

# **Waterford City and County Draft Development Plan 2022 - 2028**

## **Appendix 8**

### **Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment, Scenic Routes and Protected Views**

## **Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment , Protected Views and Scenic Routes**

### **1. Landscape Protection -Legal Context**

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 specifies that development plans shall contain particular objectives relating to landscape, including objectives in accordance with *'relevant policies or objectives ... relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention'*.

The National Landscape Strategy 2015 – 2025 aims to implement the European Landscape Convention in Ireland by providing for specific measures to promote the protection, management and planning of the landscape. Actions in the Strategy include development of a National Landscape Character Assessment, statutory guidelines on local Landscape Character Assessments and preparation of Landscape Character Assessments at local authority level.

Landscape Character Assessment is the process of understanding and documenting the range of factors that contribute to the unique physical identity of a particular geographical area. It acknowledges that distinct areas have different capacities to accommodate change that can impact on that particular landscape character and this is understood as landscape sensitivity. Land-uses are constantly changing in response to socio-economic demands and the aesthetic response of viewers varies and may change over time, as a society's cultural sensibilities evolve. Landscape sensitivity and impact from change needs to be assessed from a range of criteria that can include tangible and intangible emotions and perceptions e.g. ecology, archaeology water quality, climate impacts, architecture, history, noise, and odours. Assessment of landscape impact is underpinned by the recognition that landscape always has and always will change.

The EPA Guidelines (Draft 2017) on information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, states that EIARs need to consider assessment of impacts on; Landscape Appearance and Character, Landscape Context, Views & Prospects, and Historical Landscapes.

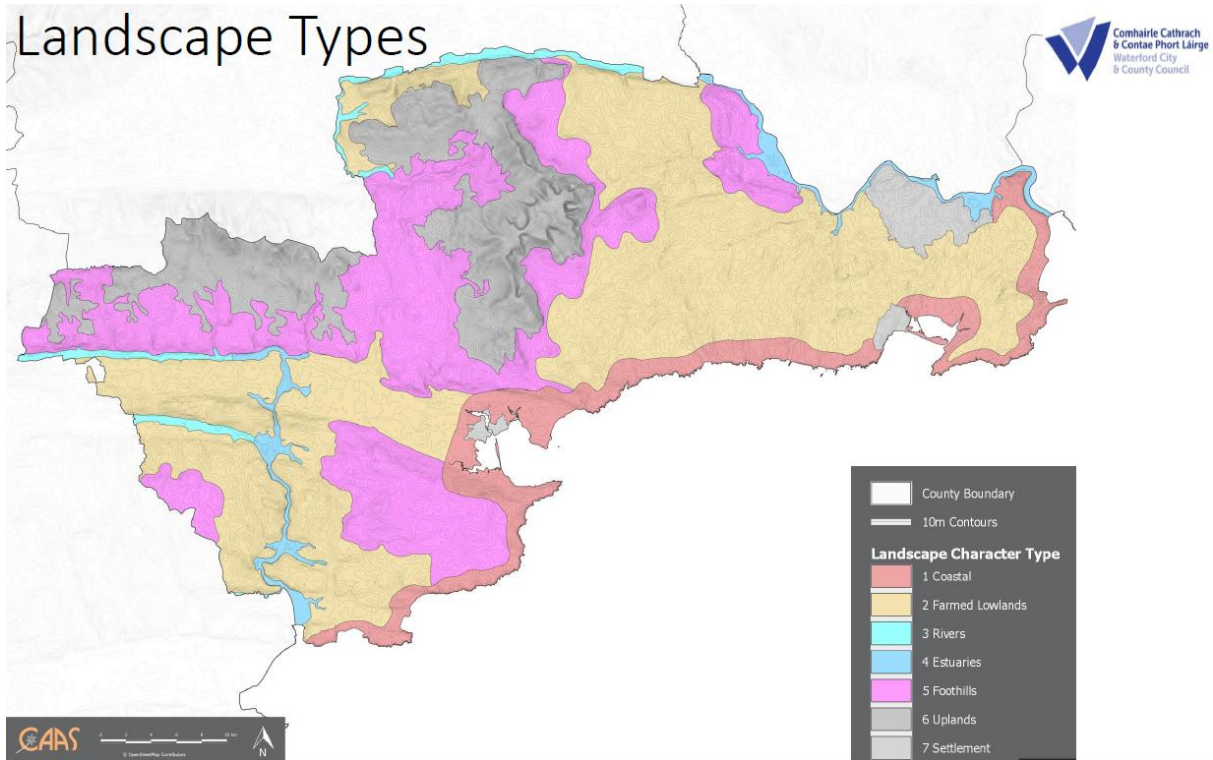
### **2. Waterford Landscape Character Assessment**

Waterford City and County Council commissioned a Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment in 2019 to inform the review of the City and County Development Plan 2022-2028.

