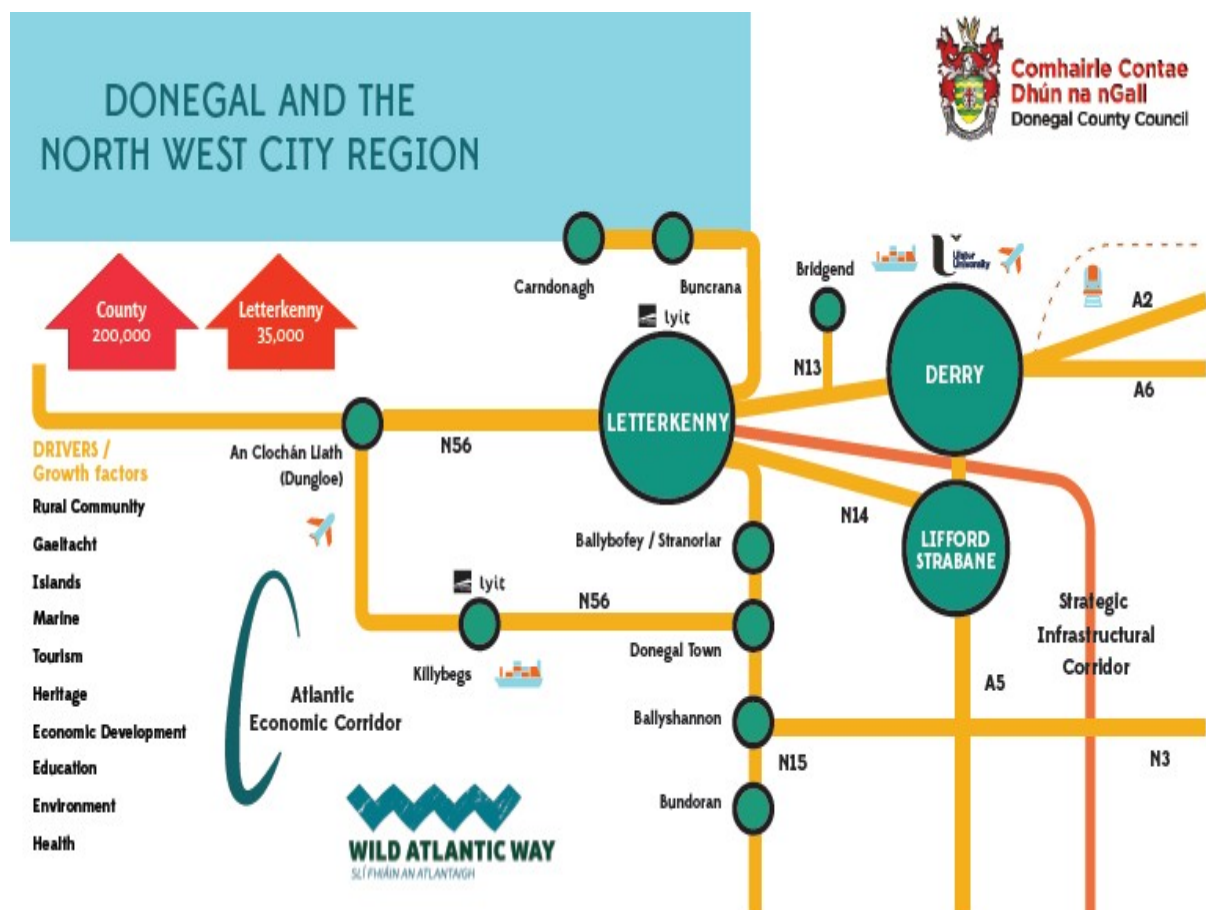


Proposed insertion of NWSGP – Section 9.2 & 9.3

North West Metropolitan Area Spatial Planning

The North West Region of the Island of Ireland, centred on Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council, is the fourth largest urban agglomeration on the island of Ireland; and is the only functional economic region of such scale on the island which experiences a national jurisdictional border.

