



Department for Infrastructure (Dfi)

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# ROADS - ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DIRECTIVE ROUND 4 - ROAD NOISE ACTION PLAN 2023-2028





Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

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# **ROADS - ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DIRECTIVE ROUND 4 - ROAD NOISE ACTION PLAN 2023- 2028**

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Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

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# **ROADS - ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DIRECTIVE ROUND 4 - ROAD NOISE ACTION PLAN 2023- 2028**

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# ROADS - ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DIRECTIVE ROUND 4 - ROAD NOISE ACTION PLAN 2023- 2028





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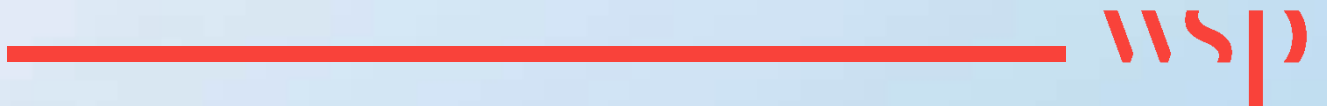
## GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Agglomeration	Part of a territory, delimited by the Member State, having a population in excess of 100,000 persons and a population density such that the Member State considers it to be an urbanised area.
CNMA	Candidate Noise Management Area.
CNOSSOS-EU: 2020	The common noise assessment method according to the END.
CRTN 1988	The noise calculation method Calculation of Road Traffic Noise 1988
Decibel (dB)	A scale for comparing the ratios of two quantities, including sound pressure and sound power. The difference in level between two sounds ( $s_1$ and $s_2$ ) is given by $20 \log_{10}(s_1/s_2)$ . The decibel can also be used to measure absolute quantities by specifying a reference value that fixes one point on the scale. For sound pressure, the reference value is 20 Pa.
dB $L_{10,18hr}$	The level exceeded for 10% of the time
dB $L_{day}$	The equivalent noise level during the daytime period of 0700 - 1900
dB $L_{den}$	Day-evening-night level. It is a descriptor of noise level based on energy equivalent noise level ( $L_{eq}$ ) over a whole day with a penalty of 10 dB(A) for night time noise (2300-0700) and an additional penalty of 5 dB(A) for evening noise (i.e. 1900-2300).
dB $L_{eq,T}$	The equivalent continuous sound level - the sound level of a steady sound having the same energy as a fluctuating sound over a specified measuring period T.
dB $L_{eq,16hr}$	The equivalent continuous sound level - the sound level of a steady sound having the same energy as a fluctuating sound over a specified measuring period of 16 hours.
dB $L_{eve}$	The equivalent noise level during the evening period of 1900 - 2300
dB $L_{night}$	The equivalent noise level during the night-time period of 2300 - 0700
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
DoE	Department of the Environment, responsible for environmental matters in Northern Ireland until a restructure in 2016 which led to its dissolution and incorporation into DAERA.
DfI	Department for Infrastructure.
Dwelling	A building used for living purposes.
END	Environmental Noise Directive.
GIS	Geographical Information System



Round 4	Round 4 of noise mapping in accordance with END and the Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006 as amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.
Sensitive areas	<p>These are considered to be areas where humans are exposed to environmental noise, in particular in built-up areas, in public parks or other quiet areas in an agglomeration, near schools, hospitals and other noise-sensitive buildings and areas.</p> <p>This definition aligns with wording from Part 1 of The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.</p>
The Regulations	Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006 were amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Road Noise Action Plan has been produced for compliance with Round 4 of the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 as amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018, referred to hereafter as the Regulations. Annex V of the European Directive for Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise 2002/49/EC, referred to as the Environmental Noise Directive (END), requires that Action Plans must include as a minimum detail under the headings below.

### A DESCRIPTION OF THE MAJOR ROAD AND ANY OTHER NOISE SOURCE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

The thresholds which noise mapping and action planning should be prepared and reported for Round 4 are as follows:

- All Major Roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year.
- All Major and non-Major Roads in all Agglomerations with a population in excess of 100,000 persons, a population density equal to or greater than 500 people per km<sup>2</sup> and which is considered to be urbanised.

The only Agglomeration considered in Round 4 was the Belfast Agglomeration, which reached the population threshold outlined above and defined in the Regulations. All Roads, both Major and non-Major, within the Belfast Agglomeration were modelled in Round 4 with an approximate area of 208.5km<sup>2</sup> which represented an area decrease of 0.9km<sup>2</sup> on Round 3.

The Belfast Agglomeration comprises the urban areas of Belfast City Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Government Districts.

The extent of Major Roads was based on an assessment of roads which met the threshold as set out in the Regulations. Major Roads to be included in Round 4 noise mapping were trunk roads, motorways and classified roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year. Northern Ireland's network of Major Roads is generally focused on Belfast, including the main radial corridors along the M1, M2, A1 and A6. It also includes the main strategic routes within the Belfast Metropolitan and Derry Urban Areas in addition to short heavily trafficked stretches of the strategic road network in and around several towns across Northern Ireland.

Modelled Major Roads both inside the Belfast Agglomeration and outside the Belfast Agglomeration are shown in **Appendix D**. Non-Major Roads have not been included in this Appendix to aid with clarity.

A link to the noise mapping output, hosted on the GIS Noise Map Viewer platform of the DAERA website is included below. These noise maps have not been reproduced in this report as it is considered that the online GIS Noise Map Viewer platform offers a more dynamic, interactive user experience than can be offered from this static report.

Graphical information on non-Major Roads can be observed on the DAERA online platform: [Noise Maps | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

## THE AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE

The Regulations set out responsibilities charged to various Competent Authorities with the production of Noise Action Plans, and The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as the Designated Authority overseeing the implementation. The Regulations state that the Competent Authority for drawing up Action Plans for roads is The Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

## THE LEGAL CONTEXT

The END was implemented in Northern Ireland by the Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006, which outline the stages to manage and, where necessary, improve environmental noise conditions. The Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006 were amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018, which provided any revisions of the 2006 document in order to implement the changes required by the Commission Directive (EU) 2015/996. The 2006 Regulations including the 2018 Amendment are referred to as The Regulations.

## LIMIT VALUES

There are no noise limit values set under the Regulations. For both Round 2 and Round 3, the following criteria were implemented after being established and approved by the then Department for Regional Development (DRD). The methodology itself mirrored that of The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Welsh Government in relation to noise from roads by determining:

- Where the 1% of the population that are affected by the highest noise levels are located.
- Where the analysis has revealed that for Northern Ireland these locations are where the  $L_{A10,18h}$  indicator is at least 75dB. As stated in the DAERA Technical Guidance, The Northern Ireland Environmental Noise Directive Steering Group (NIENDSG) agreed that the  $L_{A10, 18h}$  and  $L_{Aeq, 16h}$  indicators should be used for prioritisation.

It should be noted that, as a result of the change in road traffic noise prediction methodology in the END to Common Noise Assessment methods in Europe (CNOSSOS-EU:2020), then the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN), and its noise descriptor  $L_{A10,18h}$ , are no longer utilised for the noise predictions supporting this Action Plan. This is discussed in Section 4.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Noise maps were generated from Round 4 data and then investigated using a series of analytical tools needed to sift the data. The total population was based on 1,716,541 people. The subset representing the top 1% most affected by noise, taken out of those which are exposed to road traffic noise levels above 50 dB  $L_{Aeq,16h}$ , is approximately 10,309 individuals. All of the individuals in this subset were found to experience noise levels of at least 73dB  $L_{Aeq,16h}$ , which is the predicted noise level deemed to be equivalent to the criterion level of 75dB  $L_{A10,18h}$ . This is discussed in Section 2.5.

A list of 10 Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) were prioritised based on the number of people exposed to different noise levels and the location of the population affected.

## **ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPOSED TO NOISE AND IDENTIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

This Roads Noise Action Plan provides an overview of the results of the Round 4 END dwelling and population analysis for Major Roads across Northern Ireland and outside of the Belfast Agglomeration, and All Roads within the Belfast Agglomeration.

The DfI Divisions have identified CNMAs across Northern Ireland based on the Noise map data for Round 4.

Within the Belfast Agglomeration, there are a total of 2 CNMAs. For Major Roads outside of the Belfast Agglomeration there are a total of 8 CNMAs located in the towns and cities of Ballymena (2), Banbridge (1), Broughshane (1), Dungannon (1), Newry (1), Newtownhamilton (1), and Rathfriland (1). The numbers in brackets indicate the number of CNMAs in that town or city.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Competent Authority is required to undertake a formal consultation exercise with various stakeholders.

An eight-week consultation period for the Round 4 Road Noise Action Plan took place between 27 November 2025 and 22 January 2026. A full description of the process is included in Section 7 of this document.

## **ACTIONS WHICH THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY INTENDS TO TAKE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**

The potential mitigation measures identified in the Noise Action Plan have been reviewed in detail with consideration of timescale of implementation, funding availability and powers available through DfI. As a result, the CNMAs have been grouped on the following basis:

- Potential mitigation to be implemented by DfI within the next five years (2023 to 2028), subject to the necessary funding being made available.
- Potential mitigation outside the control of DfI.

In addition to the above review, this Action Plan provides an outline programme of implementation of the recommended mitigation, where possible. All mitigation requires the necessary additional studies and consultation to be successfully undertaken, along with the required funding.

## **ROAD NOISE ACTION PLANNING PROCESS**

The action planning process is structured around five principal stages:

1. review of the strategic noise mapping outputs;
  2. identification and prioritisation of Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) and Quiet Areas;
  3. designation of Noise Management Areas (NMAs) and Quiet Areas;
  4. consideration of existing mitigation measures alongside potential additional interventions;
- and



5. assessment of relevant UK and Northern Ireland policies, plans and programmes.

Using the strategic noise mapping results, the locations of the top 1% of the population exposed to the highest levels of road noise have been identified. These areas were then examined to identify CNMAs and identify example mitigation measures which may be appropriate depending on the outcome of stages 3, 4 and 5 which would occur later during the Round 4 process.

This document reports the outcomes of stages 1 and 2.

## **LONG TERM STRATEGY**

This Plan is over a five-year period between 2023 and 2028 up to the next round of noise mapping and action planning. However, environmental noise needs to be managed in a cost-effective manner as part of a long-term strategy which runs beyond each five-year Action Plan.

For all the CNMA's, DfI will monitor forthcoming road projects establish if developments are proposed within these designated areas and determine whether it would be practicable that mitigation measures may be included as part of the design and planning process for implementation. To ensure that the overall aims of the END and this Action Plan are fully realised, noise issues need to be carefully considered through the planning system for specific development proposals and at a more strategic scale through the production of development plans.

[Noise Maps | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 PURPOSE

This document presents the Noise Action Plan for Round 4 which details how the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), in conjunction with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), propose to deliver their obligations under the European Directive for Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise 2002/49/EC<sup>[1]</sup>. This Roads Noise Action Plan deals with noise from both Major Roads<sup>1</sup> across Northern Ireland and All Roads within Agglomerations of greater than 100,000 inhabitants<sup>2</sup>.

The European Directive for Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise 2002/49/EC, more commonly referred to as the Environmental Noise Directive (END), was transposed into Northern Ireland (NI) regulations through the Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006<sup>[2]</sup> (the 'Regulations').

The END requires Competent Authorities to review (and revise, if necessary) Noise Action Plans every five years and whenever a 'major development' that affects the current noise situation occurs. This Round 4 Action Plan constitutes the five-year review and covers the period from 2023 to 2028. The process for the ascertainment of Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) is largely consistent with that used for Round 3, though the change in modelling methodology, as discussed in this report, has led to some changes. The Round 4 Action Plan principally deals with the identification of noise impacts and CNMAs, along with proposals for treating these.

This document is one of a set of five Action Plans, the others being:

- The Railways Noise Action Plan.
- The Industrial Noise Action Plan.
- The Belfast City Airport Noise Action Plan.
- The Belfast International Airport Noise Action Plan.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DIRECTIVE

The END emerged from the recognition that, although there had been European-wide controls on noise generated by individual vehicles for many years, the increasing number of vehicles being used meant that there was no reduction in the resulting noise exposure.

The END relies on computer modelling technology to support the development of noise maps and Action Plans, and as this technology has developed the process of data collection has evolved. The Directive does require a strategic approach to assessment and therefore the use of common noise indicators ( $L_{den}$  and  $L_{night}$ ) and common methodology.

The three main objectives of the END are:

- To determine exposure to environmental noise through noise mapping.
- To ensure information on environmental noise and its effects is made available to the public.

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<sup>1</sup> Trunk Roads, Motorways and Classified Roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year as set out within Regulation 3 of The Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Major continuous Urban Area with population in excess of 100,000 persons as set out within Regulation 3 of The Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006.

- To adopt Action Plans based upon the mapping results, to prevent and reduce environmental noise where necessary, where exposure levels can induce harmful effects on human health and to preserve good environmental noise quality.

As outlined, the END was published and transposed into the Regulations in 2006. The Regulations apply to noise from roads, railways, airports and industrial sources. The Regulations do not apply to noise that is caused personally by the exposed person, noise from domestic or work activities or noise created by neighbours.

In line with the Regulations, the following organisations and key partners will be involved in action planning for roads:

- DfI.
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA).
- District Councils.

In 2005, DAERA (under its previous entity as the Department of the Environment DoE), set up the Northern Ireland Environmental Noise Directive Steering Group (NIENDSG). Any guidance from the Group should be considered by DAERA and the competent authorities in the formulation of the action plans.

The NIENDSG agreed that the  $L_{A10, 18h}$  and  $L_{Aeq, 16h}$  indicators should be used for prioritisation and that as a first priority, the Competent Authority should identify the total population affected by a noise level of more than 50dB  $L_{A10, 18h}$  and  $L_{Aeq, 16h}$  from roads.

### 1.3 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DESIGNATED BODIES

In 2013 DAERA published technical guidance document Noise Mapping and Action Planning Technical Guidance Noise from Roads<sup>3</sup> (DAERA Technical Guidance) to help Competent Authorities in the interpretation of each round of noise maps and the preparation of subsequent action plans. The DAERA Technical Guidance sets out the proposed mechanisms and arrangements for the implementation of Action Plans and aims to inform the public, guide Competent Authorities, and provide a framework for all organisations involved in noise mapping and action planning.

The Regulations require DAERA and the Competent Authorities to undertake noise mapping of roads, railways, airports and industry every five years, or in the interim, if a major development<sup>3</sup> affecting the current noise situation occurs. The work commenced with the Round 1 of Mapping, which was completed by 31 March 2007 and continued with the Round 2 of Mapping, which was completed on 30 April 2013 and the Round 3 which was completed on 10 January 2019.

