consultation document: Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) on 28th April 2015. The (6 week) consultation period ended on 9th June 2015. A report on this was presented to the Planning Committee on 27th May

2015. The consultation draft may be downloaded at: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca-consultation.zip.

4.58 Unlike the previous detailed Character Assessment, the NIRLCA is a regional and overarching document which seeks to set out the special character of each particular landscape, drawing together information on people and place; the combinations of nature; and culture and perception which make each location in Northern Ireland unique.

4.59 As such the consultation document now presents 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas (RLCA's) rather than the 130 previously drawn up. However, the final version of the document has not yet been published.

4.60 It may be necessary for the Council to carry out Pressure Analysis identifying areas of landscape that are particularly vulnerable to development and highlight natural assets which should be protected from the visual impact of wind energy development. Plans could be produced to show areas where there is a presumption against wind energy development and other areas where wind energy development may be considered. These plans would be informed by the locations of existing turbine developments and by environmental designations such as Areas of High Scenic Value, Special Protection Area's (SPA's) and wild bird migration flyways.

5.0 Access to the Open Countryside

Public Rights of Way

5.1 Public Rights of Way (PROWs) are routes that the public are legally allowed to access, regardless of whether the land is in public or private ownership. PROWs are created through the 'Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983' and responsibility for implementing this Order lies with Councils. Councils are also responsible for the management and maintenance of PROWs.

The Ulster Way

5.2 The Ulster way, a 625mile walk, runs through much of the Borough, providing visitors and locals with the opportunity to enjoy some of the finest landscapes in Northern Ireland whilst gaining the health benefits of walking. The Ulster Way is divided into quality sections. These provide quieter routes which often run through AONBs and link routes that can be completed by public transport, as these typically include busy roads. Most of the Ulster Way that runs through the Borough is on quality sections, including: The Moyle Way; Causeway Coast Way; and the North Sperrins Way. More information and route maps can be found at www.walkni.com/ulsterway.

The National Cycle Network

5.3 The National Cycle Network is a millennium project, the aim of which is to provide a safe, attractive, high quality network of traffic-free paths and traffic calmed roads running through and connecting to villages, towns and cities across the UK. Some sections will also provide a new amenity for walkers and people with disabilities. The charity Sustrans is coordinating the project, which involved a partnership with Councils, land-owning bodies, Government departments and specialist and local interest groups.

5.4 The following National Cycle Routes are located in the Council area.

- Route 96: Toome to Coleraine; and
- Route 93: Bangor to Derry.

5.5 Route 96 takes in the Bann Valley and Ballymoney. Route 93 travels along the Antrim Coast Road through the Glens to Ballycastle, Portrush, Portstewart, Coleraine to the Bishops Road, down into Limavady and along the Roe Valley. There are also other cycle routes within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough which form smaller linear and circular routes. More

information and detailed route maps can be found at the Sustrans National Cycle Network website.

Waterways Ireland

5.6 Waterways Ireland is one of the six all-Ireland North/South implementation bodies established under the Belfast Agreement in 1999. It is responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of inland navigable waterways primarily for recreational purposes. The Lower Bann Navigation is one of seven rivers in Ireland included as an inland waterway.

5.7 The Bann River's great size provides a variety of recreational opportunities for boating. Parts of the river are designated for quieter pursuits such as angling and canoeing and other sections for power sports such as wakeboarding and waterskiing. More information can be found at the waterways Ireland website at www.waterwaysireland.org.

Parks and urban wildlife corridors

5.8 Increasingly urban areas are being noted for their significance to wildlife and the habitats that urban open spaces contain. The Borough has parks and spaces which afford easy access to relaxing surroundings and an opportunity to get closer to nature. As an example it is possible to see species such as Otters and Seals from the Christie Park beside the River Bann. The Riverside Park in Ballymoney is a green lung right through the town that provides cycle ways and park facilities alongside habitat for species such as Dipper, Grey Wagtail and Wild Trout. There are many more parks and walkways in some of the smaller settlements in the area. Parklands also have a key role in keeping populations healthy through providing spaces to exercise and routes away from busy roads where the air is less polluted.

5.9 DNAP 2016 identifies areas of open space and parklands on its urban maps and Planning Policy Statement 8: Open Space and Outdoor Recreation (PPS8) contains policies for the protection of existing open space and the incorporation of open spaces in new developments.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 This paper has described the range of environmental assets, both built and natural, which are to be found within the Borough along with the existing policy context which affects them. It has also set out the statutory obligations which Council must meet when preparing its Local Development Plan, which must balance development with the protection of the environmental assets already identified at international, national and regional level.