It is well recognised across the island of Ireland that while the North West faces many challenges - not least because of its peripherality from Dublin and Belfast and associated lack of investment over many decades - this region is an untapped source of great potential - economically, socially and environmentally. It is widely accepted that the challenges can only be met, and the opportunities pursued, with a consistent and long-term approach to coordinating the development of the region.



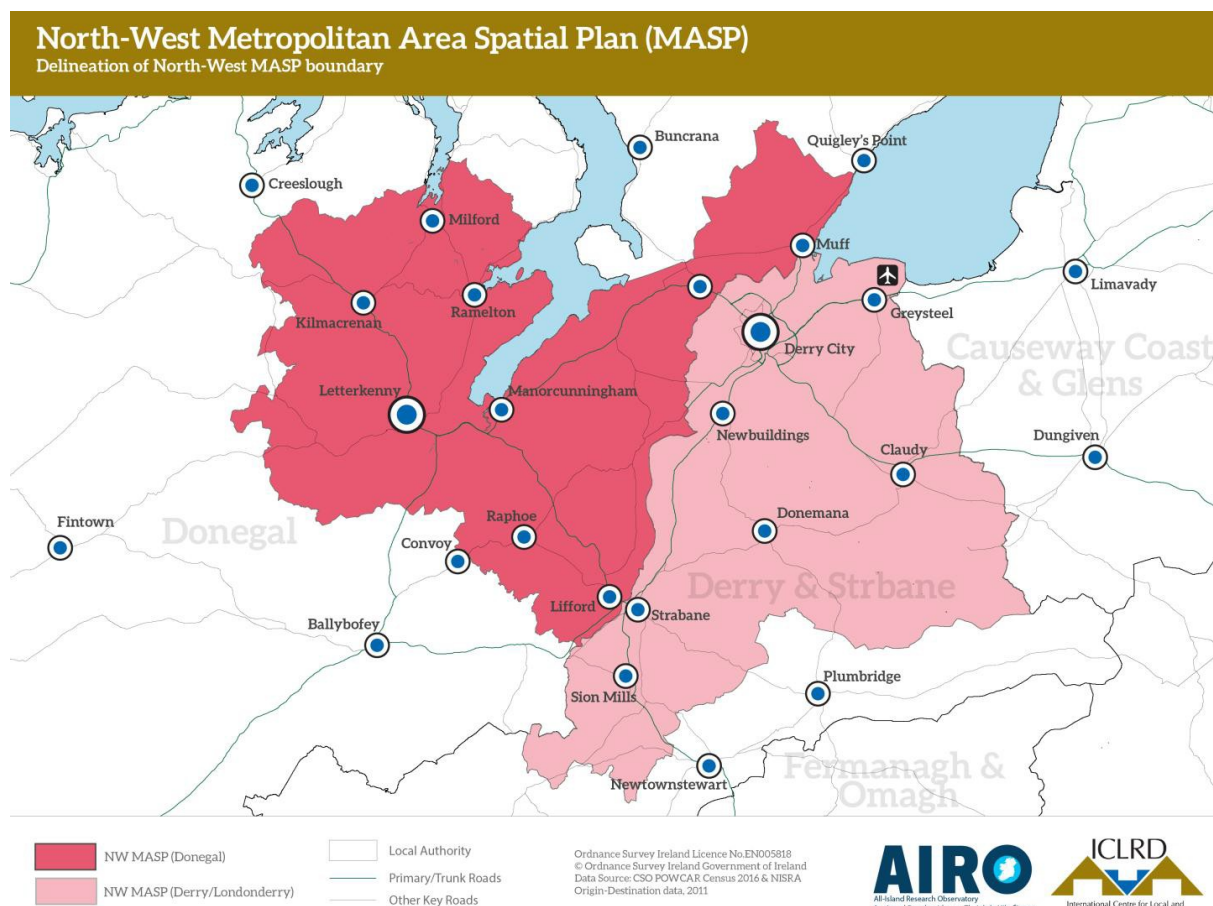
This new strategic plan for the North West City Region Metropolitan Area, including the Regional Centre of Letterkenny, is central to that coordinated approach, complementing the regional priorities of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership (NWSGP). Building on the work of the Growth Partnership and its strategic action plan (July 2016), this plan represents the sub-regional integration of spatial planning, economic and community development and infrastructure investment as part of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, which represents the operationalising of the National Planning