The Competent Authorities are DfI (roads), Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company / Translink (rail), Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airport (air), and DAERA (industry). The Competent Authority, in this case DfI, is responsible for ensuring that the Action Plan is developed.

The Road Noise Action Plan is first subjected to internal review by the Director of Engineering, Policy and Procurement (DfI). Upon completion of this review, the Plan is presented for ministerial approval by the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on what constitutes a major development, please see the Technical Guidance document.

## 1.4 PROGRAMME OF IMPLEMENTATION

**Table 1-1** outlines the programme of implementation relating to noise mapping and action planning. Round 1, Round 2 and Round 3 noise maps have been completed and are published on the Northern Ireland Noise Map website<sup>[4]</sup>. All Round 1, Round 2 and Round 3 Action Plans (roads, railways, industries, Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airport) have been agreed, approved and adopted by the Minister following public consultation.

**Table 1-1 Programme of Implementation**

Steps	Detail	Status
1	Produce the Round 1 of strategic noise maps for Major Roads, rail, airports and Agglomerations	Completed
2	Competent Authorities to draw up Round 1 Action Plans to manage noise	Completed
3	Produce the Round 2 of strategic noise maps for Major Roads, rail, airports and Agglomerations	Completed
4	Competent Authorities to draw up Round 2 Action Plans to manage noise	Completed
5	Produce the Round 3 of strategic noise maps for Major Roads, rail, airports and Agglomerations	Completed
6	Competent Authorities to draw up Round 3 Action Plans to manage noise	Completed
7	Produce the Round 4 of strategic noise maps for Major Roads, rail, airports, industries and Agglomerations	Completed
8	Competent Authorities to draw up Round 4 Action Plans to manage noise	Underway

Round 4 noise maps have been published<sup>[5]</sup> and this document constitutes the Round 4 Road Noise Action Plan. Based on the results of the noise mapping exercise, Competent Authorities are required to develop Action Plans which prioritise how they will deal with areas where noise levels are considered high. Action Plans are written to comply with Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 as amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018 and are drawn up and submitted to DAERA as Designated Authority in Northern Ireland with overall responsibility for monitoring compliance with the Regulations. This includes a Consultation process undertaken by each of the Competent Authorities, undertaken prior to the finalisation of the Action Plan.

DAERA, along with the other Competent Authorities, have developed a methodology to determine:

- Noise map assessment criteria;
- Candidate Noise Management Areas; and
- An assessment of previously identified Quiet Areas.

The requirement to examine Quiet Areas within Agglomerations is primarily managed by DAERA.

The Regulations place a duty on DAERA to review, approve, adopt and submit a consolidated action plan for all sources within agglomerations, using action plans submitted under regulations 28, 32 and 36 of The Regulations.

Once adopted the Competent Authority should treat this Action Plan as policy under the Regulations and the content of the Action Plan should be a material consideration for other decision-making bodies, such as local authorities.

## 1.5 LAYOUT OF ROADS NOISE ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan should meet the requirements of Schedule 4 of the Regulations and Annex V of the END and must include as a minimum the tasks listed in **Table 1-2**.

**Table 1-2 Layout of the Roads Noise Action Plan - Round 4**

Task	Location in Action Plan
A description of the major road and any other noise sources considered.	Section 3.1
The authority responsible.	Section 2.1
The legal context.	Section 2.2
Any limit values in place.	Section 2.5
A summary of the results of the noise mapping.	Section 4
An estimate of the number of people exposed to noise and identify problems and situations that need to be improved.	Section 4
A record of public consultations as per the requirement in the Regulations 43.(1) (a)	Section 7
Any noise reduction measures already in force and any projects in preparation.	Section 6
Actions which the Competent Authority intends to take in the next five years, including measures to preserve quiet areas.	Section 6
Long term strategy.	Section 8
Financial information (if available): budgets, cost-effectiveness assessment, cost-benefit assessment; and	Section 8
Provisions envisaged for evaluating the implementation and the results of the Action Plan.	Section 8



## 1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

WSP has made assumptions in the preparation of this report which are described in this section.

The END transposed to the Regulations requires that:

*'The action plans shall be reviewed, and revised, if necessary, when a major development occurs affecting the existing noise situation, and at least every five years after the date of their approval.'*

The principal objectives and methodology of previous rounds remain unchanged. Due to this and the iterative nature of the Road Noise Action Plan process, some of the text from previous Road Noise Action Plans is still applicable. In addition, the policy and guidance relating to Round 4 remain largely consistent with that used for previous rounds. As a result, some text used in previous Road Noise Action Plan reports appears verbatim in this report, where applicable.

For Round 4, WSP has produced this report based on technical input provided by others. Noise Consultants Limited carried out noise modelling and the summary of findings, the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) output of which was shared with WSP. WSP carried out a high-level review of the provided information and used it to prepare this Plan and to designate 10 CNMAs.

With regard to Quiet Areas, DAERA is the Competent Authority responsible for the identification of Quiet Areas. DAERA has identified and advised WSP of the locations of designated Quiet Areas which are reported in Section 6.2.

## 2 REGULATORY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

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### 2.1 THE AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE

The Regulations set out responsibilities charged to various Competent Authorities with the production of Noise Action Plans, and overseeing of their implementation. The Regulations state that the Competent Authority for drawing up Actions Plans for roads is DfI.

### 2.2 EUROPEAN POLICY

#### 2.2.1 DIRECTIVE 2002/49/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 2002

The European Directive for Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise 2002/49/EC, more commonly referred to as the END, relates to the assessment and management of environmental noise, and it is commonly referred to as the Environmental Noise Directive (END). It aims to define a common approach to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. It requires Member States to produce strategic noise maps for the determination of exposure to environmental noise. The END was updated in 2020 with Commission Directive (EU) 2020/367<sup>[24]</sup> to account for changes including updated methodology and assessment methods.

### 2.3 UK POLICY

The UK implements the requirements of the END into domestic law through the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006<sup>[23]</sup> in each of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, ensuring continuity in how it manages environmental noise.

### 2.4 NATIONAL POLICY

The END was transposed into Northern Ireland (NI) regulations through the Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006<sup>[2]</sup> (the 'Regulations'). The Environmental Noise Regulations (NI) 2006 were amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018, which provided revisions of the 2006 document in order to implement the changes required by the Commission Directive (EU) 2015/996..

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) Planning for Sustainable Development<sup>[22]</sup> discusses the impact of noise on human health and well-being, outlining the role of planning authorities in minimising adverse effects through local development plans. It highlights the need for careful zoning of land for both noise-generating and noise-sensitive uses, consideration of mitigation measures and discusses balanced decision-making weighing noise issues against other planning priorities. The SPPS recommends the use of Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland<sup>[8]</sup> (NPSNI) for planning authorities. NPSNI provides a framework for managing noise to protect public health and quality of life. It sets out three objectives which are underpinned by the principles of sustainable development. It aims to avoid significant adverse impacts on, mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on, and contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.

The DfI Environmental Mission Statement for Infrastructure Development and Management<sup>[9]</sup> states its purpose as developing policies and delivering infrastructure services in a way that places environmental considerations at the heart of everything that we do.

The Northern Ireland Executive Programme for Government 2024-2027<sup>[10]</sup> discusses the importance of investment in infrastructure:

*“Improving our infrastructure will be vital to delivering our Priorities. By investing in water and wastewater, roads and transport, and sporting infrastructure we will encourage businesses to invest, enable house building, and support greater energy efficiency and affordability.”*

The document describes itself as an ambitious agenda of change for Northern Ireland.

DfI is currently preparing a new suite of transport plans which will set the framework for making transport policy and investment decisions up until 2035, the first being the Eastern Transport Plan 2035<sup>[14]</sup>. The new regional plans acknowledge that transport has a role to play in delivering against several of these priorities and is central to healthy, safe and inclusive communities.

## 2.5 NOISE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

There are no noise limit values set under the Regulations. For both Round 2 and Round 3, the following criteria were implemented after being established and approved by the then Department for Regional Development (DRD). The methodology itself mirrored that of The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Welsh Government in relation to noise from roads by determining:

- Where the 1% of the population that are affected by the highest noise levels are located.
- Where the analysis has revealed that for Northern Ireland these locations are where the  $L_{A10,18h}$  indicator is at least 75dB.

It should be noted that as a result of the change in methodology from Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN)<sup>[27]</sup> to Common Noise Assessment Methods in Europe (CNOSSOS-EU 2020)<sup>[28]</sup>, the  $L_{A10,18h}$  indicator is no longer predicted to fulfil the requirements in the END, meaning predicted noise levels cannot be readily compared against the  $L_{A10,18h}$  criteria above. The  $L_{Aeq,16hr}$  is, however, predicted to ascertain a  $L_{Aeq,16hr}$  criteria level equivalent to the 75dB  $L_{A10,18h}$  criteria level, a correction of -2dB is applied to the  $L_{A10,18h}$  value as per the guidance of the Department for Transport, Transport Appraisal Guidance Unit A3<sup>[20]</sup>. This means that a sound level of 75dB  $L_{A10,18h}$  would be equivalent to 73dB  $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ .

## 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

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### 3.1 EXTENT

The END requires that Action Plans be designed to manage noise issues and effects at places near Major Roads and at places near All Roads within Agglomerations.

Within Agglomerations, the Regulations require the mapping of all roads, railway, industry and airport noise regardless of the thresholds. The thresholds for Round 4 are the same as for previous rounds for which noise mapping and action planning should be prepared and reported for:

- All Major Roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year.
- All Major and non-Major Roads in all Agglomerations with a population in excess of 100,000 persons, a population density equal to or greater than 500 people per km<sup>2</sup> and which is considered to be urbanised.

The only Agglomeration area in Northern Ireland considered in Round 4 is the Belfast urban area, which reaches the population threshold outlined above and defined in the Regulations. The roads modelled in the Belfast Agglomeration for Round 4 comprise the urban areas of Belfast, Castlereagh, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down Local Government Districts.

The extent of Major Roads is based on an assessment of roads which are likely to exceed the threshold as set out in the Regulations and include trunk roads, motorways and classified roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year.

## 4 CHANGES IN METHODOLOGY BETWEEN ROUND 3 AND 4

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### 4.1.1 CHANGES IN THE ROAD SOURCE DATA AND 3D PROPAGATION MODEL

There have been several changes to the roads source data and 3D propagation model between Round 3 and Round 4.

As an example, modelling for road noise under previous Rounds including Round 3 were based on CRTN, whereas Round 4 used the CNOSSOS-EU 2020 methodology.

The CNOSSOS-EU:2020 method has three separate modelling parts:

- **Source part:** There are separate noise source emission models for road, railway, industrial and aircraft sources. The noise source emission describes the sound power level emitted by the source as a function of a variety of input factors. For example, in the case of road traffic, this would include traffic volume and speed, road temperature, road gradient and road surface.
- **Propagation part:** The propagation part of CNOSSOS-EU:2020 defines how noise levels will attenuate due to aspects such as the distance along a propagation path (source to receiver), air absorption, terrain elevations, screening effects from buildings and barriers, meteorological effects and the influence of ground cover. The CNOSSOS-EU:2020 propagation model is derived from the French NMPB 200814 model and is the same irrespective of the source type being modelled (road/rail/industry).
- **Receiver part:** The receiver part specifies how receiver points should be positioned on dwelling façades, how the number of people and number of dwellings should be attributed to the calculated noise exposure levels at the façade, and how the area exposed to noise should be determined from the calculated noise grids.

Altogether, an approximately additional 650km of roads were modelled for Round 4 when compared to Round 3.

Discussion on some of these and other changes is included in Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Stage 2 – Final Report<sup>[21]</sup>, in Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Stage 1 – Data Input Report<sup>[19]</sup>, and in Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Road Modelling Report<sup>[18]</sup>.

### 4.1.2 CHANGES TO EXTENTS OF THE POPULATION MODEL

All elements of the population model have been updated for Round 4. The Belfast Agglomeration area from Round 3 was re-evaluated and redefined using Census 2021 data. The updated Round 4 Belfast Agglomeration area continues to accurately represent the densely population regions surrounding the Belfast urban area, complies with the Regulations, and aligns with the population distribution throughout Belfast.

CNOSSOS-EU, which was not used for Round 3, sets out a specific methodology for assigning the population and dwellings of a building to the calculated noise levels at the façade of the building. For example, for multi-dwelling buildings (e.g. a block of flats) the method requires that the median of all calculated façade levels is determined, then the population and dwellings of the building are evenly distributed to each calculated façade level that is above the median. It should be noted that these are



statistical values and are therefore decimalised according to the proportion of the dwelling/population of a building that has been assigned to a calculated façade noise level.

Key changes to the population model are discussed in Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Stage 2 – Final Report<sup>[21]</sup>, in Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Stage 1 – Data Input Report<sup>[19]</sup>, and in Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Road Modelling Report<sup>[18]</sup>.

## 5 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF NOISE MAPPING

**Table 5-1** summarises the noise mapping thresholds and outcome for previous rounds of noise mapping.

**Table 5-1 Summary of previous Noise Mapping Rounds**

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<b>Major Roads Threshold (Vehicle passages per year)</b>	6 million	3 million	3 million
<b>Agglomeration Threshold (Inhabitants)</b>	250,000	100,000	100,000
<b>Summary of CNMAs</b>	CNMAs identified at Round 2	Most CNMAs are located within Belfast Agglomeration, 23 out of a total of 32. 9 were in proximity to a motorway. The remaining 14 CNMAs within the Belfast Agglomeration are located along main routes within urban areas of Belfast, Lisburn, Bangor and Hollywood. Outside the Belfast Agglomeration were a total of 9 CNMAs located in the towns and cities of Derry, Ballymena, Dungiven, Ballykelly, Moy, Newtownards and Armagh.	Within Belfast Agglomeration, there are a total of 25 CNMAs. Outside of the Belfast Agglomeration were a total of 28 CNMAs located in towns and cities of Armagh, Banbridge, Ballynahinch, Crossgar, Lurgan, Newry, Newtownards, Fivemiletown, Clogher, Lisnaskea, Derry, Moneymore, Moy, Maguiresbridge, Ballymagorry, Omagh, Ballymena, Broughshane, Coleraine and Dungiven.

### 5.1 ROUND 4 MAPPING

For Round 4, the thresholds for which noise mapping and action planning should be prepared to are:

- All Major Roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages per year.
- All Agglomerations with a population in excess of 100,000 persons, a population density equal to or greater than 500 people per km<sup>2</sup> and which is considered to be urbanised.