The objective of this assessment is to assist in development management by providing criteria for decision making based on a systematic and scientific methodology and alerting applicants and designers to the need for special requirements in certain areas for landscape fit or design to facilitate the integration of development in a particular landscape character type or area.

The 2020 Waterford Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment identified seven landscape character types set out below and on the accompanying map.

# Landscape Types

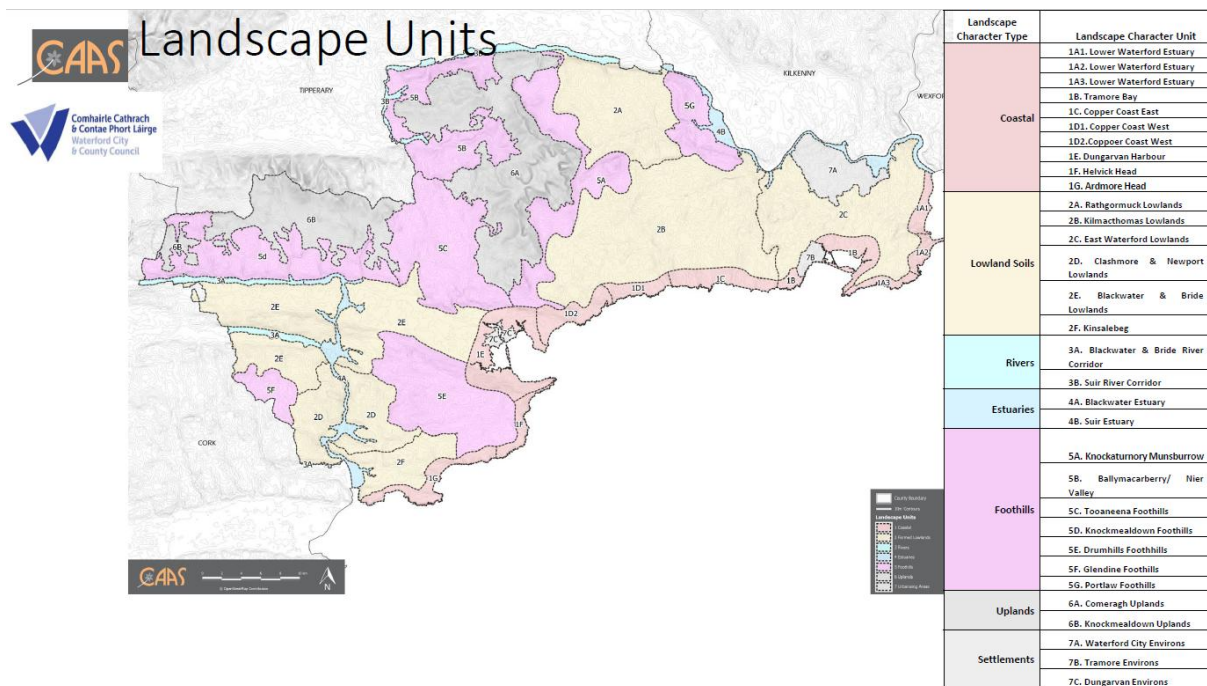


These seven landscape character types encompass the following landscape character areas;

TYPE	KEY	NAME
1. Coastal Landscapes	1A	Lower Waterford Estuary
	1B	Tramore Bay
	1C	Copper Coast East
	1D	Copper Coast West
	1E	Dungarvan
	1F	Helvic Head
	1G	Ardmore Head
2. Farmed Lowland Landscapes	2A	Rathgormack Lowlands
	2B	Kilmacthomas Lowlands
	2C	East Waterford Lowlands
	2D	Clashmore and Newport Lowlands
	2E	Blackwater and Bride Lowlands
	2F	Kinsalebeg
3. River Corridor Landscapes	3A	Blackwater and Bride River Corridor
	3B	Suir River Corridor
4. Estuaries	4A	Blackwater Estuary
	4B	Suir Estuary
5. Foothill Landscapes	5A	Knockaturnory Munsboro
	5B	Ballymacarbry/Nire Valley

	5C	Tooraneena Foothills
	5D	Knockmealdown Foothills
	5E	Drumhills
	5F	Glendine
6. Upland Landscapes	6A	Comeragh Mountains
	6B	Knockmealdown Mountains
7. Urbanising Landscapes	7A	Waterford city Environs
	7B	Tramore Environs
	7C	Dungarvan Environs

There are further elaborated on the map below.