Appendix 1: List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesne

Registered Site

Bellarena	Benvarden House
Drenagh	Leslie Hill
Knockan and Ash Park	Lissanoure
Walworth	Moore Lodge
Anderson Park	O'Harabrooke
Beardiville	Ballydivity
Bovagh House	Ballyhibistock House
Downhill	Ballylough House
Guy Wilson Daffodil Garden	Dunderave
Knocktarna House	Maherintemple
Lizard Manor	Manor House, Rathlin

Supplementary Site

Ardnargle
Dog Leap
Pellipar
Roe Valley Park
(Thomas Phillip's Garden)
Cromore
Gardenvale
Moore Fort
Dunluce Castle
Clare Park

Appendix 2: List of Sites of Local Conservation Importance (SLNCIs)

Acra Valley	Ballynagor	Carnfin/Carhery Woodland
Aghabrack	Ballyrathan	Carranroe Burn
Aghenagerragh River Bog	Ballyveely Bog	Castle River
Agivey Bridge	Ballywindelland Lower	Castlequater Lakes
Ally Lough	Barony Glen	Castlerock Golf Course
Altahullion Burn	Bellisle	Cave House
Altataunaghanny Woodland	Benady Glen	Church Quarter & Mullindress
Altattan Glen	Benbradagh Bog	Clady Burn
Altgal Burn	Benbradagh West	Cloonty Bog
Altifren Glen	Black Lough	Cloonty Bog
Altmore Burn	Boleran Bridge	Colebreene Wood
Altnahinch	Bovagh Woods	Colebreene Wood
Ardclinis	Boyd's Bog	Cool Wood
Avish	Brockaboy	Coolmaghra
Ballintoy Carrick-Na-Ford	Brockagh Wood	Coolranny
Ballyberidagh Glen	Broughmore	Crab Lough
Ballycarry	Brown Hill	Craigagh Wood
Ballycastle Beach	Burnquarter	Craigall Rocks
Ballyconagan	Bushfoot Dunes	Craigs Upper
Ballycraig Rock	Cah	Cromore Marsh
Ballyhacket	Carnagal	Culbane Bog
Ballykelly Glen	Carnanbane	Culnaman
Ballykelly Moraine	Carnaneigh Point	Curraghlane
Ballymullholland	Carcullagh	Cushendun Bay
	Carneety	Cushendun Caves
		Cushenilt

Cushleake Mountain	Galboly	Larrys Brae Dunloy
Decoy Plantation	Garry Lower	Leckpatrick Point
Dernflaw Sand Pit	Generals Bridge	Leganaman Pot
Derrylane	Gettistown	Lifeboat House
Derrynaflaw	Glassaneeran Bog	Lislaban
Doey Plantation	Glenaan	Long Mountain Bogs
Dogleap	Glenariff Cliff	Lough Galboly
Donalds Hill	Glendun (Incorporating Knocknacarry)	Loughan Bay
Dourhery Water	Glennullin Bog	Loughan Wood
Drenagh Lake	Glenshesk Valley (Incorporating Doonfin)	Loughnafanaghy
Dromore Wood	Glenshesk Wood	Lower Drummans
Drumack Bog	Gortgonny	Lower Kiltinny
Drumaculin Blanket Bog	Gortmacrane	Mallaboy
Drumadreen	Grange	Mccollums Hill South
Drumagully	Greenaghan	Moneyrannel
Drumbolcan	Greysteel Beg	Moyan Road
Drumcroon Road	Innisfree Farm	Moyarget Lower
Drumfresky	Islandboy South	Mulkeeragh Wood
Drumsurn	Kathleens Lough	Mullaghmore Complex (Part)
Dunalis Reservoir	Killen Vale	Murlough, Fair Head Composite
Dunfinn	Killycreen	Oakhill
Dunluce- Ballintrae	Kilrea Dam	Old Pier
Dunnavenny Bridge Bog	Kinkeel Lough	Ovil
Edn Lodge	Kirkhill Bog	Port Obe
Englishtown	Knockaduff	Port Vinegar
Escort Port	Knockantern	Portrush / Portstewart
Farranlester	Knockavrinann Bridge	Portrush Golf Links
Faughanvale	Knocknogher	Portstewart Golf Links
Frosses North	Knocksoghey	Portstewart Old Links
Fruitfield Delta 1, 2& 3		