Noise maps were generated from the Round 4 data and then investigated using a series of analytical tools. At that stage an understanding of the number of people exposed to different noise levels and the number of buildings affected was reached, thus enabling an updated list of CNMAs to be prepared.

Two of the ten total CNMAs were located within the Belfast Agglomeration. One is at College Square East and adjoining areas, and the other is at Beersbridge Road. The other eight CNMAs, all of which are outside the Belfast Agglomeration are located in the towns and cities of Ballymena (2), Banbridge (1), Broughshane (1), Dungannon (1), Newry (1), Newtownhamilton (1), and Rathfriland (1).

## 5.2 POPULATION EXPOSURE AND ANALYSIS

Annex VI of the END states that the estimated number of people living in dwellings that are exposed to noise are to be calculated for the various parameters mapped. This is discussed further in Section 4.1.2. The methodology behind this exposure assessment is provided in Section 7 of the Noise Consultants Limited Round 4 Noise Mapping for Northern Ireland Stage 2 – Final Report, 2024<sup>[21]</sup>. The results of this analysis are presented in the tables **Table 5-2** to **Table 5-6**.

The figures presented in Round 3 are presented for information purposes but are not intended to be used to compare to Round 4 figures owing to the difference in methodology, as discussed in Section 4.

Annex IV of the END requires that figures must be rounded to the nearest hundred.

Noise mapping was carried out to predict the following noise indicators:

- $L_{Aeq, 16hr}$ .
- $L_{den}$ .
- $L_{day}$ .
- $L_{evening}$ .
- $L_{night}$ .

### 5.2.1 BELFAST AGGLOMERATION

**Table 5-2** and **Table 5-3** show, respectively, an estimate of the number of dwellings and population exposed to road traffic noise sources for major roads inside the Belfast Agglomeration. The numbers have been rounded to the nearest hundred, as required by paragraph 1.5 of Annex IV of the END.

Approximately 11,000 dwellings within the Belfast Agglomeration are shown to be exposed to noise levels from Major Roads greater than 75 dB  $L_{den}$ . Around 800 dwellings were exposed to these noise levels in Round 3. For the  $L_{night}$  parameter approximately 2,100 dwellings within the Belfast agglomeration are exposed to noise levels of more than 70 dB  $L_{night}$ . Around 100 dwellings were exposed to these noise levels in Round 3.

Approximately 22,700 people within the Belfast Agglomeration are shown to be exposed to noise levels from Major Roads greater than 75 dB  $L_{den}$ . Around 3,100 people were exposed to these noise levels in Round 3. For the  $L_{night}$  parameter approximately 4,800 people within the Belfast agglomeration are exposed to noise levels of more than 70 dB  $L_{night}$ . Around 400 people were exposed to these noise levels in Round 3.

**Table 5-2 All Roads - Number of Dwellings within the Belfast Agglomeration**

Noise Level dB	$L_{den}$	$L_{day}$	$L_{eve}$	$L_{Aeq,16h}$	$L_{night}$
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50-54	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	44,500
55-59	98,400	95,600	54,300	85,300	26,300
60-64	43,600	39,200	28,000	36,200	16,200
65-69	25,800	22,700	21,100	22,300	10,400
70-74	18,400	19,300	13,200	18,700	2,100
≥75	11,000	8,200	1,600	6,500	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>197,200</b>	<b>185,000</b>	<b>118,200</b>	<b>169,000</b>	<b>99,500</b>

**Table 5-3 All Roads - Population Exposure within the Belfast Agglomeration**

Noise Level dB	L <sub>den</sub>	L <sub>day</sub>	L <sub>eve</sub>	L <sub>Aeq,16h</sub>	L <sub>night</sub>
50-54	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	92,100
55-59	207,300	199,800	112,000	177,000	53,400
60-64	89,900	80,700	57,600	74,700	32,800
65-69	52,700	46,400	42,600	45,600	21,100
70-74	37,500	39,500	27,600	38,000	4,800
≥75	22,700	17,200	3,400	13,900	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>410,100</b>	<b>383,600</b>	<b>243,200</b>	<b>349,200</b>	<b>204,200</b>

## 5.2.2 MAJOR ROADS STATISTICS

**Table 5-4** and **Table 5-5** show, respectively, an estimate of the number of dwellings and population exposed to road traffic noise sources for major roads across Northern Ireland, outside the Belfast Agglomeration. The numbers have been rounded to the nearest hundred, as required by paragraph 2.5 of Annex IV of the END.

Approximately 14,200 dwellings are shown to be exposed to noise levels from Major Roads outside the Belfast Agglomeration greater than 75 dB L<sub>den</sub>. Around 2,400 dwellings were exposed to these noise levels in Round 3. For the L<sub>night</sub> parameter approximately 2,400 dwellings outside the Belfast agglomeration are exposed to noise levels of more than 70 dB L<sub>night</sub>. Around 500 dwellings were exposed to these noise levels in Round 3.

Approximately 28,700 of the population living close to Major Roads are exposed to noise levels greater than 75 dB L<sub>den</sub>. Around 6,700 people were exposed to these noise levels for Round 3. For the L<sub>night</sub> parameter, approximately 5,000 people living close to Major Roads are exposed to night noise levels of greater than 70 dB L<sub>night</sub>. Around 1,200 people were exposed to these noise levels for Round 3.

**Table 5-4 Major Roads - Number of Dwellings**

Noise Level dB	L <sub>den</sub>	L <sub>day</sub>	L <sub>eve</sub>	L <sub>eq,16h</sub>	L <sub>night</sub>
50-54	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	33,900
55-59	59,700	50,000	33,300	46,400	19,300
60-64	29,400	25,200	17,900	23,200	18,400
65-69	17,500	16,300	17,800	16,200	13,200
70-74	18,600	18,800	16,400	19,100	2,400
≥75	14,200	11,600	1,600	9,200	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>139,400</b>	<b>121,900</b>	<b>87,000</b>	<b>114,100</b>	<b>87,200</b>

**Table 5-5 Major Roads - Population Exposure**

Noise Level dB	L <sub>den</sub>	L <sub>day</sub>	L <sub>eve</sub>	L <sub>Aeq,16h</sub>	L <sub>night</sub>
50-54	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	75,600
55-59	132,200	110,600	73,600	102,600	43,100
60-64	65,100	55,600	40,000	51,300	39,400
65-69	39,200	36,600	39,200	36,300	27,700
70-74	40,200	40,200	32,900	40,400	5,000
≥75	28,700	23,000	3,200	18,200	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>305,400</b>	<b>266,000</b>	<b>188,900</b>	<b>248,800</b>	<b>190,800</b>

Statistics pertaining to Area of Noise Bands, Population exposed, and Dwellings exposed above the 55, 65 and 75 dB L<sub>den</sub> thresholds, are presented in **Table 5-6** . Those figures include Major Roads and the Belfast Agglomeration.

**Table 5-6 Statistics  $L_{den}$  thresholds**

Noise Level $L_{den}$ dB	Area of Noise Bands <sup>4</sup> in km <sup>2</sup>	Population exposed	Dwellings exposed
> 55	1,047	566,500	266,200
> 65	309	187,400	89,000
> 75	86	49,000	23,900

### 5.3 IDENTIFICATION OF CNMAS FOR ROUND 4

The selection methodology for identifying CNMAs was developed by DAERA. This process uses automated GIS tools to identify areas with the highest concentrations of population exposed to elevated noise levels.

The outputs from this process enable Competent Authorities to identify, assess, and designate CNMAs for protection under the statutory noise action planning framework.

Strategic noise maps for Round 4 were generated and analysed using a suite of GIS-based analytical tools. The primary objective was to identify 1% of the population affected by the highest road traffic noise levels from those which are exposed to road traffic noise above 50 dB  $L_{Aeq,16h}$ .

As a result, the model does not cover the entire region of Northern Ireland but captures a population of approximately 1,716,541 people. The subset representing the top 1% most affected by noise, (out of those which are exposed to road traffic noise levels above 50 dB  $L_{Aeq,16h}$ ) is approximately 10,309 individuals.

The population exposed to road traffic noise levels above 50 dB  $L_{Aeq,16h}$  were identified, and from this subset of the total population, the top 1% of the population with the highest noise exposure were grouped into spatial clusters of 50m. These clusters were then categorised into four priority bands based on the number of affected properties:

- Noise Action Plan Band 1, >20 properties affected.
- Noise Action Plan Band 2, 11 - 20 properties affected.
- Noise Action Plan Band 3, 5 - 10 properties affected.
- Noise Action Plan Band 4, >0 - 4 properties affected.

Bands 1 and 2 i.e. areas where more than 11 residential properties are affected were considered for Round 4 which is the same approach taken in Round 3.

The identified clusters, representing the 1% of the population most affected by road traffic noise, serve as the basis for proposing CNMAs. These areas are characterised by high noise exposure and are prioritised for potential noise reduction interventions.

Analysis of the dataset resulted in the identification and prioritisation of the ten clusters with the greatest population exposure, which were subsequently designated as the proposed CNMAs. Based on this approach the clusters or CNMAs were identified across Northern Ireland and are shown in

<sup>4</sup> The measured area exposed to noise at or above the stated level



**Appendix C.** It should be highlighted that noise maps in **Appendix C** are proposed CNMAs only and are to be reviewed in conjunction with this Action Plan.

Within the Belfast Agglomeration, there are a total of two CNMAs. Outside of the Belfast Agglomeration there are a total of eight CNMAs located in the towns and cities of Ballymena (2), Banbridge (1), Broughshane (1), Dungannon (1), Newry (1), Newtownhamilton (1), and Rathfriland (1).

## 6 MITIGATION AND PROTECTION MEASURES

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### 6.1 GENERAL MITIGATION MEASURES

On a strategic and local scale, DfI currently considers ways to manage and mitigate road noise in accordance with the following guidance documents:

- Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) published by the Department for Transport.
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA111 noise and Vibration<sup>[25]</sup> and LD119 Roadside environmental mitigation and enhancement<sup>[26]</sup>.
- Roads Service Policy and Procedure Guide: RSPPG\_E030 Major Works Schemes – Inception to Construction<sup>[29]</sup>.
- Noise Insulation Regulations (NIR) Northern Ireland (NI) 1995.
- Director of Engineering Memorandum (DEM) 164/17: (NI) - guidance on DfI approach to the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN)<sup>[9]</sup>.
- Roads Service Policy and Procedure Guide: RSPPG\_SO22 Article 22 of the Land Acquisition and Compensation (NI) Order 1973 Noise (NIR)<sup>[12][12]</sup>.

At various stages throughout the design process DfI requires the environmental impact to be assessed of schemes in line with their current procedural guidelines. The extent of the assessment depends on the design stage, the size of the scheme, its location and environmental sensitivity of the surrounds.

Wherever possible, the environmental assessment of road schemes aims to avoid or minimise adverse noise impacts. At an early stage in the design process noise and vibration mitigation measures should be considered which include:

- Realigning the route away from residential areas or other sensitive areas.
- Keeping the route low within the natural topography to exploit any natural screening.
- Providing environmental barriers, such as earth mounding or acoustic fencing.
- Using low noise surfacing to reduce noise of vehicle tyres interacting with the road surface.

In addition to the internal procedures that DfI has drawn up, the planning system plays an important role in supporting the overall management of noise. Noise is a key consideration in the determination of planning applications, which means that noise effects are taken into account when considering development proposals. Existing local planning policy emphasises the need to carefully consider noise in the design of new development as well as development plans which include planning policies tailored to the control of noise.

Noise from individual vehicles is controlled under mandatory EU noise emission standard legislation which apply to all new road vehicles. This legislation is implemented through the Road Traffic (NI) Order 1995<sup>[13]</sup>, where all new vehicles must meet the requirements before starting service and once in operation must be maintained in good condition.

The Roads (NI) Order 1993<sup>[13]</sup> also implement European legislation that controls the noise emitted from the contact of tyres to the road surface. The Order mandates noise limits on new tyres fitted to newly manufactured vehicles and through a phased introduction, since 2011, on all replacement tyres.

DfI has identified some schemes which may result in noise reduction.

Table 6-1 shows some of these schemes undertaken since Round 3.

**Table 6-1 Schemes resulting in potential noise reduction undertaken since Round 3**

Measure	Comment
Promoting active travel	<p>Active travel is promoted by the Public Health Agency and other government bodies to promote cycling and walking. An Active Travel Delivery Plan was put to public consultation between 13 November 2024 and 28 February 2025. The Plan sets out how the Department for Infrastructure will prioritise and deliver high-quality active travel infrastructure for shorter everyday journeys within urban and rural settlements over the next 10 years and beyond.</p> <p>In March 2025, the Minister announced a £1.9 million funding boost to support councils to deliver seven active travel projects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mid Ulster - Dungannon Park Active Travel Pedestrian/ Cycle Route improvements;</li> <li>■ Mid Ulster - Dungannon Park Active Travel Route Lighting Upgrade;</li> <li>■ Belfast City Council - Introduction of E-bikes to the Belfast Bikes Scheme;</li> <li>■ Belfast City Council - Under The Bridges project – Supporting connectivity in greater Clarendon area;</li> <li>■ Belfast City Council - Sailortown/ Titanic Quarter Bridge – Support for scheme development to RIBA stage 2;</li> <li>■ Newry, Mourne and Down District Council - Newcastle Active Travel Hub - Support for improving active travel connections and enabling infrastructure; and</li> </ul> <p>Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council - Valley Park Active Travel infrastructure improvements.</p>
Cycleways	<p>Various cycleway schemes have been built, including the Clabby Road Fivemiletown, widening scheme which was opened in March 2018. Shared bus and cycle lanes as well as city centre cycle lanes have been introduced since Round 2 to provide quieter alternatives to travel.</p> <p>A new 1.4km off-road cycling path to link Sprucefield Park &amp; Ride to Lisburn and on to Belfast was opened in 2020.</p>
Electric vehicles	<p>Since Round 2, DfI has increased the number of electric car charging points throughout Northern Ireland which follows on from the UK Government's 'Road to Zero' Strategy which includes an ambition to see at least half of new cars to be ultra-low emission by 2030.</p>
Fivemiletown Active Travel	<p>A CNMA was identified in Fivemiletown during Round 3. It was proposed that, to reduce noise, specific initiatives would be introduced in 2023 such as car-pools, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport.</p> <p>DfI constructed a shared footway at Clabby Road, Fivemiletown in 2023-2024. It is hoped that this scheme may help to reduce road traffic noise in the Round 3 Fivemiletown CNMA 1 by allowing car users to use forms of active travel instead, including cycling and walking.</p>
A6 Randalstown to Castledawson Dualling	<p>The purpose of this scheme is to dual around 15 km of the A6 from the M22 at Randalstown to the start of the Toome Bypass, and from the</p>

Measure	Comment
	end of the Toome Bypass as far as the Castledawson Roundabout. Alongside the increased noise impacts at some receptors, the environmental statement noted a large number of decreases in noise impacts at receptors along the route, resulting in lower noise levels than the existing strategic route. The full scheme was opened to traffic in May 2021.
A6 Derry to Dungiven	The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTN TP) 2015 endorsed the provision of a 30 km dual carriageway from Derry to Dungiven, including a dual carriageway bypass of Dungiven. The scheme opened to traffic in April 2023, rerouting through traffic away from the Dungiven CNMA, reducing traffic volume and percentage of heavy goods vehicles, and subsequently reducing noise impacts in Dungiven. The scheme was constructed using low noise road surfacing material.
Black's Road 'Park & Ride'	The extension to the existing 'Park & Ride' facility at Black's Road opened in late 2018, more than doubling the existing spaces by 307 to 550. The scheme is expected to contribute to reducing traffic volumes and subsequent traffic noise levels.