### 3. Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity

#### 3.1 Capacity to Absorb Development

The Landscape Character Assessment has classified areas within Waterford City and County according to their capacity to absorb development without changing the distinctiveness and character of that particular landscape type. A landscape that could readily absorb development without disproportionately affecting the landscape, is considered to be an area of least sensitivity. Areas where a development could easily cause a change in the character of the landscape and have impact over a wide area, would be an area of most sensitivity.

The capacity of an area to visually absorb development is influenced by a combination of the following factors:

1) *Topography*-development in elevated areas will usually be visible over a wide area; development in enclosed areas will not.

2) *Vegetation* - areas which support (or which have the potential to support) trees, tall hedges and woody vegetation can screen new development from view. Areas which cannot easily sustain such vegetation will be unlikely to screen new development.

3) *Development* - New development is less likely to be conspicuous in the context of existing development in the landscape.

Taking the above into account all development proposals must satisfy site suitability and technical considerations, including;

- Availability of adequate infrastructure;
- Landscaping and screening;
- Degree to which it will give rise to ribbon development / suburbanisation of the countryside;
- The height, scale, bulk, massing, finishes and detailed design;
- Suitability of site layout;
- Availability of adequate sight distances at vehicular entrance;
- Ability to safely treat the wastewater arising from the proposed development, on site according to best practice;
- Natural Heritage, Archaeology and Built Heritage Assessments and
- Degree to which site development works will scar the landscape / result in a site with excessive gradient.

Areas where enclosing topography, screening vegetation and/or existing development are present, should have a high potential to absorb new development. Areas of elevated topography, with low growing or sparse vegetation, with little existing development should have a low potential to absorb new development.

### **3.2 Disproportionate Visual Impacts**

Every landscape can be affected to some degree by new developments. For the purpose of development management, it is important to appraise the extent of the land affected by the visual impacts of the proposed development. It is reasonable to assume that any evaluation of the visual impact of a proposed development should have regard to whether the area of the visual impact has been adhered to a reasonable minimum, so that a development does not impose disproportionate effects on the community and wider environs.

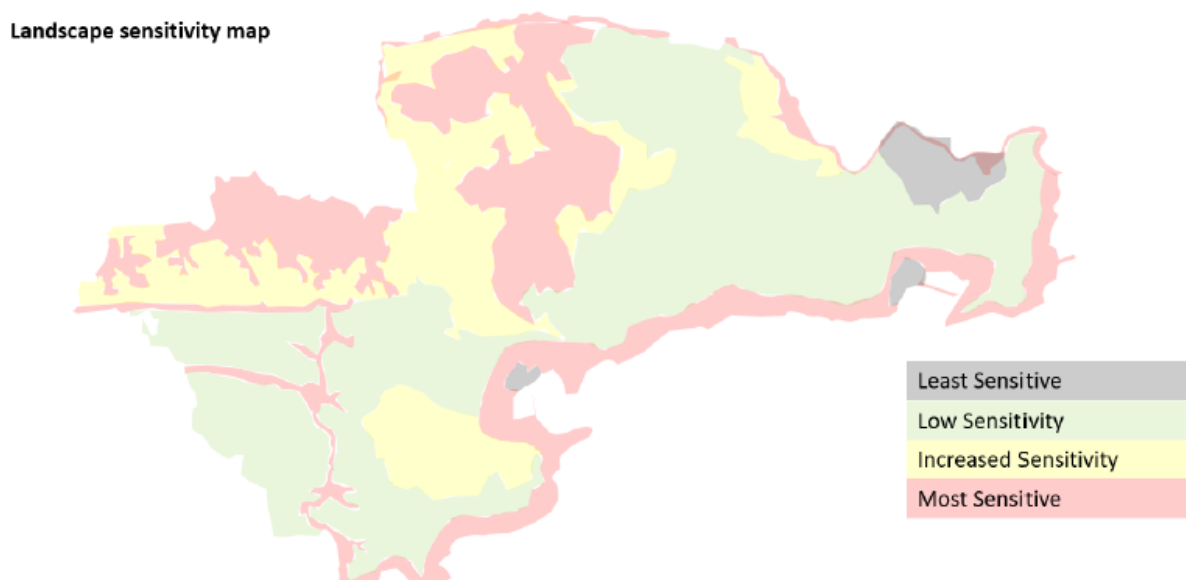
Skyline ridges, hill and mountain tops, coastlines, promontories, headlands, lake shores and banks of large rivers are all conspicuous features in the landscape. The eye is strongly drawn to such features, principally because strong contrasts of colour and form occur along these lines of contact between the land and the sky or water. New development on or in the vicinity of such natural features has a significant potential to be conspicuous over a wide

area. It is accepted that these landscape features have an extremely low potential to absorb new development without causing disproportionate visual impacts.