Quaw Burn

Red Arch

Retreat

River Main

Rock Port

Sandleford Bridge

Slaugh Island

Somerset Ponds

South Lifeboat House

Spincha Burn

Tamney

Tavanaghorna Wood

Tavnaghboy

The Isles

The Rock

The Rough Hills

Toberbilly

Tornamoney

Umbra

Ushet

Whitehill

Wood Burn

Appendix 3: List of Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)

Dervock River East, Dervock	Finvoy
Ballymoney River Lower, Ballymoney	Carnany, Ballymoney
Balnamore Mill/O'Hara brook, Balnamore	Glebe, Rasharkin Cloghmills Water, Clogh Mills
Dervock River East, Dervock	Greenville, Ballymoney
Killagan Water, Corkey	Ballymoney River Lower, Ballymoney
Glebe, Rasharkin	Greenville, Ballymoney
Killagan Water, Corkey	Carnany, Ballymoney
Ballymoney River Upper, Ballymoney	Balnamore Mill/ O'Hara brook, Balnamore
Bush Valley, Stranocum	Dunloy South, Dunloy
Bush River, Magherahoney	Glebe, Rasharkin
Cloghmills Water, Clogh Mills	St Patrick's Church, Loughguile
Ballymoney River Lower, Ballymoney	Rectory, Ballymoney
Drumbolcan, Rasharkin	Ballymoney River Upper, Ballymoney
Leslie Hill, Ballymoney	Dunloy South, Dunloy
Burn Gushet, Ballybogy	St Patrick's Church, Loughguile
Bush River, Magherahoney	Leslie Hill, Ballymoney
Leslie Hill, Ballymoney	Dervock River East, Dervock
St Patrick's Church, Loughguile	Greenville, Ballymoney
Dervock River, Dervock	Bush Valley, Stranocum
Drumbolcan, Rasharkin	Dervock River, Dervock
Ballymoney River Upper, Ballymoney	Derrykeighan Dervock River, Dervock

Bush River, Magherahoney	River Bann and Banks, Coleraine
Killagan Water, Corkey	St Patrick's, Kilrea
Dunloy South, Dunloy	Portmore Road, Portstewart
Rectory, Ballymoney	Ballyarton, Coleraine
Rectory, Ballymoney	Shell Hill and Hermon Lodge, Coleraine
Derrykeighan	Dominican Walk, Portstewart
Finvoy	Ballycairn Motte, Coleraine
Cloghmills Water, Clogh Mills	Knockantern, Coleraine
Bush Valley, Stranocum	Lizard, Clarehill
Derrykeighan	Agivey River, Garvagh
Drumbolcan, Rasharkin	Lissatinny, Garvagh
Slieve Banna, Coleraine	Bushfoot, Portballintrae
Macosquin River, Macosquin	Coleraine College, Coleraine
Causeway Hospital, Coleraine	Ballysally Burn, Coleraine
West Bay, Portrush	Ramore Head, Portrush
Laurel Hill, Coleraine	Mountsandel Woods, Coleraine
Castlerock Dunes, Castlerock	Dunluce, Portballintrae
Castlerock Strand, Castlerock	St Malachys Church, Coleraine
Twenty Acres, Garvagh	Mullaghacall, Portstewart
Glenullin	Golf Links / Eastern Coastal, Portstewart
Cashlandoo, Portstewart	St. Mary's, Macosquin
Rockview, Portstewart	Dundooan House, Coleraine
Mill Brook, Kilrea	Breezemount, Coleraine
Royal Portrush, Portrush	Bay, Portballintrae
School House, Castlerock	Portstewart Strand, Portstewart
Somerset Woods, Coleraine	Washing Lough, Kilrea

Articlave River, Articlave	Altahullion/ Bovevagh, Burnfoot
Portneal, Kilrea	Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly
Derry Central Railway, Kilrea	Ballykelly Glen, Ballykelly
Flowerfield, Portstewart	Glebe/ Roe, Burnfoot
County Hall, Coleraine	Greystone, Limavady
The Cutts, Coleraine	Castle River, Limavady
Castleroe Forest and Bann Banks,	Walworth Bawn, Ballykelly
Ballydevitt, Clarehill	Old Railway, Limavady
Cromore, Portstewart	Christchurch, Limavady
University, Coleraine	Altcattan, Feeny
Kathleens Lough, Kilrea	Myroe/Hunters Bend, Limavady
Portstewart Point, Portstewart	Ogilby Estate, Dungiven
Coleraine Inst., Coleraine	Greysteel Glen, Greysteel
Horse Fair Green, Kilrea	Drenagh, Limavady
Overfields, Coleraine	Foyleview, Greysteel
Strandview, Portstewart	Foreglen River, Foreglen
Knocktarna, Coleraine	Roe Park, Limavady
The Brook, Coleraine	Roe Valley Country Park/Gorteen,
Metropole, Portrush	Gelvin / Roe, Burnfoot
Garvagh Forest, Garvagh	Dungiven Castle, Dungiven
Strand Head, Portstewart	Round Hill, Limavady
Loreto College, Coleraine	St. Canice's, Dungiven
Ballyrashane LLPA, Ballyrashane	West of Dernaflaw Road, Dernaflaw
Barview, Coleraine	Cushendun Coastal, Cushendun
Portstewart Golf Course, Portstewart	Bush River, Armoy
McMasters, Coleraine	Ballintoy Harbour, Ballintoy