**Table 6-2** shows details of some of these schemes with a planned implementation date identified during the next five years, i.e. between 2023 and 2028 which may result in noise reduction.

**Table 6-2 Schemes resulting in potential noise reduction measures identified during next five years**

Improvement	Comment
A5 Western Transport Corridor Dual Carriageway	Construction of the proposed upgrade of the A5 in the west of Northern Ireland from the Irish border near Aughnacloy, via Omagh and Strabane to New Buildings is paused pending the outcome of a Notice of Appeal by the Department for Infrastructure against the A5 judgement made in June 2025. Noise mitigation for the Proposed Scheme includes 2m high acoustic fencing to reduce traffic-related noise at 9 locations along the Proposed Scheme corridor and the use of low noise road surfacing on the main carriageways.
A6 Derry to Dungiven	The project will upgrade 30 kilometres of the A6 between Derry and Dungiven to dual carriageway and includes a dual carriageway bypass of Dungiven. It would also improve the existing A2 Clooney Road dual carriageway between Caw roundabout and Maydown roundabout.
A24 Ballynahinch Bypass	The proposed A24 Ballynahinch Bypass would run from a new roundabout at the junction of the A24 Belfast Road and the A21 Saintfield Road to a new roundabout located at the existing junction of the B2 Downpatrick Road and the A24 Drumaness Road. A compact grade separated junction would connect the B7 Crossgar Road with the proposed bypass.

Improvement	Comment
	<p>Overtaking opportunities would be provided for traffic leaving both roundabouts to travel along the proposed bypass. A shared footway/cycleway extending between the terminal roundabouts would be included within the proposed A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme.</p> <p>A 'Park &amp; Share' facility would be constructed on the northern side of the proposed Saintfield Road Roundabout between the A24 Belfast Road and A21 Saintfield Road.</p>
A1 Junctions Phase 2	<p>This scheme aims to provide further safety improvements along the A1 dual carriageway between Hillsborough and Loughbrickland. The improvements will include the provision of new grade separated junctions, the closing up of all gaps in the central reservation and the provision of a continuous central reserve safety barrier along the whole route.</p>
A29 Cookstown Bypass	<p>The Proposed Scheme comprises approximately 4km of carriageway extending from Loughry roundabout on the A29 Dungannon Road to the south of Cookstown, to a proposed new roundabout on the A29 Moneymore Road to the north. There would also be carriageway improvements to Sandholes Link Road.</p>
A4 Enniskillen Southern Bypass	<p>DfI Roads Western Division are progressing the design and development of the A4 Enniskillen Southern Bypass between the A4 Dublin road and the A4 Sligo Road.</p>
Newry Southern Relief Road	<p>The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Southern Division is advancing the design and development of a new strategic road link to the south of Newry City, between the A1 Dublin Road dual carriageway and A2 Warrenpoint Road dual carriageway. This would provide an alternative route for strategic traffic that avoids Newry City centre.</p>
Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) Phase 2	<p>The selected route for Phase 2 of Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT2) will see the introduction of a G3 Glider service extending from Glengormley in the north along the Antrim Road linking through the city centre along the Ormeau Road and Saintfield Road to Carryduff. The existing G2 City Centre to Belfast Harbour glider service will also be extended to provide connections with Queens University and Belfast City Hospital.</p>
Lagan pedestrian and cycle bridge	<p>The Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge will be a twin-pylon cable-stayed steel bridge spanning 143m across the River Lagan from the Lagan Towpath at the Gasworks site to the Ormeau Embankment, close to the 'Ozone' indoor tennis centre and leisure complex. The steel superstructure will be supported on piled reinforced concrete piers and abutments, with approach ramps provided beyond the bridge at each end to tie into the existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. The width of the bridge at 5.0m, will accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists and improve linkages between communities from both sides of the River Lagan. It will also improve</p>

Improvement	Comment
	transport linkages to the City Centre for pedestrians and cyclists and accessibility to leisure facilities and parks for local communities and commuters. It will encourage sustainability by enabling people to choose healthier cleaner forms of transport and improve road safety to provide an alternative traffic free route.
Derry Central Riverfront Project	<p>The Central Riverfront and Strand Road Active Travel and Place-Making Project (known as the Central Riverfront Project or CRP) is a partnership project between the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC).</p> <p>The £45 million scheme comprises roads realignment, streetscape enhancement and creation of an active travel corridor along Strand Road and Queens Quay as well as the creation of new civic spaces including University Square, Harbour Square/ Victoria Market, Peace Bridge Landing Point &amp; Whitaker Street.</p>
Strabane Footbridge	This project aims to construct a new Strabane Footbridge across the Mourne River to enhance active travel access. Although termed as a footbridge, it is designed for use by both pedestrians and cyclists at all times. An important feature of the Footbridge will be its role in enhancing connectivity to and from the bus station, connecting with existing public footways and desire lines through O’Nolan Park and Bradley Way to the west, and providing access to Main Street and the Town Centre to the east via steps and ramped footways.
A32 Cornamuck	<p>The proposed scheme that DfI Roads have developed is part of a strategy for improving the A32 route between Omagh and Enniskillen. The strategy proposes a programme of both ‘on-line’ and ‘off-line’ improvement schemes to modern single carriageway standards with improved overtaking opportunities</p> <p>The proposed scheme at Cornamuck, located between Dromore and Irvinestown, is approximately 1.4km in length and comprises widening of the existing road, a new section of offline road and associated junction improvements with a current estimated cost of £8.9m (under review). The Environmental Statement, Notice of Intention to Make a Direction Order and Vesting Order were published during August 2015.</p>

As for all the schemes requiring further assessment and development of Draft Statutory Orders, a complete appraisal will be undertaken in line with the Department for Transport’s Transport Analysis Guidance and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. This will include appraisal in terms of environment, economy, engineering, traffic and social objectives.

## 6.2 QUIET AREAS

In 2016 DAERA published guidance on the identification, designation and management of Quiet Areas<sup>[6]</sup>. Action plans should protect areas that are already quiet against an increase in noise. A quiet area is defined in the END as: an area which is not exposed to an  $L_{den}$  noise level greater than a certain value. The selection criteria are like those adopted by the other parts of the UK and Republic of Ireland. The criteria are:

- Land type - publicly available parks and open space within an agglomeration.
- Noise level - Noise levels less than 55 dB  $L_{den}$ .
- Minimum area - Minimum area of 5 hectares.

Once quiet areas have been formally designated, district councils should manage the noise environment either by monitoring the noise levels or by reviewing the Round 4 noise maps. Councils should undertake any necessary mitigation measures (e.g. acoustic barriers) and take enforcement action in situations where noise levels have become unacceptable i.e. above 55 dB  $L_{den}$ .

Councils can protect Quiet Areas by:

- Bringing forward bespoke policy in their local development plans.
- Managing development through determining planning applications and taking cognisance of the third aim of Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (NPSNI) i.e. to contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.

In addition to the protection through the planning system, competent authorities may adopt measures such as noise limits or traffic management systems, to prevent noise increases having an adverse effect on quiet areas. Competent authorities may also need to review their Action Plans following the designation of Quiet Areas to ensure that there is no conflict and that they are taking sufficient action to prevent an increase in noise from the sources for which they have responsibility.

During the Round 3 process, three quiet areas were designated by the Minister on 20 September 2016 which are:

- Conor Park/Stricklands Glen, Bangor West, North Down - 5.37 hectares.
- Bashfordsland, Carrickfergus - 10.93 hectares.
- Carnmoney Hill - Upper Newtownabbey - 16.70 hectares.

DAERA, as the Authority responsible for the designation of Quiet Areas, has advised DfI that the three quiet areas designated on 20 September 2016 remain current. The locations of the three quiet areas are shown in **Appendix A**. At the time of preparing this report, GIS information with the exact polygons was not available. **Appendix A** shows a representation of the Quiet Areas shown in **Appendix A** of the Round 3 report <sup>[17][17]</sup>.

DAERA also consulted the public on the designation of Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area between 21 September 2016 and 19 October 2016. However, at the time of writing (October 2025) Lagan Meadows has not been formally designated as a Quiet Area.

### 6.3 POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES FOR ROUND 4 CNMAS

Prior to formal confirmation of the CNMAs as Noise Management Areas, potential noise mitigation measures and costs and benefits should be investigated. There are a wide range of direct and indirect noise mitigation measures available, some of which are outside the control of DfI as they are at a national or regional level and some are not appropriate for the location or cost-effective in their implementation. Examples of noise mitigation measures potentially outside the control of DfI or for which DfI does not have sole responsibility might include noise reduction resulting from large road infrastructure projects, national policies on changing speed limits, carbon-related policies such as Climate Action Plans.

The DAERA Technical Guidance provides examples of potential options that may be considered.

For all the CNMAs, DAERA will monitor, alongside the planning department from the relevant local authority or DfI, any developments plus supporting mitigation measures as part of the design.

**Table 6-3** shows the summary of proposed mitigation measures for Round 4 which are subject to available funding and powers available to DfI. Due to the nature of the measures many of the costs are not known as they are outside the powers available to DfI. Some of the proposed measures identified are generic and it is anticipated that these will be developed over the course of the Round 4 period.

Detailed noise reduction calculations cannot be carried out at this stage as DfI are not in possession of all noise modelling input information in relevant formats such as traffic information. It is considered that the quantification of noise reduction offered by specific mitigation measures would be carried out at a later stage of the Round 4 process once Noise Management Areas had been formally designated, which is not an exercise for completion during writing of the Road Noise Action Plan. It is considered that the process to designate CNMAs as NMAs would involve feasibility studies unrelated to noise before NMAs are designated and detailed mitigation measures can be identified and their impacts quantified.

The implementation of the proposed mitigation measures would be anticipated to reduce the road traffic noise levels in these CNMAs. Detail on the degree of noise reduction would be anticipated to be ascertained once CNMAs were formally designated as NMAs and quantitative appraisal on noise mitigation had been undertaken. As an example, DMRB LA111 advises that noise predictions including the replacement of Hot Rolled Asphalt road surfaces with thin surfacing on roads with speeds of greater than 75km/h should adopt a surface correction of the Road surface influence (RSI). If RSI data is not available an upper limit correction of -3.5dB should be assumed.

**Table 6-3 Summary of Proposed Mitigation for CNMAs**

CNMA Reference	Proposed Measures	Approx. Cost	Delivery
CNMA 1 (Belfast, Beersbridge Road)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as speed reduction, car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport, including the BRT on the Albertbridge Road so could potentially benefit from the scheme.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 2 (Belfast, College Square East)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport. The promotion of the use of railway commuting may aid the reduction in	Not known at time of writing	2028

CNMA Reference	Proposed Measures	Approx. Cost	Delivery
	commuter traffic into the city centre.		
CNMA 3 (Ballymena, Queen Street)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport including at Ballymena train station which is approximately 1km from the CNMA.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 4 (Ballymena, Waveney Road)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport including at Ballymena train station which is directly adjacent to the CNMA.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 5 (Banbridge, Dromore Road/Church Street)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 6 (Broughshane, Main Street)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 7 (Dungannon, Milltown Street/Wellington Road)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 8 (Newry, Armagh Road)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and	Not known at time of writing	2028

CNMA Reference	Proposed Measures	Approx. Cost	Delivery
	encouraging the use of public transport.		
CNMA 9 (Newtownhamilton, Armagh Street/Dundalk Street)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport.	Not known at time of writing	2028
CNMA 10 (Rathfriland, Newry Steet/Downpatrick Street)	Introduction of targeted initiatives such as car-pools, low-noise road surfacing, cycling to work schemes and encouraging the use of public transport.	Not known at time of writing	2028

## 7 CONSULTATION

### 7.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public Consultation of the Draft Road Noise Action Plan was undertaken in accordance with Article 8(7) of the Environmental Noise Directive between 27 November 2025 and 22 January 2026, seeking comments from consultees.

Consultation and invitation to contribute was made by the following means:

- Hard copies of the Round 4 DRAFT Road Noise Action Plan were be made available at all DfI Roads divisional headquarters;
- A targeted email to the consultees in Appendix E was sent on 27 November 2025, inviting consultees to review the DRAFT report and share comments as part of the public consultation process; and
- DfI posted social media inserts including on LinkedIn and Facebook including a link to the DfI website summarising the purpose of the Round 4 Road Noise Action Plan and inviting comments.

Consultation responses have been logged and replies formulated by DfI.

A total of five responses were received during the public consultation process, from:

- Belfast City Council;
- Walk Wheel Cycle Trust;
- Royal National Institute of Blind People in Northern Ireland (RNIB NI) & Guide Dogs;
- A private Citizen; and
- Institute of Highway Engineers.

Table 7-1 summarises the main points raised by the respondents and includes replies from DfI. Where a consultation response included multiple points, these have been listed individually to aid readability of the Department’s response.