### 3.3 Degrees of Sensitivity

The landscape is made up of a series of compartments each of which has a distinctive character. Each unit of character is assigned an indicator of sensitivity, which indicates the extent to which the landscape will be vulnerable to change in its character. The categories will reflect the criteria of the capacity to absorb new development as well as the potential to create disproportionate visual impacts. Each unit of character can then become the focus of policy or development control.

The categories in the **Sensitivity Zoning Key** are as follows:



**Table 1. Sensitivity Classifications**

1. Most Sensitive	Very distinctive features with a very low capacity to absorb new development without significant alterations of existing character over an extended area.
2. High Sensitivity	Distinctive character with some capacity to absorb a limited range of appropriate new developments while sustaining its existing character.
3. Low Sensitivity	A common character type with a potential to absorb a wide range of new developments.
4. Least Sensitive	Areas of existing development and infrastructure. New development reinforces existing desirable land use patterns.

## **4. Landscape Sensitivity Guidelines**

### **4.1(a) Most Sensitive Areas**

Landscape Character Areas and features designated as Most Sensitive, represent the principal features which create and sustain the character and distinctiveness of the surrounding landscape. To be considered for permission, development in, or in the environs of these areas, must be shown not to impinge in any significant way upon its character, integrity or uniformity when viewed from the surroundings. Particular attention should be given to the preservation of the character and distinctiveness of these areas as viewed from scenic routes and the environs of archaeological and historic sites.

### **4.1(b) Areas Designated as Most Sensitive**

The coastline, all headlands and promontories.

The banks of the rivers;

The shoreline of all lakes;

The skylines of upland areas;

### **4.2(a) High Sensitivity Areas**

These areas have a distinctive, homogenous character, dominated by natural processes.

Development in these areas has the potential to create impacts on the appearance and character of an extensive part of the landscape. Applications for development in these areas must demonstrate an awareness of these inherent limitations by having a very high standard of site selection, siting layout, selection of materials and finishes.

### **4.2(b) Main Areas Designated as High Sensitivity**

- Intertidal flats;
- Coastal lagoons;
- Agricultural lands with significant areas of natural vegetation;
- Sparsely vegetated areas;
- Beaches, dunes and sands;
- Inland and salt marshes;
- Bare rocks;
- Transitional woodland scrub;
- Broad leaved forest;
- Peat bogs; and
- Natural grassland.

### **4.3(a) Low Sensitivity Areas**

A large area of County Waterford is designated as a landscape of low sensitivity. These areas have potential to absorb a wide range of new developments subject to normal planning and development control procedures. In these areas the Planning Authority will have regard to general restrictions to development, such as scenic routes, siting, road set backs, road widening plans, parking numbers, road and sewage disposal criteria.

#### **4.3 (b) Areas Designated as Low Sensitivity**

- Pasture Land
- Coniferous Plantations

#### **4.4(a) Least Sensitive Areas**

A small area of Waterford City and County is designated least sensitive to landscape change. These are areas of concentrated existing development and infrastructure. Appropriate new development in these areas can reinforce the existing desirable land use patterns. Regard shall be had to site development standards such as density, building lines, height of structures and design standards. The overall aim is to ensure that the inherent character of city /town environs and town and village centres is maintained.

In least sensitive areas:

- (a) New development shall sustain and reflect the character of the area;
- (b) Frontages on to the existing streets shall reflect the character of the street through careful design and use of materials; and
- (c) Development should reflect the character of the townscape generally but fresh approaches to design will be considered.
- (d) New development should be encouraged as a means of improving the existing character of such areas.

#### **4.4 (b) Areas Designated as Least Sensitive**

- Continuous Urban Fabric
- Discontinuous Urban Fabric
- Industrial or Commercial Units
- Airports