Church Bay

Glenariff River, Waterfoot

Liscolman Mill, Liscolman

Moss-Side Crossroads, Moss-Side

Coast and Links, Ballycastle

Ballycastle High School and St Patrick's
And St Bridget's Church, Ballycastle

Drumavoley House, Ballycastle

Bushfoot, Bushmills

Montalto, Bushmills

Ballycastle Seafront, Ballycastle

Boheeshane Bay, Ballintoy

Glenshesk, Ballycastle

O'Connor Memorial, Ballycastle

Faughil, Cushendall

Court Mcmartin, Cushendall

Ramoan, Ballycastle

Red Arch, Waterfoot

Carey River, Ballyvoy

River Bush, Bushmills

St Patrick's, Ballyvoy

Marconi Memorial, Ballycastle

Red Bay, Cushendall

Tow Valley Lower, Ballycastle

Golf Links, Cushendall

Glendun River, Cushendun

Clare Park, Ballycastle

Moss-Side Water, Moss-Side

Millburn Burn, Cushendun

Ballintoy

Dundarave, Bushmills

Ballycastle Presbyterian Church,

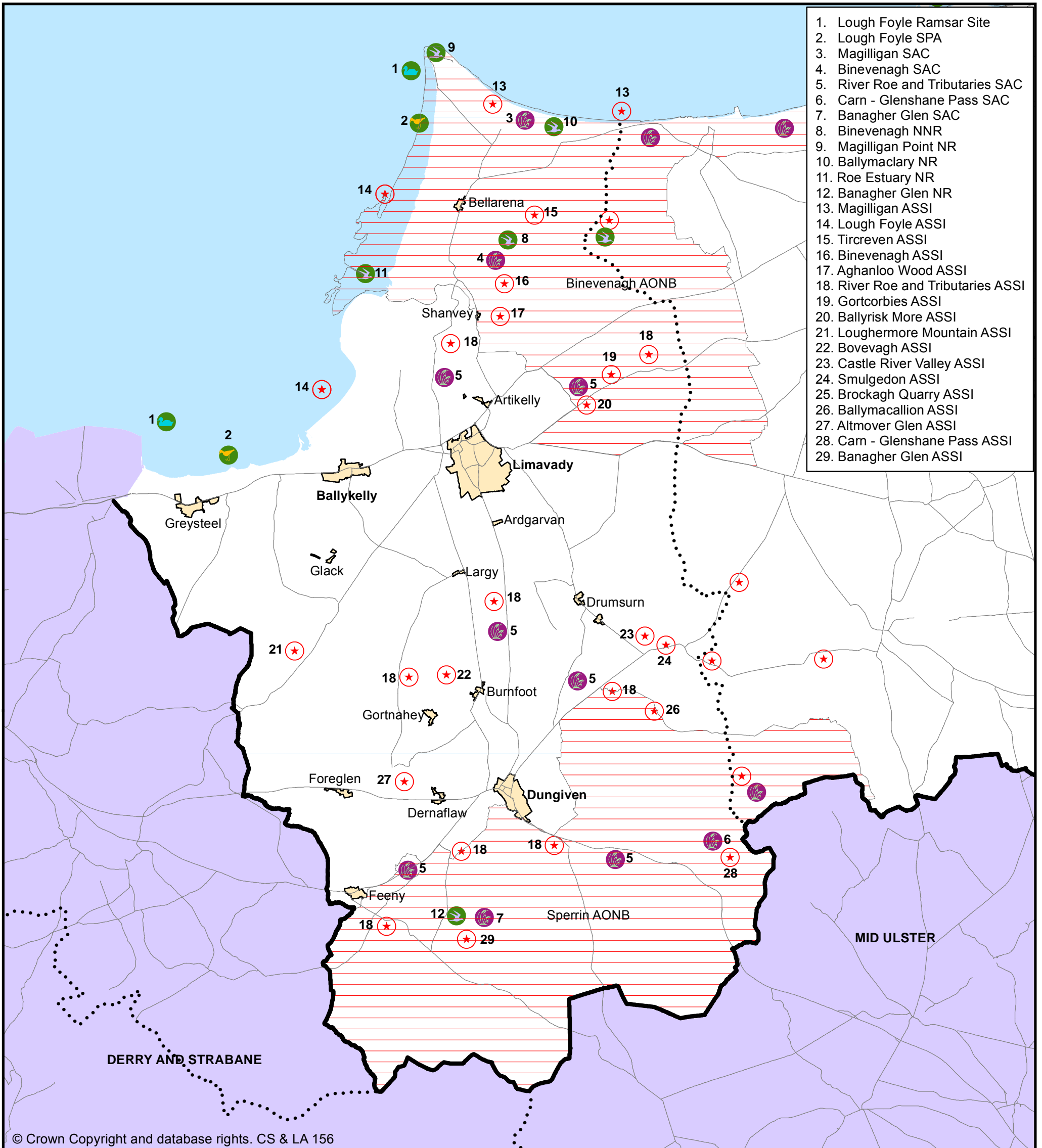
Fairhead View, Ballycastle

Tow Vally Upper, Ballycastle