**Table 7-1 Summary of consultees, consultation responses and replies from the Department for Infrastructure**

Consultee	Consultee Response	DfI Response
The Department for Infrastructure is seeking your views on the draft Road Noise Action Plan 2023–2028 which has been produced to comply with Round 4 of the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.		
Institute of Highway Engineers	The IHE considers that the statutory purpose of the action plan is clearly set out. However,	The intention of the RNAP is to manage noise issues and effects, including noise reduction where necessary, and protect quiet areas against an increase in noise

	<p>the plan would benefit from a clearer explanation of outcome-based objectives, for example, what practical improvements affected communities should expect as a result of this action plan and how progress will be given at the end of the five-year cycle.</p> <p>Providing information on whether the action plan aids in reducing existing high levels of noise exposure, prevents further deterioration, or manages future growth in traffic noise, would help stakeholders better understand the strategic intent and priorities as well as the limitations of the plan.</p>	<p>where appropriate. Candidate Noise Management Areas are chosen as per the DAERA Technical Guidance using the criteria detailed in Section 5.3. With regard to reducing existing high levels of noise exposure in non-CNMA areas, members of the public can contact DfI through existing channels of communication to make queries about noise levels at specific locations. A validation exercise may be initiated by DfI and a further noise study may be required to determine noise levels at receptors.</p> <p>Quiet Areas have been identified as part of this Noise Action Plan and the purpose of this is the prevention of deterioration of existing noise levels, as discussed in Section 6.2. DAERA will continue to gather information to assist in the preparation of the Round 5 Road Noise Action Plan.</p>
	<p>How do objectives relate to health and the quality-of-life influence threshold selection or prioritisation?</p>	<p>The preparation of this Noise Action Plan has been made considering the current evidence embedded in National Policy pertaining to Health and quality of life. Health and quality of life are discussed in Section 2.4.</p>
	<p>How does DfI balance noise objectives against other transport requirements such as safety, network capacity, and asset condition?</p>	<p>This is currently beyond the objectives of this exercise. There is a process to follow the publication of this Noise Action Plan which will include the formal confirmation of CNMAs, at which stage, factors including transport requirements, safety and network capacity may be considered.</p> <p>This will be considered for Round 5.</p>
	<p>In the plan the Department for Infrastructure is correctly identified as the authority for road traffic noise. However, road noise management often crosses into responsibilities held by other bodies, therefore the IHE believes that the plan would benefit from clearer explanation of how DfI works with local councils,</p>	<p>Following this response, further clarification was added at the end of Section 1.3.</p>

	<p>planning authorities, and environmental health where improvement measures fall outside direct highway interventions.</p> <p>Providing clarity on governance arrangements would support effective delivery and show that there is a high level of accountability.</p>	
	<p>This section of the plan clearly establishes the DfI's role, however the plan could be supported by clearly linking road noise management to DfI's wider transport and infrastructure responsibilities. This would in turn display how noise considerations are considered in decision making and not treated as a standalone exercise.</p>	<p>As per DfI's Eastern Transport Plan (ETP) 2035<sup>[14]</sup>, there is a focus on delivering lasting, real and positive change in people's lives. Transport has a role to play in delivering against several of these priorities and is central to healthy, safe and inclusive communities.</p>
	<p>This section of the plan [THE AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE] clearly establishes the DfI's role, however the plan could be supported by clearly linking road noise management to DfI's wider transport and infrastructure responsibilities. This would in turn display how noise considerations are considered in decision making and not treated as a standalone exercise.</p>	<p>Following this response, further detail in this regard has been added to the end of Section 2.4. This subject is also discussed in Section 6.1.</p>
	<p>If the DfI expects continued alignment with EU noise assessment practices in future rounds of the plan.</p>	<p>Continued alignment is anticipated with respect to the arrangements outlined in Section 1.1.</p>
	<p>How emerging best practice will be reviewed and integrated in the plan over time Including this information in the plan would provide reassurance regarding the long-term consistency of the approach and the technical robustness of the action plan.</p>	<p>It is the intention of DfI to keep abreast of emerging technologies pertinent to the management and mitigation of noise.</p>

	<p>The draft plan does explain the noise indicators and thresholds used and while this information is technically accurate, the IHE considers that this section could be expanded by drawing where appropriate on the appendices to explain what the different noise indicators mean for communities in practical terms and how different metrics are used in prioritising and informing decision making.</p>	<p>An explanation of noise indicators and thresholds is included in the Glossary. Further explanation will be considered for Round 5.</p>
	<p>The study area includes major roads exceeding the traffic threshold and the Belfast Agglomeration. The IHE feel that this section could include a comprehensive summary either in a table within the main document or clearly signposted to an appendix of all modelled roads.</p>	<p>A list of all modelled roads has not been produced. However, the DAERA Round 4 Noise Maps web app platform is available, and all roads exceeding the traffic thresholds and modelled roads are indicated.</p> <p>See: <a href="#">Noise Maps   Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</a></p>
	<p>Further clarification on how communities at the edge of the study area are considered, especially where noise impacts may still be significant to them and would increase transparency.</p>	<p>All receptors within the jurisdiction are considered. The study area pertains to the extent of roads for which mapping has taken place and no receptors have been omitted from mapping. The process for establishment of the study area is discussed in Section 3.</p>
	<p>The IHE considers that stakeholders would benefit from clearer guidance on how differences between Round 3 and Round 4 results were interpreted and how methodological change affects trend analysis and prioritisation. This is particularly important to avoid misunderstanding of apparent changes in noise exposure of these periods.</p>	<p>Changes in methodology between Round 3 and Round 4 are summarised in Section 4. In addition, changes are discussed in the DAERA Round 4 Noise Maps and Noise Mapping Technical Reports as discussed in Section 4.1.1 and found at <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/round-4-noise-maps-and-noise-mapping-technical-reports">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/round-4-noise-maps-and-noise-mapping-technical-reports</a>.</p>
	<p>The IHE recommends expanding this section to explain how exposure data is used in decision making</p>	<p>The preparation of exposure statistics has been completed by DAERA and Noise Consultants Limited and methods used are discussed in the DAERA Round</p>

		4 Noise Maps and Noise Mapping Technical Reports as discussed in Section 5.2 and found at <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/round-4-noise-maps-and-noise-mapping-technical-reports">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/round-4-noise-maps-and-noise-mapping-technical-reports</a> .
	and whether thresholds represent triggers for action or relative indicators used for prioritisation."	Thresholds are used in the CNMA identification process, however there are no triggers to set specific actions once the CNMAs are identified.
	The IHE believes that prioritisation between CNMAs is not as clear as it could be, therefore the final plan would benefit from a transparent framework that outlines priorities and a clear explanation of how competing CNMAs are assessed.	As above, the END does not mandate specific criteria for the identification of CNMAs. The process used for the identification of CNMAs is detailed in Section 5.3.
	Factors such as cost effectiveness and how planned works are aligned should additionally be recognised, even if precise rankings are not published.	Considerations for the formal confirmation of CNMAs, including cost-effectiveness, are discussed in the RNAP, including in Sections 6.3, and Section 8.
	The IHE feels that the draft plan does outline a range of possible mitigation measures. Furthermore, the IHE believe that this is an important section of the plan and would be enhanced further by greater depth of how mitigation options are matched to specific noise issues, constraints such as funding, land availability, and engineering possibility. Additionally, details on how noise mitigation is integrated into routine maintenance and capital schemes could be included.	Noted. As per Section 6.3, some of the proposed measures identified are generic and it is anticipated that these will be developed over the course of the Round 4 period. Constraints including those regarding fundings are acknowledged in Section 6.3. Details on how noise mitigation may be integrated into routine maintenance will be considered for Round 5.
	Although the consultation process is clearly outlined the IHE would recommend that the plan provides better explanation on how	DfI undertakes structured engagement with all relevant stakeholders throughout the development of planned infrastructure projects, ensuring that

	consultation responses will be analysed and be reflected in final decisions as well as whether communities within CNMAs will receive feedback or be engaged with during the progress.	communities, statutory bodies, and interested parties are consulted at each key stage of the process.
	The IHE believe that the plan should provide a clearer summary of screening outcomes and any identified considerations whether this in the main body of the document or through clearer signposting to supporting material, as this would strengthen accountability.	A reference to the Section 75 Equality Impact Assessment DfI website has been added as ref. [15].
	The IHE do believe that the plan sets out a framework that is forward looking, however recommends defining measurable performance indicators, how lessons are learned during Round 4 to aid in future action planning and how noise considerations will be included in long-term transport planning.	It is considered that the measurable performance indicator between successive Road Noise Action Plans is the comparison of the predicted noise levels and summary findings between them.
	The plan does provide a firm foundation which is supported by detailed technical information in the appendices. The effectiveness of it would, however, be improved by more detail on decision making processes, monitoring arrangements, and how it relates to wider transport policy.	Following this response, further detail in this regard has been added to the end of Section 2.4.
Private Citizen	Belfast CNMA 15 includes Holywood, Co. Down.	Belfast CNMA 15 was included in RNAP Round 3 and is not included as a proposed CNMA for Round 4.
	If noise levels are equal to or greater than the 75dB limit, the introduction of feasible noise	Members of the public can contact DfI through existing channels of communication to make queries about

	mitigation measures such as low-noise surfacing etc may be introduced.	noise levels at specific locations. A validation exercise may be initiated by DfI and a further noise study may be required to determine noise levels at receptors.
	On the above, I would have thought that the 75dB limit (or 73dB depending on the understanding of the science behind it) is set far too high, and therefore will not be considered.	Currently there are no noise limit values set under the END for the UK. The 75dB $L_{A10,18hr}$ indicator has been used in relation to the prioritisation process. The criteria was adopted from the methodology of DEFRA and the Welsh Government as discussed in Section 2.5. Further information of this is included in the 'Limit Values' section of the Executive Summary of this document.  As above, members of the public can contact DfI through existing channels of communication to make queries about noise levels at specific locations.
	There is a chronic traffic noise issue at Strathearn Court, Holywood (that is likely below 75dB) but is nonetheless detrimental to quality of life here as its chronic/ongoing. I would suggest that any analysis undertaken should consider chronic ongoing road traffic, and not focus on ad-hoc incidents of noise greater than the high limits set above.	The investigation of specific queries is outside the scope of this exercise. As above, members of the public can contact DfI through existing channels of communication to make queries about noise levels at specific locations.
	In the end, this could simply be a matter of introducing noise reducing hedging for example to the roadside periphery as a acoustic barrier that is. I would suggest that such a measure would cost significantly less than lower noise road resurfacing works for example.	The investigation of specific queries is outside the scope of this exercise.
RNIB & Guide Dogs	Is there are a correlation between levels of road noise and incidences of KSI (Killed and Seriously Injured) or other collisions involving pedestrians?	This is outside scope of this report. Further clarification on this matter may be sought from DfI separately.

	Can the information mapping those areas with the highest and most sustained levels of noise, be overlaid with information on collisions or near collisions with pedestrians, to ascertain if there is a pattern and if there is a correlation with areas of most pedestrian usage, particularly at busy junctions and crossings, for example?	This is outside scope of this report. Further clarification on this matter may be sought from DfI separately.
	We welcome that the environmental assessment of road schemes has mitigation measures to 'realign... the route away from residential areas or other sensitive areas'. We believe that separation between moving vehicles and pedestrians is crucial, to minimize the risk of collisions or near misses. We would like to ask what constitutes 'sensitive areas'? (page 29, second set of bullet points).	Following this response, the term 'Sensitive areas' has been added to the Glossary.
Belfast City Council	The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate, however, that during 2021, Northern Ireland was subject to Covid-19 movement restrictions, and that those restrictions were not finally rescinded until February 2022. Accordingly, it is unclear as to the applicability of noise modelling undertaken for road transport for a 2021 year to the entirety of the 2023-2028 five year review period.	Consideration of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, in this case with regard to traffic flows was considered. Detail on this can be found in the Noise Consultants Limited Stage 1 - Data Input Report at the following link: <a href="#">Round 4 Noise Maps and Noise Mapping Technical Reports   Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</a>
	Council noise officers have reviewed maps of the proposed CNMAs, and it appears that in respect of CNMA 1, some recent residential developments along the Beersbridge Road may not be fully reflected within the Department's maps, and that for CNMA 2, the properties located	As per the Noise Consultants Limited Stage 1 - Data Input Report, address data was obtained from OSNI Pointer Data captured in 2021. The report discussing this in more detail is available at the following link: <a href="#">Round 4 Noise Maps and Noise Mapping Technical Reports   Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</a>

	<p>beside 103-105 Castle Street are retail premises. "</p>	
	<p>The Department for Infrastructure will appreciate that with respect to CNMA 1, the Beersbridge Road is already regularly served by Translink Metro Service 4, and that at the location of the proposed CNMA 1, the Translink Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) G1 Glider east route, which runs from the city centre via the Albertbridge Road and Upper Newtownards Road, terminating at the Dundonald Park and Ride, is located some 600 m away. It is unclear, therefore, whether the proposed mitigation measures, that also include speed reductions and carpooling, etc. will lead to the necessary improvements in road transport related noise within the CNMA by the action plan delivery date of 2028.</p>	<p>Noted. As per Section 6.3, some of the proposed measures identified are generic and it is anticipated that these will be developed over the course of the Round 4 period.</p>
	<p>it is considered that where residential properties within the Belfast City Council area have been determined by the Department for Infrastructure to be subject to excessive road transport related noise levels, more affirmative, measurable and site specific mitigation measures should be proposed by the Department,</p>	<p>Noted. As per Section 6.3, some of the proposed measures identified are generic and it is anticipated that these will be developed over the course of the Round 4 period.</p>
	<p>Moreover, it is unclear which organisations would be responsible for the introduction and operation of specific measures such as carpools and cycle to work schemes within each of the CNMAs and how their implementation and impact could be monitored and confirmed by the Department for Infrastructure</p>	<p>The management of the operation of individual infrastructure schemes will vary depending on the authority responsible. As part of the investigation of mitigation measures over the course of the Round 4 period, the authority responsible for the maintenance of the intervention will be a material consideration.</p>

	<p>in order to ensure that road transport noise levels within the CNMAs are reduced to 'acceptable' levels by 2028.</p>	
	<p>Although acoustic barriers or low noise road surfacing are not proposed within either of the two Belfast CNMAs, the Department for Infrastructure is nevertheless recommended to undertake noise readings to validate the round 4 strategic noise mapping and to confirm the need for designation and implementation of the proposed CNMAs. The Department should additionally engage with residents and other relevant parties located within each of the CNMAs in order to agree any final necessary road noise mitigation measures.</p>	<p>Validation exercises including noise measurements in CNMAs form part of the process prior to formal designation as NMAs. Any proposed projects including noise mitigation measures will involve stakeholder consultation (that may include resident groups, charities etc.)</p>
<p>Walk Wheel Cycle Trust</p>	<p>People already exposed to excessive noise and poor air quality are more likely to be socially deprived and suffer from a range of poor housing conditions. This seems to be borne out by the Noise Management Areas cited in this Plan. Noise and air quality management should therefore be properly integrated with housing policies and wider policies to tackle health inequalities.</p>	<p>It is a statutory duty that equality is considered with respect to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This is discussed further in Section 7.2.</p>
	<p><i>'At an early stage in the design process noise and vibration mitigation measures should be considered which include: Realigning the route away from residential areas or other sensitive areas.'</i></p> <p>We agree with this measure and would also encourage planners to</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

	ensure new developments, in particular, are accessible and indeed prioritise travel by public transport, and walking, wheeling and cycling.	
	Before a new road scheme is progressed, active travel infrastructure and public transport access should be considered and prioritised	This process will all be carried out as part of good design for infrastructure as per DMRB guidance.
	<p><i>‘Existing local planning policy emphasises the need to carefully consider noise in the design of new development as well as development plans which include planning policies tailored to the control of noise.’</i></p> <p>Given the growing body of research on the negative impact of noise on human health, planning policy needs to not just ‘carefully consider’ this factor but define an upper threshold of noise beyond which planning applications should be rejected.</p>	Policies of the Planning Department are outside the scope of this exercise but are summarised in DAERA's Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland.
	Fivemiletown Active Travel – We are not aware of any behaviour change programme to encourage active travel or public transport use in Fivemiletown. Does DfI have figures for usage of the new shared footway at Clabby Road? Were pedestrian and cycle counters installed?	This is outside the scope of this exercise. Further clarification on this matter may be sought from DfI separately.
	We are not aware of any tender or discussion about delivering behaviour change programmes for active travel in any of the areas listed. Given delivery is by 2028, with no costs included, there is a high possibility this element of the Plan will not succeed. Behaviour change does not happen overnight.	As per Section 6.3, mitigation is subject to available funding and resources available to DfI.