**Table. 2. Sensitivity areas and classification**

<b>Sensitivity Class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Landscape type</b>	<b>Landscape Character Area</b>	<b>Location</b>
1. Most Sensitive	Very distinctive features with a very low capacity to absorb new development without significant alterations of existing character over an extended area.	The coastline	1A. Lower Waterford Estuary 1B. Tramore Bay 1C. Copper Coast East 1D. Copper Coast West 1E. Dungarvan 1F. Helvic Head 1G. Ardmore Head  4A. Blackwater Estuary 4B. Suir Estuary	All beaches and strands, including headlands and promontories, from Waterford Harbour to East Point.
		The banks of rivers	3A. Blackwater and Bride River Corridor 3B. Suir River Corridor	The banks of the rivers Blackwater, Bride, Nire, Owenashad and Suir.
		Lake shorelines		Belle Lake, Ballyscanlan, Ballinlough, Coumshingaun, Crotty's Lake, Sgilloge Lakes, Lough Coumfea,
		The skylines of upland areas	6A. Comeragh Mountains 6B. Knockmealdown Mountains	The Pike, Knockaun,, Coolowen, , Ballyneety, Knocknalough Knockadullaun, Knockcorragh, Knocknaboul, Knockaunarast, Monatarriv Knockaunabulloga, Southern slope of Sugarloaf Hill, Knockaunagnauv, Knocknafallia, Knockmeal Knockanask, Curraheenavoher Hill, Laghtnafrankee Long Hill, Raven's Rock, Shauneenabrega, Moanyarha, Knockanaffrin, Crotty's Rock, Knockeen, Milk Hill, Coumfea, Knockaunapeebra, Comeragh Mtn. Fauscoum,

				Foilaunaprisoon, Seefin, Coumaraglin Mtn. Farbreaga, Crohaun, Knockacomortish, , Monacalee, Kilnafarna Hill, Knockaunaboullaga.
2.High Sensitivity	Distinctive character with some capacity to absorb a limited range of appropriate new developments while sustaining its existing character.	Intertidal flats and coastal lagoons; Beaches, dunes and sands; Inland and salt marshes		Clohernagh along the northern side of Back Strand, Dungarvan Harbour: - North: Abbeyside to Kilminnin to Ballynacourty Point - South: Cunnigar point to Ballynagaul Kinsalebeg to Ardsallagh Tramore Bay Clashanahy, adjacent to Whiting Bay, Killongford Bridge on the southern side of Dungarvan Harbour, Bunmahon Bay. Inland Marshes: At Snugborough on the banks of the River Bride, At the confluence of the Bride and the Blackwater.
		Lakes		Cappagh, Monaneeea, Kilmaloo, Ballylough, Ballyscanlan Lake at Ballymorris, Carrickavranty and Fennor
		Hills	5A. Knockaturnory Munsboro 5B. Ballymacarbry/Nire Valley 5C. Tooraneena Foothills 5D. Knockmealdown Foothills 5E. Drumhills 5F. Glendine	Ardsallagh Hill, Ballycondon Hill, Coolnabeasoon, Barranashigaun, Croughan Hill, Dyrick, Knocknamona, Slievegrine Hill, Curraghballintlea, Carronadavderg,
		Transitional woodland scrub and semi-natural grassland		Dunhill Lower, Raheens, Ballyrohin, North of Ballygarron between Kilbunny Wood and Glenhouse Wood, Mount Bolton, South of Georgestown, East of Graiguearush, Knockanacullin, Ballindysert and Sheskin, Kilrossanty, On the shores of the Dalligan river west of Ballynevoga, From Bohadoon north to Kilbrien and Carrigataggle,

				<p>Curraghnamadree, Knockroe and Garrydon, South-east of Millstreet, north of Soldiers Cross Roads, Ballysaggartbeghill, South of Kilbeg, North-west of Carncrow, North-wwest of Kinsalebeg, Knocknamona at Woodhouse Cross Roads, South of Johnstown House, Ballycullane House and North of Mountstuart, South of Monagally and Reanaboola, Carronadavderg and Lickybeg, Toor South, Monameen, North of Carrigeen, Gorteen. Knockroe ,</p> <p>Mount Beresford Brownstown Head Monamintra Carrickphilip Ballinlough Croughaun Crotty's Rock Coumshingaun Kilclooney Graiuearush Davmore Comeragh mtn. Farbreaga Boolatin Dalligan Bridge Ballintlea Carrigataggle Glendalligan Carricknafinnoge Knockacomortish Knockavanna Knocknaree Curraheen Glenpatrick Shauneenabreaga Glendalough Knockgow Byrick Knocknanask Gowlaun Knocknahoola Monacalee Knockaunabouchala</p>
		Broad leaved forest		Portlaw Wood, Curraghmore, Gardenmorris, Dromana Forest, Kilahally, Monaman Headborough, Harristown, Ballygarron.
		Peat bogs		Laghtnafranke ,Glenpatrick, Glendalough, Curragheenavoher, Crow Hill, Shauneenabreaga, Knockanaffrin, The Gap, Coolingady, Knockacomortish, Crotty's Rock, Knockaunabulloga, Knockmealdowns ,Knockanask , Moanyarha
		Moor and Heathland		Harney Cross Rd.s Glendalough Knockanaffrin Glennanore Lyre Knockavanna Tooreen Shanballyanne