Carvey River, Ballycastle

Glenariff Bay, Waterfoot

Distillery, Bushmills



1. Lough Foyle Ramsar Site
2. Lough Foyle SPA
3. Magilligan SAC
4. Binevenagh SAC
5. River Roe and Tributaries SAC
6. Carn - Glenshane Pass SAC
7. Banagher Glen SAC
8. Binevenagh NNR
9. Magilligan Point NR
10. Ballymaclary NR
11. Roe Estuary NR
12. Banagher Glen NR
13. Magilligan ASSI
14. Lough Foyle ASSI
15. Tircreven ASSI
16. Binevenagh ASSI
17. Aghanloo Wood ASSI
18. River Roe and Tributaries ASSI
19. Gortcorbies ASSI
20. Ballyrisk More ASSI
21. Loughermore Mountain ASSI
22. Bovevagh ASSI
23. Castle River Valley ASSI
24. Smulgedon ASSI
25. Brockagh Quarry ASSI
26. Ballymacallion ASSI
27. Altmoover Glen ASSI
28. Carn - Glenshane Pass ASSI
29. Banagher Glen ASSI

© Crown Copyright and database rights. CS & LA 156

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

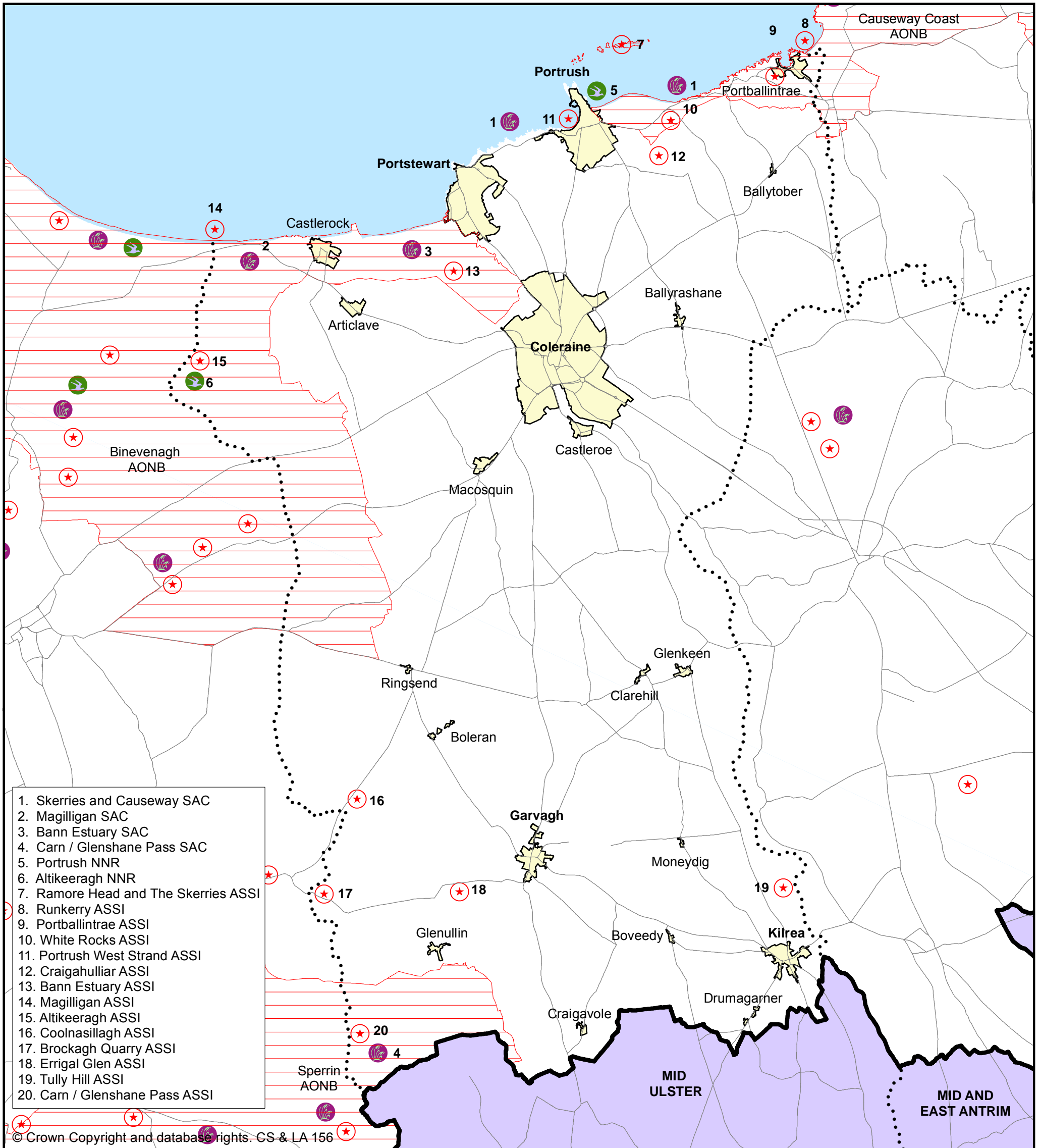
Map No. 1 - Limavady Area Environmental Designations