## 7.2 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening exercise<sup>[15]</sup> and Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) were carried out for the Round 4 Road Noise Action Plan and it concluded that no further action was necessary i.e. a full EQIA was 'screened out'. Should the need for a full Equality Impact Assessment be identified this decision will be reviewed. Further details are available at the Equality Commission website<sup>[16]</sup>.

## 8 FORWARD STRATEGY

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The action planning process is structured around five principal stages:

1. review of the strategic noise mapping outputs;
2. identification and prioritisation of CNMAs and Quiet Areas;
3. designation of NMAs and Quiet Areas;
4. consideration of existing mitigation measures alongside potential additional interventions;  
and
5. assessment of relevant UK and Northern Ireland policies, plans and programmes.

Using the strategic noise mapping results, the locations of the top 1% of the population exposed to the highest levels of road noise have been identified. These areas were then examined to identify CNMAs and identify example mitigation measures which may be appropriate depending on the outcome of stages 3, 4 and 5 which would occur later during the Round 4 process.

This document reports the outcomes of stages 1 and 2 and the Plan is over a five year period between 2023 and 2028 up until the next round of noise mapping and action planning. However, environmental noise needs to be managed in a cost-effective manner as part of a long-term strategy which runs beyond each five year Action Plan. Therefore, in line with the DAERA Technical Guidance, the following aspects should be borne in mind over the next five year period.

A discussion should be undertaken with relevant stakeholders to include DfI and third-party acoustic consultants regarding the criteria used in the determination of Candidate Noise Management Areas, particularly but not limited to noise thresholds and noise indicators. Following such discussion, DfI as the Competent Authority will have the opportunity to investigate this further, as required.

The DAERA Technical Guidance states that 'a degree of field work may need to be undertaken prior to any designation of formal Noise Management Areas'. The approach taken for Round 4 is the same as that for Round 3 where the formal adoption of Noise Management Areas is not done in the RNAP and that monitoring prior to the designation of formal Noise Management Areas will take place following its publication

When addressing specific CNMAs, validation exercises are undertaken, for example site-specific noise monitoring can be completed when developing noise models to determine the specification of acoustic barriers or low noise road surfacing. This information can then be used to help inform the next round of mapping exercise in five years' time.

On a more strategic scale DfI will further consider amending such policy and guidance to enable schemes to be prioritised which will provide benefits to CNMAs in terms of noise. This can be undertaken across the board for minor works, traffic calming and maintenance schemes.

For all the CNMAs DfI will monitor, alongside the planning departments of local councils, and if developments are proposed within these designated areas any mitigation measures will be assessed as part of the design and planning process for implementation. Therefore, DfI will ensure that the planning departments whose jurisdiction CNMAs fall within are fully aware of this Action Plan. To ensure that the overall aims of the END and this Action Plan are fully realised, noise issues need to be carefully considered through the planning system for specific development proposals and



at a more strategic scale through the production of development plans. There needs to be a collaborative relationship between the planning system and the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 as amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018, allowing local planning policy to reflect this.

In addition, DfI should work with DAERA and other relevant authorities and bodies to establish a clear framework of responsibility, so that road noise is properly managed in the context of sustainable development and the role of each body is clearly understood by the public. Where a potentially beneficial action has been identified by DfI, for which it is not the managing authority or organisation it will liaise with the relevant authority to discuss the viability of action, or support the other authority in undertaking desired actions.

The Round 5 RNAP will be undertaken subsequent to the completion of Round 4 RNAP, with DAERA and DfI continuing to work jointly throughout the process. All of the relevant points raised above pertaining to Round 5 will be considered.

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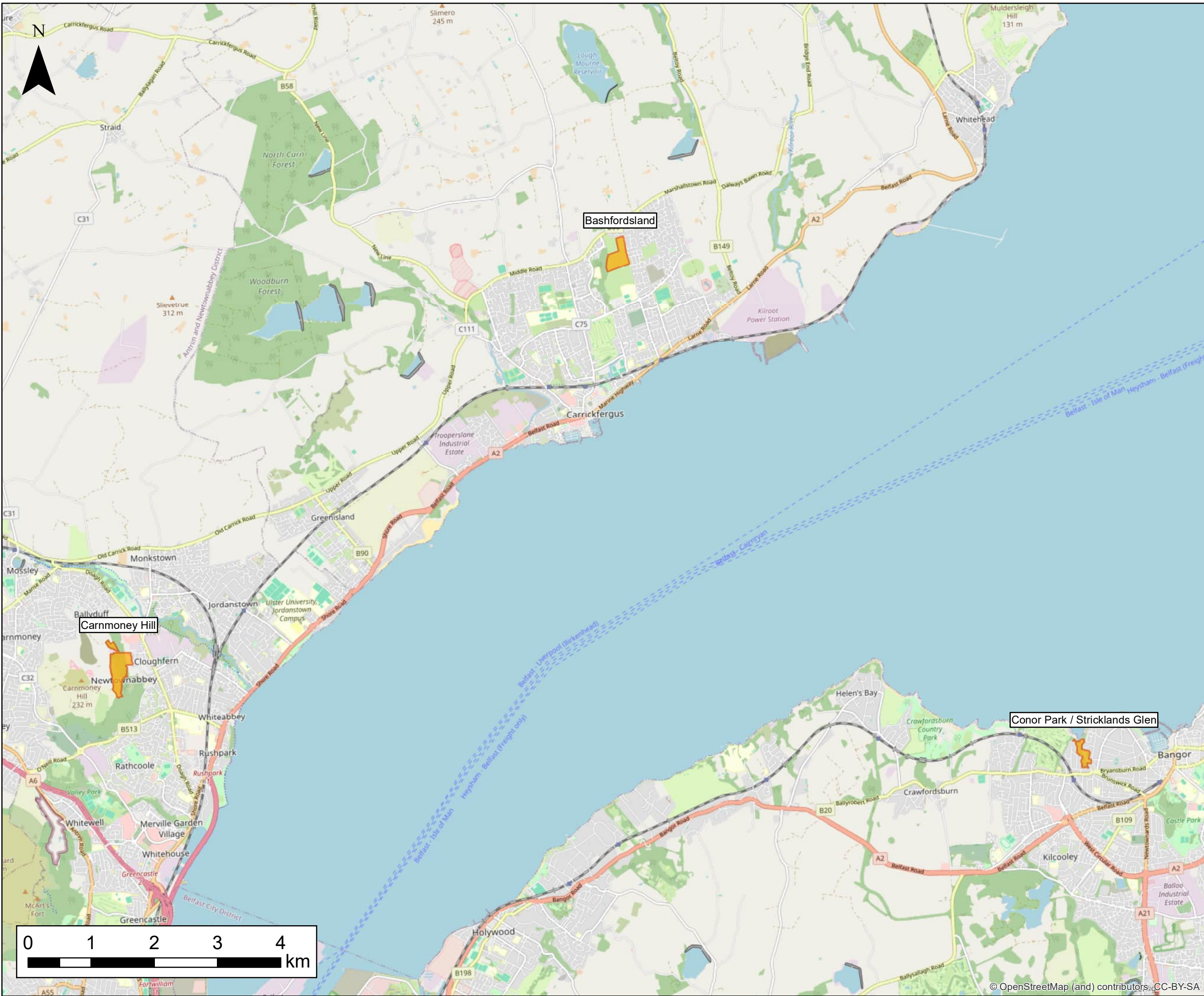
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# Appendix A

## LOCATION OF QUIET AREAS





# Legend

 Quiet Areas

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Checked:	MM	06/10/2025	
Approved:	MM	06/10/2025	



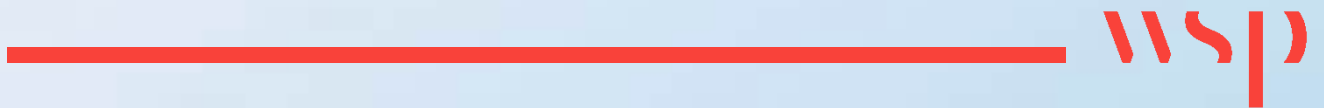
## Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### Quiet Areas

Scale @ A3: 1:55,000

# Appendix B

## **LIST OF CURRENT POLICY AND FRAMEWORK USED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE**



## LIST OF CURRENT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE USED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ROAD TRAFFIC NOISE

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This is a non-exhaustive list which includes some examples of current and most relevant legislation, policy and guidance used for the management of road traffic noise.

### Legislation

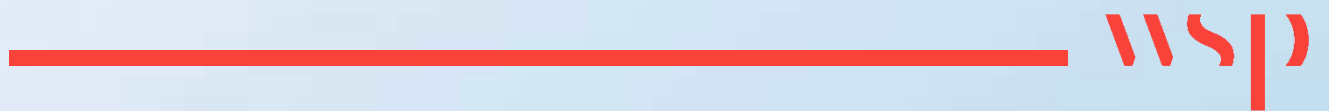
- Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 as amended by The Environmental Noise (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.

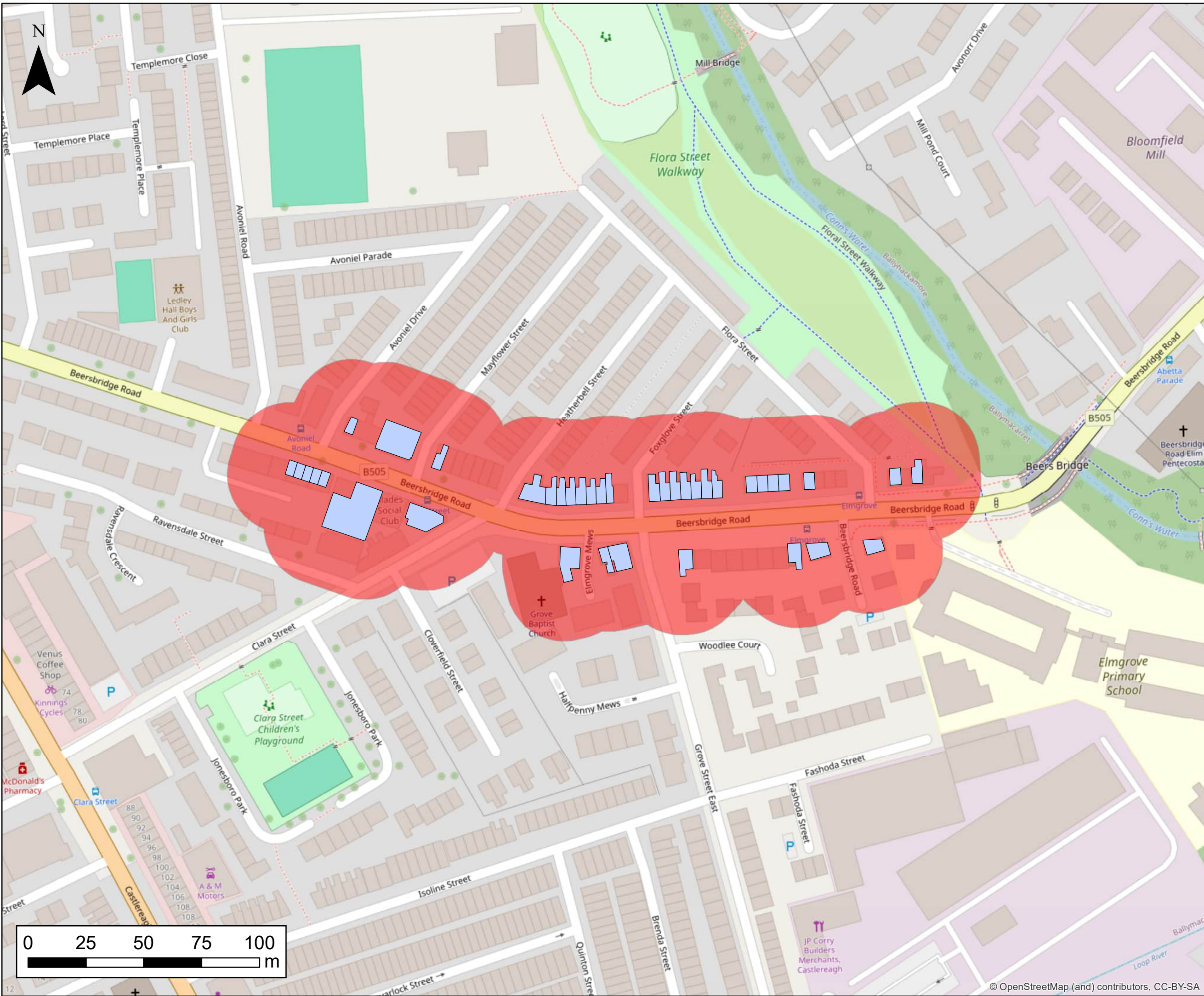
### Relevant Guidance Publications

- Common Noise Assessment Methods in Europe (CNOSSOS-EU), 2012.
- Calculation of Road Traffic Noise – Department of Transport 1988, NI Modification 1995.
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 11, Section 3, Part 7, HD 213/11 Noise and Vibration.
- BS 5228:2009+A1:2014 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites.
- BS 7385 Part 2 1993 – Evaluation and measurement of vibration in buildings, guide to damage levels from ground borne vibration.
- BS 7445 Part 1: 2003 – Description and measurement of environmental noise. Guide to quantities and procedures.
- BS 7445 Part 2: 1991 – Description and measurement of environmental noise. Guide to the acquisition of data pertinent to land use.
- BS 7445 Part 3: 1991 – Description and measurement of environmental noise. Guide to application to noise limits.
- BS 8233:2014 - Sound insulation and noise reduction from buildings Code of Practice.