				Knockeen, Knockaunapeebra, Seefin, Coumalocha Foilanaprisoon, Bleantasour Bearnamaddra Ballynevoga Ballintaylor Knocknamona Byrick Knockboy Mount Mellary
3 Low Sensitivity	A common character type with a potential to absorb a wide range of new developments.	Pasture Land	2A. Rathgormack Lowlands 2B. Kilmacthomas Lowlands 2C. East Waterford Lowlands 2D. Clashmore and Newport Lowlands 2E. Blackwater and Bride Lowlands Kinsalebeg	The majority of the County consists of pasture land with the exception of large pockets at the Knockmealdown, Comeragh and Monavullagh Mountain ranges, the area south of Dungarvan Harbour, South of Tallow, Waterford City and around Portlaw.
		Coniferous Plantations		North of Ballydavid House / East of Callaghane Bridge, South of Monamintra, Around Ballyscanlan Lake, Kill, North-west of Savagetown Cross Roads, West of Carrickphilip, Ballygarron, South of Cullenagh, Glenhouse Wood, Beallough, Portlaw Wood, Kilbunny Wood, Tower Hill, Clashroe, Curraghballintlea, Brownswood and Fiddown, Robertstown, Whitestown Cross Roads, Croughan Hill, Crehaunagh, Coolnamuck Wood, Gurteen le Poer Wood, Tinkincor Wood, North of the Punchbowl, Clondonnell, Southwest of Knocknarea, East of Coumduala Lake, Southern shore of Coumshingan, South of Shauneenapeebra, From Furraleigh along the R676 to the road West to Coumshingan, Ballybrack, Slievenamona, Gortnalaght, South-west of Lyre, Briska, Comeragh Mountain to Boolatin, Glendalligan Wood, Carricknafinnoge, South of Mount Kennedy at Carrigmorna and between Downey's Cross and Durrow

				<p>Cross, Boheraval Cross Roads, North of Monarud, Knockacomortish, North of Knockaunagloom, North of Milk Hill at Knockavanna, North-west and South-east of Tooreen, North of Shanballyanne and Craginagower / Ballymacarbry on the banks of the Nire, Mountneill Wood, Caherbaun, Curragheenavoher Hill, Boolabrien, South of Knockgow, Boulavonteen, West of Ballynamult, West of Byrick, Tooranaraheen, Coolagorthboy, Ardnagunna, Glenshelane, Crow Hill, On the shores of the Glenafallid and Glenshelane Rivers, East and south slopes of Knockafallia, Knocknabulloga, Along the Owenshad River, North of Knockadullaun, East and south of Curragheenav, Labbanacallee, Lyregloch, Gortnapeaky, The banks of the River Bride at the Cork border, North of Kilnacarriga and east of Ballyspick, South-west of Kilbeg, Coolbeggan, Corradremaun Cross Roads, West of Strancaly Castle, Boola and North of Carriglass, Dromore, Ballycullane, Knocknamona, Western slopes of Knockaunabouchala, East of Mountstuart, Slievegrine Hill, Knocknahoola, East of Monaculee, Gorteen, Lagnagoushee, South of Moonbrack, Monamraher, Carrigeen Kearagulee, Carronadavderg, South of Lickybeg, Toor South, West of Glenlicky and Grally Bridge on the shores of the Licky River, Ballymacart Bridge. Coolbeggan, Deerpark Hill</p>
4 Least Sensitive	Areas of existing development and infrastructure. New development reinforces	Continuous Urban Fabric	7A. Waterford City Environs 7B. Tramore Environs 7C. Dungarvan Environs	Waterford City, Dungarvan, Tramore, Clonmel Environs, Carrick-on-Suir Environs.

	existing desirable land use patterns.			
		Discontinuous Urban Fabric		Waterford City, Dungarvan, Carrick-on-Suir Environs, Clonmel Environs, Cheekpoint, Dunmore East, Tramore, Kilmacthomas, Cappoquin, Lismore, Tallow, Ardmore.
		Industrial or Commercial Lands		Ballyneashagh West of Waterford City, Abbeyside East of Dungarvan.
		Airports		Waterford Regional Airport

## **5. Scenic Routes and Protected Views**

Scenic routes and protected views indicate public roads and viewing points from which views and prospects of areas of natural beauty and interest can be enjoyed. Sightseeing visitors are more likely to be concentrated along these routes. The onus should be on the applicant for permission to develop in the environs of a scenic route, to demonstrate that there will be no obstruction or degradation of the views towards either visually vulnerable features, or significant alterations to the appearance or character of sensitive areas.