- Plan Area Boundary
- Legacy Council Boundary
- Settlement Development Limit
- Road Network
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- For Information Only
- Ramsar Site
 - Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - National Nature Reserve (NNR) / Nature Reserve (NR)
 - Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)

Please refer to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's website www.doeni.gov.uk/niea for details.





Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Please refer to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's website www.doeni.gov.uk/niea for details.

Map No. 2 - Coleraine Area Environmental Designations

- Plan Area Boundary
- Legacy Council Boundary
- Settlement Development Limit
- Road Network
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

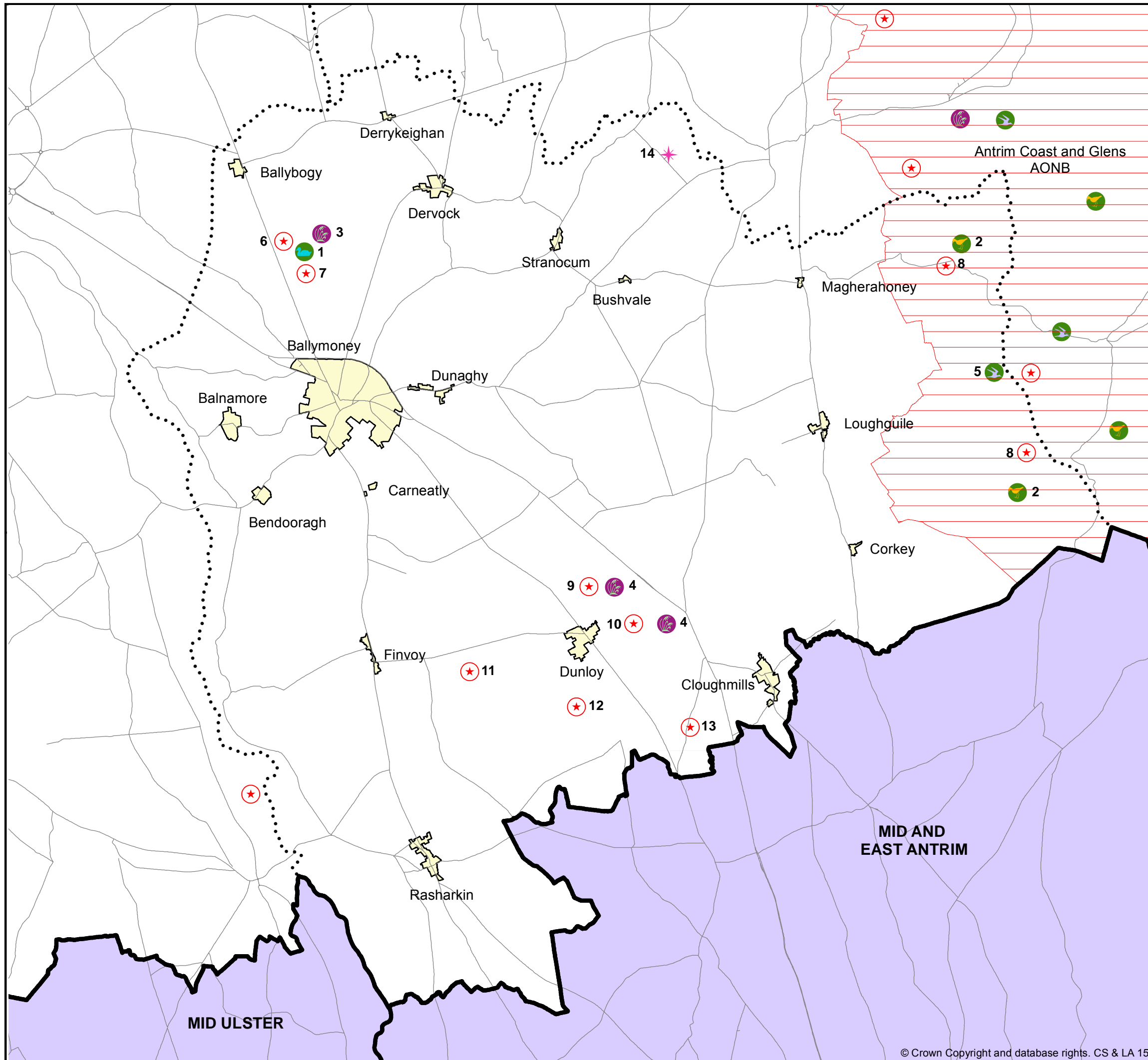
For Information Only