Framework (NPF) at the level of the North West City Region (see Figure XXX). The plan plays a key role in guiding future growth and investment across this trans-boundary, inter-jurisdictional City Region, offering local, regional and national governments the opportunity to take a high-level, and long-term strategic approach, to the sustainable growth of the North West City Region.

The North West City Region

The North West region comprises Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council areas covering an area of 2,394 square miles. This Metropolitan Area region is defined by the spatial influences of Letterkenny-Derry~Londonderry-Strabane. This functional urban area is characterised by a dense concentration of population, employment, service provision including transport, education and healthcare in this North West region

The population of the Metropolitan Area (see Map XXX) is 193,106 people while the wider North West City Region and its functional territory is home to over 350,000 people. The region is home to over 35,000 third level students. Of the current population of working age (16+), 39% have a Level 3 or above qualification. When apprenticeships are added to this, this increases to 43%.



Map 1-?????????? The North West City Region Metropolitan Area (Map based on >= 50% interaction from RoI EDs to NW Settlements & >=77.5% interaction from NI SOA to LGD DCSDC)

The City Region is further defined by its rich tourism, culture and heritage offerings, industrial history, breath-taking scenery, its robust maritime tradition, the entrepreneurial spirit and creativity of its people, and its strong sense of community. In recent years, the councils have strengthened their shared approach to the effective development of these shared assets to the benefit of the region as a whole and, indeed, the all-island economy.

Strategic Vision for the North West City Region

Drawing from these core policy documents, the strategic vision for this Strategic Plan as it relates to both the North West City Region Metropolitan Area and the Letterkenny Regional Centre is:

By 2038, the North West City Region Metropolitan Area and Letterkenny Regional Centre will be Connected, Vibrant, Resilient and Inclusive.

This Plan's vision centres on managing spatial change and improving people's quality of life. Ultimately, this is about creating a good quality place to live, work and socialise via processes of place-based leadership and place-making. To achieve this vision, there is a recognised need to work collectively and in an inter-disciplinary manner.

How will this be achieved?

Delivering this vision requires collaborative leadership and working with partners across the private, public and third sector. The achievement of this strategic vision shall be made possible through the new collaborative structures that have been co-designed by both Donegal County Council and Derry city and Strabane District Council and which place a strong emphasis on the principles of place-based leadership, namely:

- the North West Strategic Growth Partnership involving senior Central Government Officials, both North and South, and
- the North West Regional Development Group involving senior management and elected representatives from both Council areas.

In addition, those positive working relationships that have been nurtured through the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and the Higher and Further Education bodies to facilitate delivery of the key objectives of their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be capitalised on.

Key Strategic Outcomes:

This strategic plan is centred on four key strategic outcomes – closely aligned with the national strategic outcomes and priorities of the *National Planning Framework (NPF)* and the eight strategic aims of the *Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035*. Those outcomes are:

- Building Inclusive and Compact Places;
- Investing in Connected and Accessible Places;
- Planning for a Vibrant Economy and Nurturing Communities; and
- Creating Resilient Places and Low-Carbon Infrastructure.

Under this strategic plan, new developments will, to the extent possible, contribute towards the creation of high quality places across the North West City Region, taking account of the Placemaking Principle. Under the principles of place-making, development proposals should be based upon a design led and participative process and should seek to deliver on the six qualities of place – namely, distinctive, safe and pleasant, welcoming, adaptable, resource efficient and easy to move around and beyond. The following objectives shall form a framework for this.