### **5.1 Scenic Routes**

1. The R666 heading west from the County border to Cappoquin;
2. The R668 north from Lismore and R669 north from Cappoquin;
3. Various third class routes heading north from the R666 through the Comeragh Mountains;
4. Third class route from the mouth of the Glendine River, crossing the River Bride and following the Blackwater north, turning west to Lismore;
5. From Youghal Bridge east along the N25 to Dungarvan;
6. North from Kinsalebeg to Clashmore on the R671, east at Clashmore along third class route to N25 at Gorteen;
7. East from Gorteen along third class route via Monamraher to the R674. East to Helvick (Heilbhc) Head, west to N25;
8. North-west from Dungarvan to Tooraneena on the R672. Third class North to Ballymacarbry. Join R671 to Clonmel taking the R678 and turning south for third class route through the Comeraghs;
9. Third class route east off the R671 at Ballymacarbry along the banks of the Nire, joining with route;
10. Third class route through the Monavullagh Mountains from the R672 to Lemybrien;
11. Third class circular route off R672 to Kilgobnet;
12. R680 East from Clonmel to Carrick-on-Suir. Turn south onto third class route to R678 or through Coolnamuck Wood onto R676;
13. R676 South from Clonmel to Lemybrien. N25 south to The Pike. Circular route along third class road south to R675, crossing N25 via Garrynageragh, east along R675 and north via Garranbaun and third class road returning to The Pike;
14. From Ballyvoyle Head east on the R675 to the junction with the R677. Continuing south along the R675 to Bunmahon, east via Kilmurrin and Annestown and Northeast to Fennor. East onto Tramore and north to Waterford City; and

15. South-east from Waterford City on the R683 to Mount Druid. South along the R684 to Belle Lake and east on third class road via Woodstown to Waterford Harbour. North to Passage East along the Harbour, continuing north towards Cheekpoint. South at junction to R683 and west to Waterford City.

## **5.2 Protected Views**

1. View from Lismore Bridge E and W
2. View from Ardmore Round Tower over Ardmore Bay.
3. N25 at Barrinalara overlooking Dungarvan Bay
4. Knockyoolahan East on Greenway looking to Ballynacourty headland and An Rinn
5. Old Parish Road lay-by overlooking Dungarvan Bay
6. Blackwater Valley looking west of AGLISH
7. Blackwater River from Ardsallagh
8. Nire Valley Trail Car park Area
9. Panoramic View of Clonmel from Lachtnafrankee
10. Copper Coast View point
11. Tankardstown Copper Mine E and W
12. The Vee
13. Lay-by Helvic Head Harbour
14. Lay-by S Face of An Rinn Headland
15. Picnic Area between Cappoquin and Lismore along River Blackwater
16. Sugarloaf Horseshoe Walk Parking Area- Waterford/Tipperary Border
17. Mount Monyarha Lough Lay-by north of Glandaloughin
18. Annestown Beach
19. Goat Island
20. Máma Road
21. Mahon Falls
22. Farnaught Strand to Creadan Head
23. Coastal trail between Dunmore East and Brownstown Head