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)
- Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)

0 1.5 3 Kilometres



**Map No. 3
Ballymoney Area
Environmental Designations**



- Plan Area Boundary
- Legacy Council Boundary
- Settlement Development Limit
- Road Network
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

For Information Only

- Ramsar Site
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Nature Reserve (NR)
- Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)
- Area of Scientific Interest (ASI)

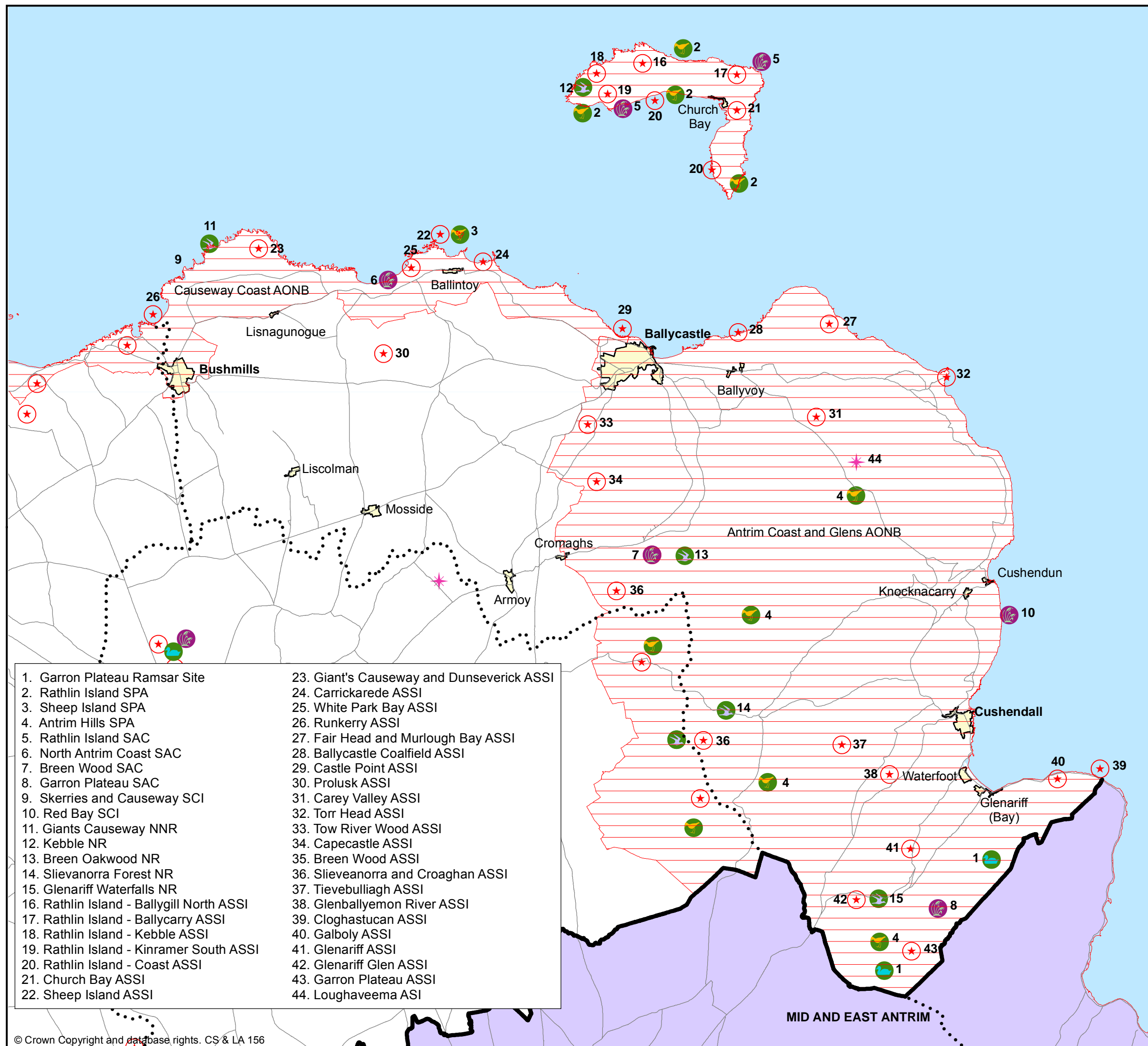
1. Garry Bog Ramsar Site
2. Antrim Hills SPA
3. Garry Bog SAC
4. Main Valley Bogs SAC
5. Slievanorra Forest NR
6. Garry Bog ASSI
7. Garry Bog Part II ASSI
8. Slievanorra and Croaghan ASSI
9. Caldanagh Bog ASSI
10. Dunloy Bog ASSI
11. Craigs ASSI
12. Ballymacaldrack ASSI
13. Glarryford ASSI
14. Clontyfinnan ASI