Objective NWMA1: Build Inclusive and Compact Places by:

- a) Planning for Inclusive Communities through regional cooperation and collaboration, to support the wider economic and social development agendas of the region and integrating health and wellbeing outcomes across all activities, ensuring that spaces are made available for community use;
- b) Accommodating Growth and Delivering Housing through compact growth where housing opportunities are close to schools, community facilities, health facilities, shopping, and employment; Prioritising the (re-)use of existing under utilised land and buildings, and other infill opportunities.
- c) Accessing Quality Services by maximising the use of transport and digital infrastructure to ensure people can access quality education and health services, building on the quality health and education infrastructure that exists on a cross-border basis and building more shared services and nurturing greater collaboration between actors and agencies in the co-design of new services.
- d) Valuing Cultural Heritage by creating appealing places through attractive and imaginative building design, street layout, civic space and public realm design; Developing new offerings in support of existing ventures in the tourism sector, such as greenways, walking trails and other inter-urban connections, based on the wealth of natural and cultural heritage assets and providing links to the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coast.

Objective NWMA 2: Investing in Accessible and Connected Places through:

- a) Investing in Transport Infrastructure encouraging Donegal County Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council and transport providers to work together to deliver programmed and future investment for strategic internal and external transport improvements. This to include consideration of cross-border connectivity – with a particular emphasis on provision of high quality Ten-T routes, maximising the level of accessibility to the urban core for all sectors of the community and all abilities, with a focus upon supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling, public transport, whilst embracing disruptive technologies to augment the shift to electric vehicles and other modes of transport.
- b) Encouraging active travel with a clear focus on place building and connectivity and promoting active mobility through soft measures including information and awareness raising campaigns to complement hard investments in routes and support activities, including activity-based recreation resources;
- c) Strengthening Digital Infrastructure by supporting the expansion and investment in third-level education and leveraging cross-border knowledge networks to strengthen access to skills and talents that support a digital economy, nurtures entrepreneurship, anticipates and responds to the demand for innovative services that are socially inclusive, attractive and supportive of the local workforce, and contributes to quality public realm.

Objective NWMA 3: Planning for a vibrant economy through:

- a) Fostering Enterprise and Innovation by identifying the critical linkages between place-making and business investment , utilising the North West Strategic Growth Partnership in realising the economic potential of the Region in priority areas ensuring they are supported by our third level institutes and our R&D institutions of excellence and that further spaces are developed to

nurture and catalyse the region's most innovative entrepreneurs with the area's strong network of experienced business leaders and cutting edge research and development institutions;

- b) Nurturing the rural economy through protecting and promoting the sense of place and culture and the quality, character and distinctiveness of the rural landscape, whilst facilitating the appropriately-scaled development of rural enterprise initiatives, including the appropriate development of tourism, delivering business start-up programmes and development support to rural communities experiencing economic disadvantage, whilst also meeting appropriate rural housing need having due regard to all material considerations.

Objective NWMA 4: Create Resilient Places and Low-Carbon Infrastructure by:

- a) Managing Natural Resources through adhering to the principles of the circular economy, monitor air quality through use of smart technologies such as sensors, with the overall aim of improving air quality and to protect local ecosystems through the management of our natural capital.
- b) Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy through a presumption against development in areas vulnerable to flooding and rising sea levels, continuing to assess the probability of risk from all sources of flooding, and working with relevant stakeholders in both the assessment and delivery of any mitigation responses required; Furthermore, pursue the generation of renewable energies and their local applications through, for example, green infrastructure planning, innovative design solutions, the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes.
- c) Diversifying Energy Resources by promoting and facilitating the development of the wider North West region as a Centre of Excellence for renewable energy and innovation and establishing a sustainable energy strategy for the City Region that pursues continued investment in the resilience and security of electricity networks and infrastructure, and the development of a diverse energy portfolio, harnesses the expertise of technological research and training among the region's institutions of higher education, grows the development of a skilled workforce in all aspects of energy generation including linking employment opportunities in the emerging renewable energy field to workers displaced from other economic sectors.