## 6. Seascapes

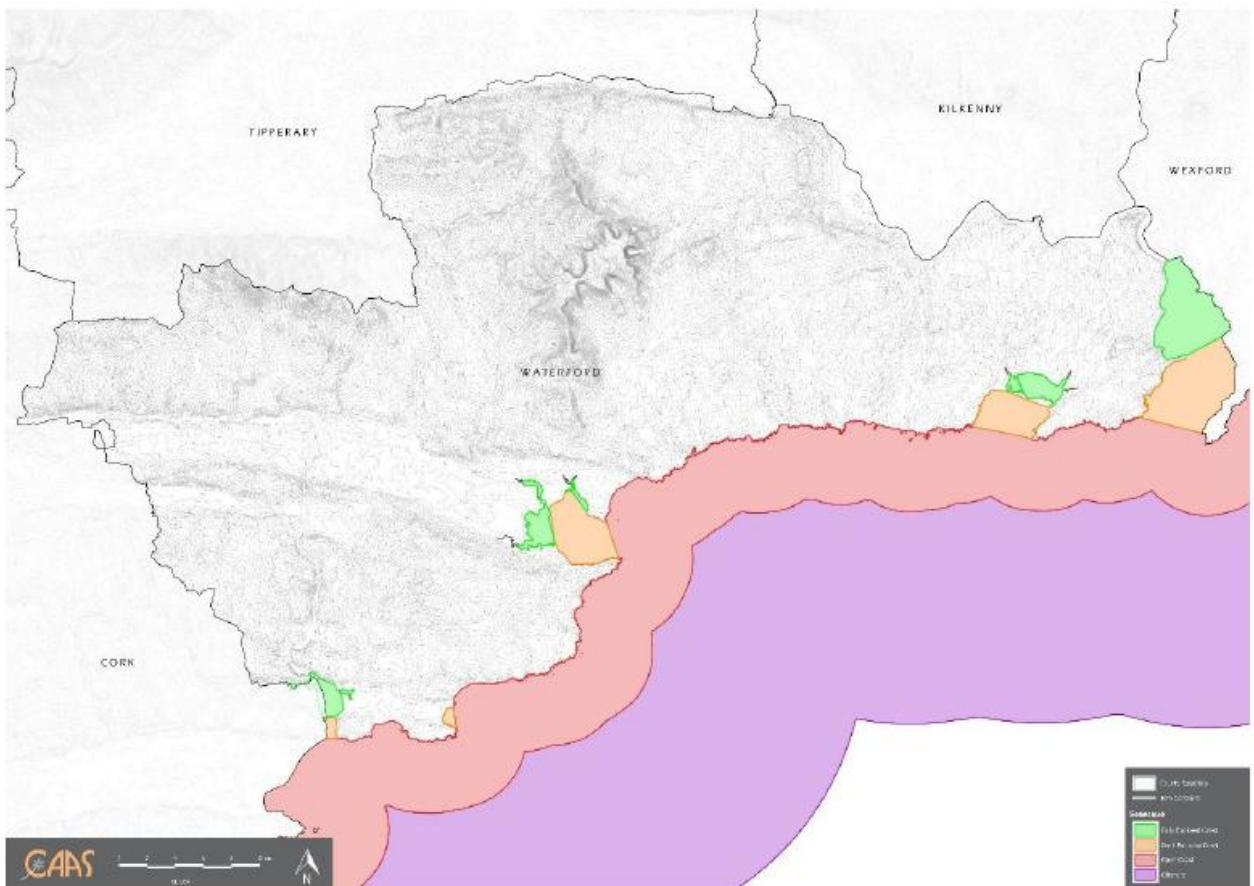
A Draft Regional Seascape Character Assessment for Ireland was published by the Marine Institute in 2020 to fill an identified gap in baseline descriptions of seascape character and to contribute to commitments under the European Landscape Convention and the National Landscape Strategy 2015- 2025. Seascape character assessment is a core component for Marine Spatial Planning and marine policy formulation.

Seascape Character Assessment formed part of the 2020 Waterford Landscape Character Assessment project which classified the coast according to the Seascape types and Seascape Units detailed in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1 Seascape Type and Sensitivity**

Seascape Type	Description		Sensitivity	
Fully enclosed Coast	Shorelines adjacent to marine or transitional waters but no view of the sea horizon.  (The horizon is assumed to be at a distance of 20km)	A1: Youghal Inner Bay	Most Sensitive to change	Likely to undergo significant change or loss of character and appearance due to relatively minor changes - especially if located along the shoreline or skyline as it is visible throughout the area.
		A2: Dungarvan Inner Bay		
		A3: Tramore Inner Bay		
		A4: River Barrow Inner Estuary		
Semi-Enclosed Coast	Shorelines adjacent to marine or transitional waters but no more than 50% view of the sea horizon.	B1: Youghal Outer Bay	High Sensitivity to change	Likely to undergo noticeable change of character and appearance due to the magnitude or effects of new uses or developments that are visible from some parts of the area.
		B2: Ballinamona Bay		
		B3: Dungarvan Outer Bay		
		B4: Tramore Outer Bay		
		B5: River Barrow Outer Estuary		
Open Coast	All sea areas for a distance of up to 5km offshore with a view that is at least 50% ocean horizon. Views from these waters will feel that the land is the dominant feature.	C1: Waterford Estuary Coast	Less Sensitive to change	Areas where use, development and change may occur and where new uses or developments are visible from some parts of the area.
		C2: Tramore Coast and Copper Coast		
		C3: Dungarvan to Youghal Coast		

<p>Offshore and the Open Sea</p>	<p>All water between the edge of the Open Coastal waters Boundary (5km from the shore) and the Open Sea boundary (20km from the shore). Views from these waters will feel that the sea is the dominant feature.</p> <p>All waters that are beyond sight of land</p>		<p>Least Sensitive</p>	<p>Capable of accommodating, without loss of overall character, patterns of significant change of appearance due to continued development or use on the seaward side.</p>
----------------------------------	---	--	------------------------	---



Map 6: Seascapes of County Waterford