0 1.5 3 Kilometres



Please refer to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's website www.doeni.gov.uk/niea for details.

**Map No. 4
Moyle Area
Environmental Designations**



- Plan Area Boundary
- Legacy Council Boundary
- Settlement Development Limit
- Road Network
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- For Information Only
- Ramsar Site
 - Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Special Area of Conservation (SAC) / Site of Community Importance (SCI)
 - National Nature Reserve (NNR) / Nature Reserve (NR)
 - Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)
 - Area of Scientific Interest (ASI)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Garron Plateau Ramsar Site | 23. Giant's Causeway and Dunseverick ASSI |
| 2. Rathlin Island SPA | 24. Carrickarede ASSI |
| 3. Sheep Island SPA | 25. White Park Bay ASSI |
| 4. Antrim Hills SPA | 26. Runkerry ASSI |
| 5. Rathlin Island SAC | 27. Fair Head and Murlough Bay ASSI |
| 6. North Antrim Coast SAC | 28. Ballycastle Coalfield ASSI |
| 7. Breen Wood SAC | 29. Castle Point ASSI |
| 8. Garron Plateau SAC | 30. Prolusk ASSI |
| 9. Skerries and Causeway SCI | 31. Carey Valley ASSI |
| 10. Red Bay SCI | 32. Torr Head ASSI |
| 11. Giants Causeway NNR | 33. Tow River Wood ASSI |
| 12. Kebble NR | 34. Capecastle ASSI |
| 13. Breen Oakwood NR | 35. Breen Wood ASSI |
| 14. Slieveanorra Forest NR | 36. Slieveanorra and Croaghan ASSI |
| 15. Glenariff Waterfalls NR | 37. Tievebulliagh ASSI |
| 16. Rathlin Island - Ballygill North ASSI | 38. Glenballyemon River ASSI |
| 17. Rathlin Island - Ballycarry ASSI | 39. Cloghastucan ASSI |
| 18. Rathlin Island - Kebble ASSI | 40. Galboly ASSI |
| 19. Rathlin Island - Kinramer South ASSI | 41. Glenariff ASSI |
| 20. Rathlin Island - Coast ASSI | 42. Glenariff Glen ASSI |
| 21. Church Bay ASSI | 43. Garron Plateau ASSI |
| 22. Sheep Island ASSI | 44. Loughaveema ASI |



Please refer to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's website www.doeni.gov.uk/niea for details.