# Appendix C

## PROPOSED CNMAS FOR ROUND 4





### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

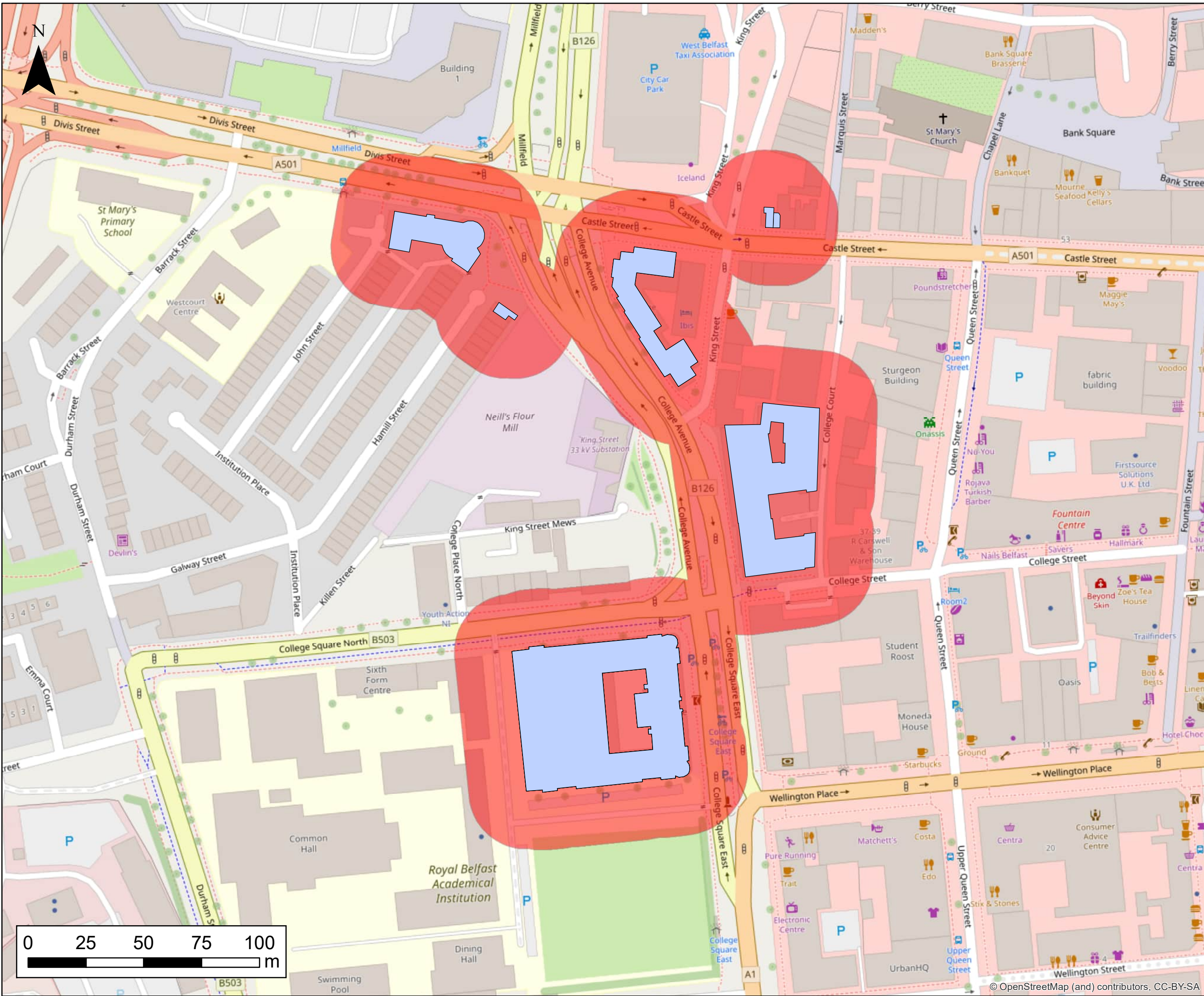
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Checked:	MM	05/09/2025	
Approved:	MM	05/09/2025	



**Roads Noise Action Plan  
Fourth Round**

**CNMA 1  
Belfast, Beersbridge Road**

Scale @ A3: 1:1,500



### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

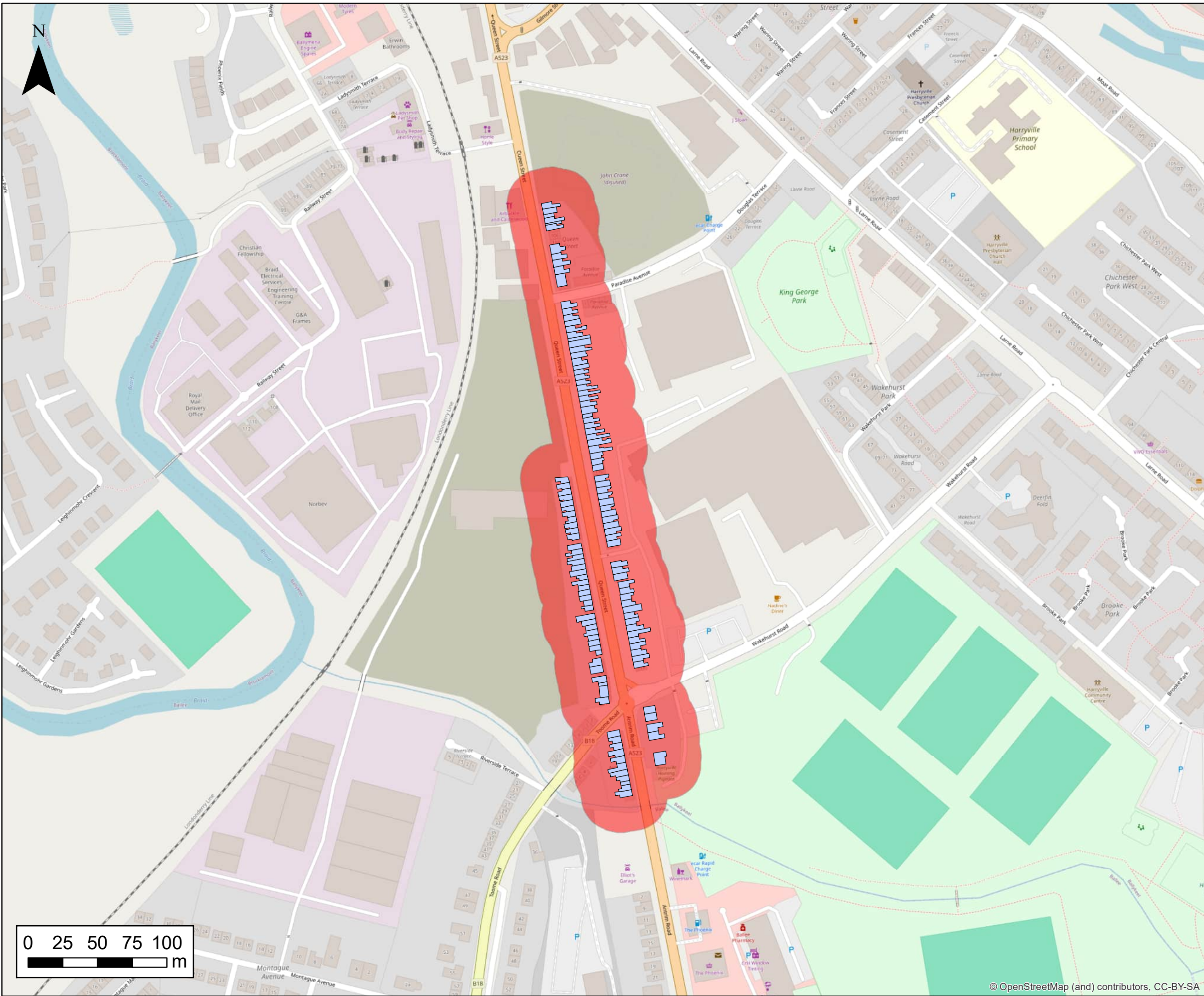
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Checked:	MM	05/09/2025	
Approved:	MM	05/09/2025	



### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 2 Belfast, College Square East

Scale @ A3: 1:1,500



### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

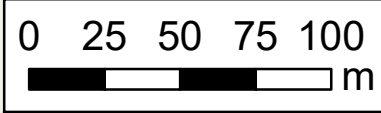
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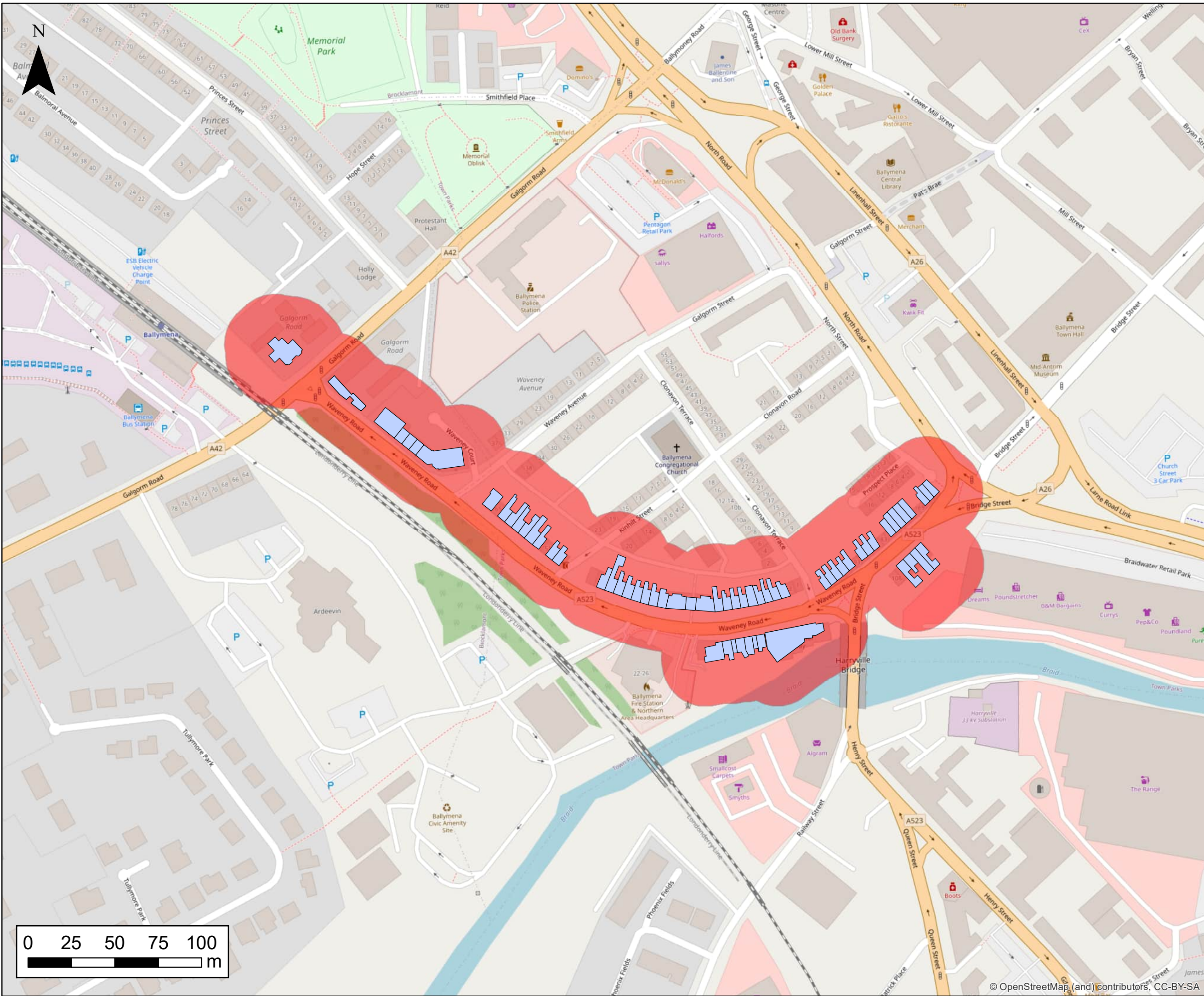


### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 3 Ballymena, Queen Street

Scale @ A3: 1:2,500





### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

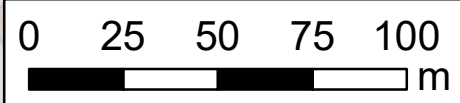
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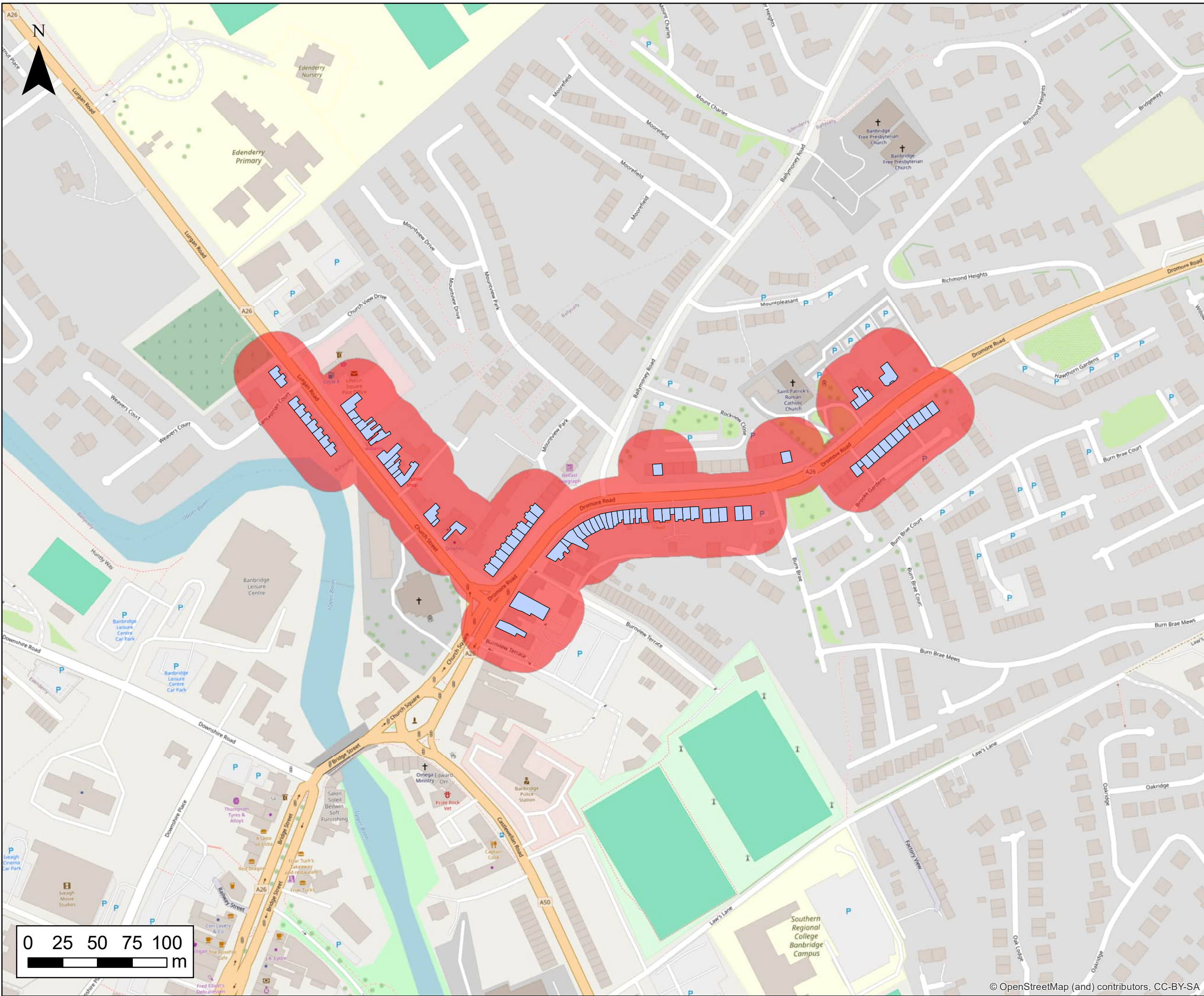


### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 4 Ballymena, Waveney Road

Scale @ A3: 1:2,000





### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

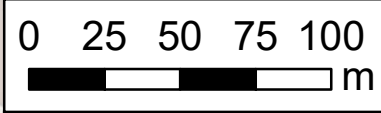
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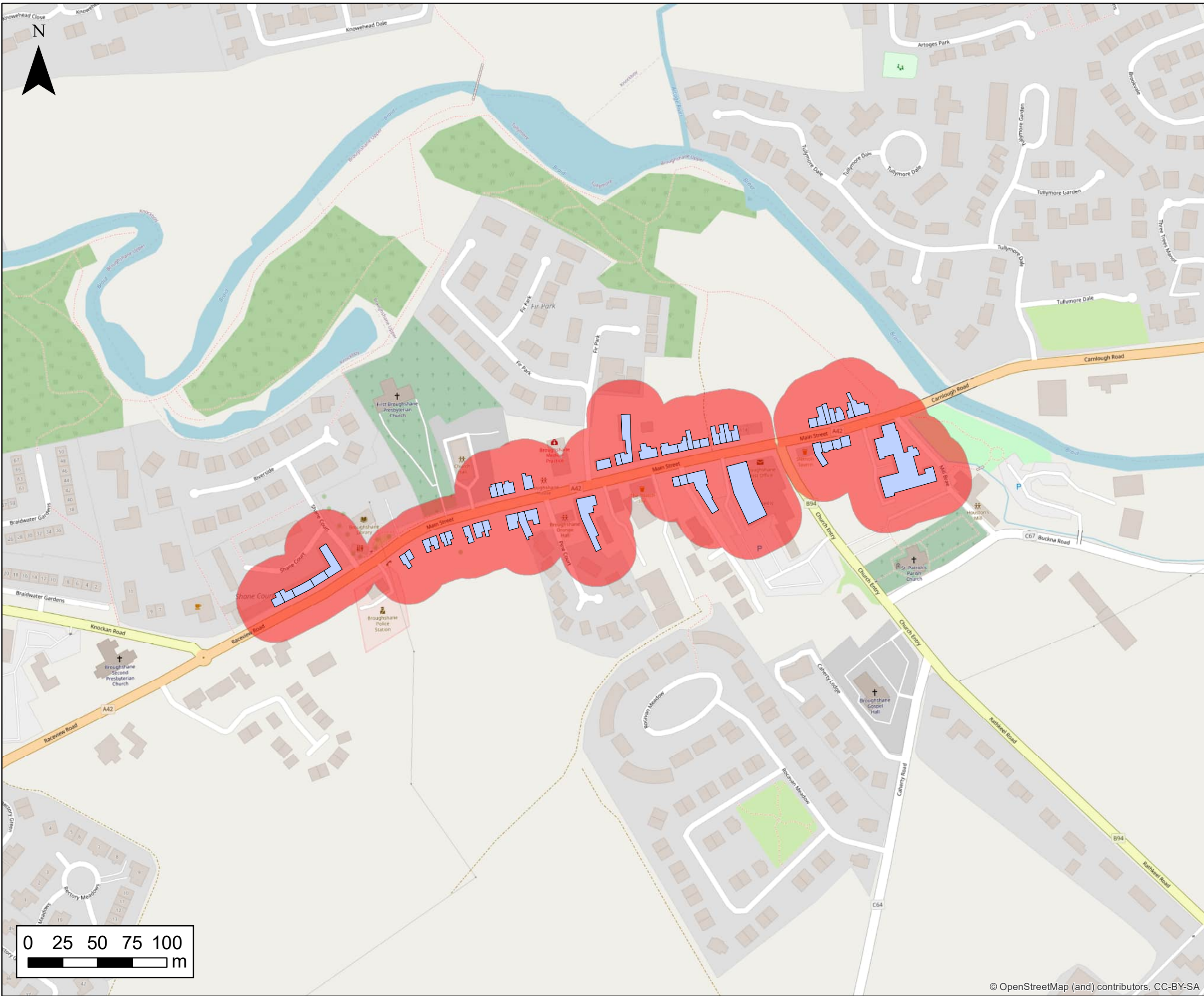


### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 5 Banbridge, Dromore Road / Church Street

Scale @ A3: 1:2,500





### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

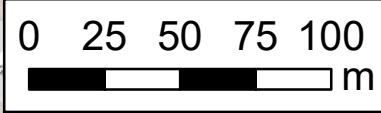
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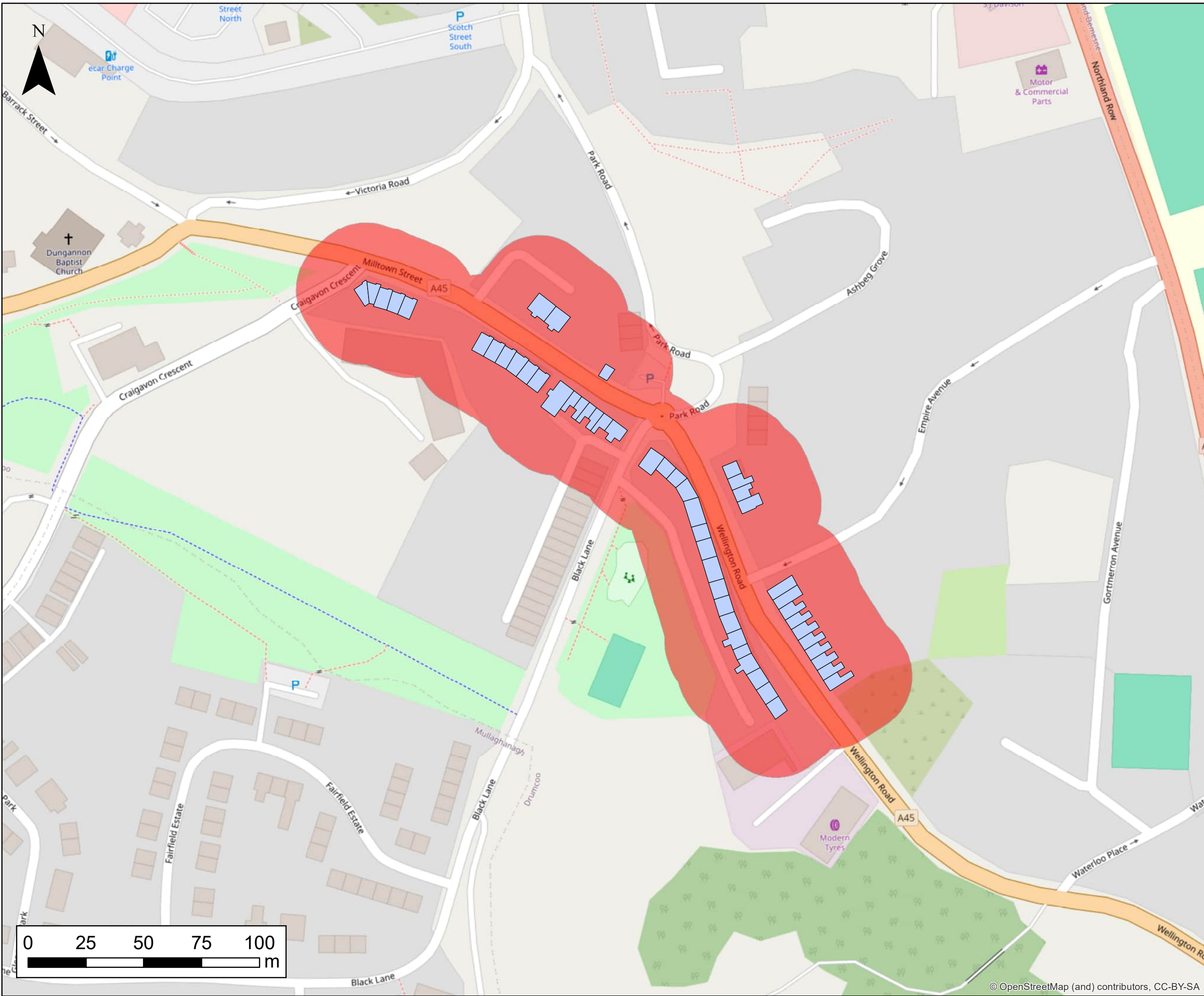


### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 6 Broughshane, Main Street

Scale @ A3: 1:2,500





### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

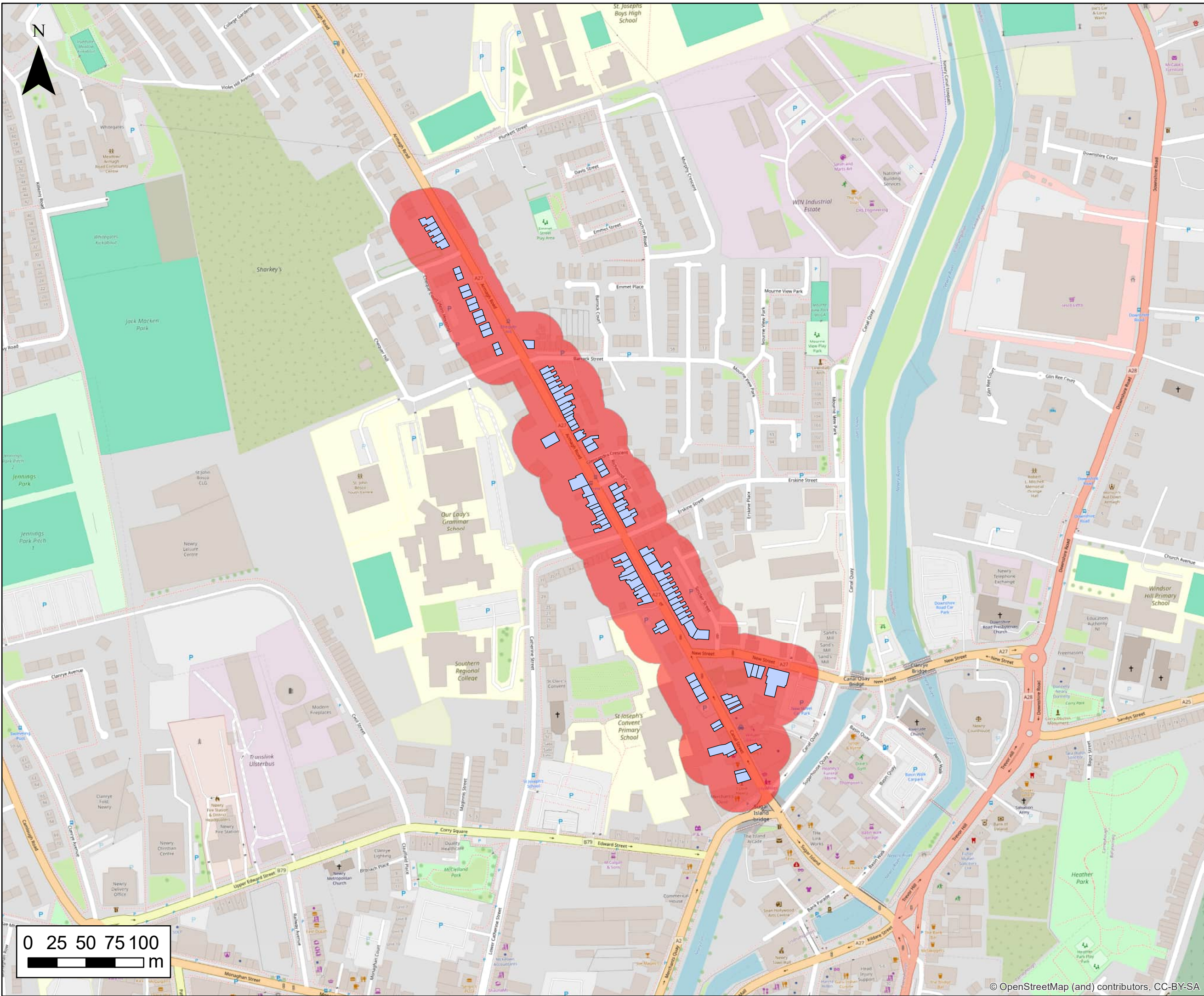
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Checked:	MM	05/09/2025	
Approved:	MM	05/09/2025	



### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 7 Dungannon, Milltown Street / Wellington Road

Scale @ A3: 1:1,500



### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

Drawn:	WN	04/09/2025	Rev 1
Checked:	MM	05/09/2025	
Approved:	MM	05/09/2025	



### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 8 Newry, Armagh Road

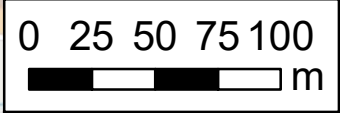
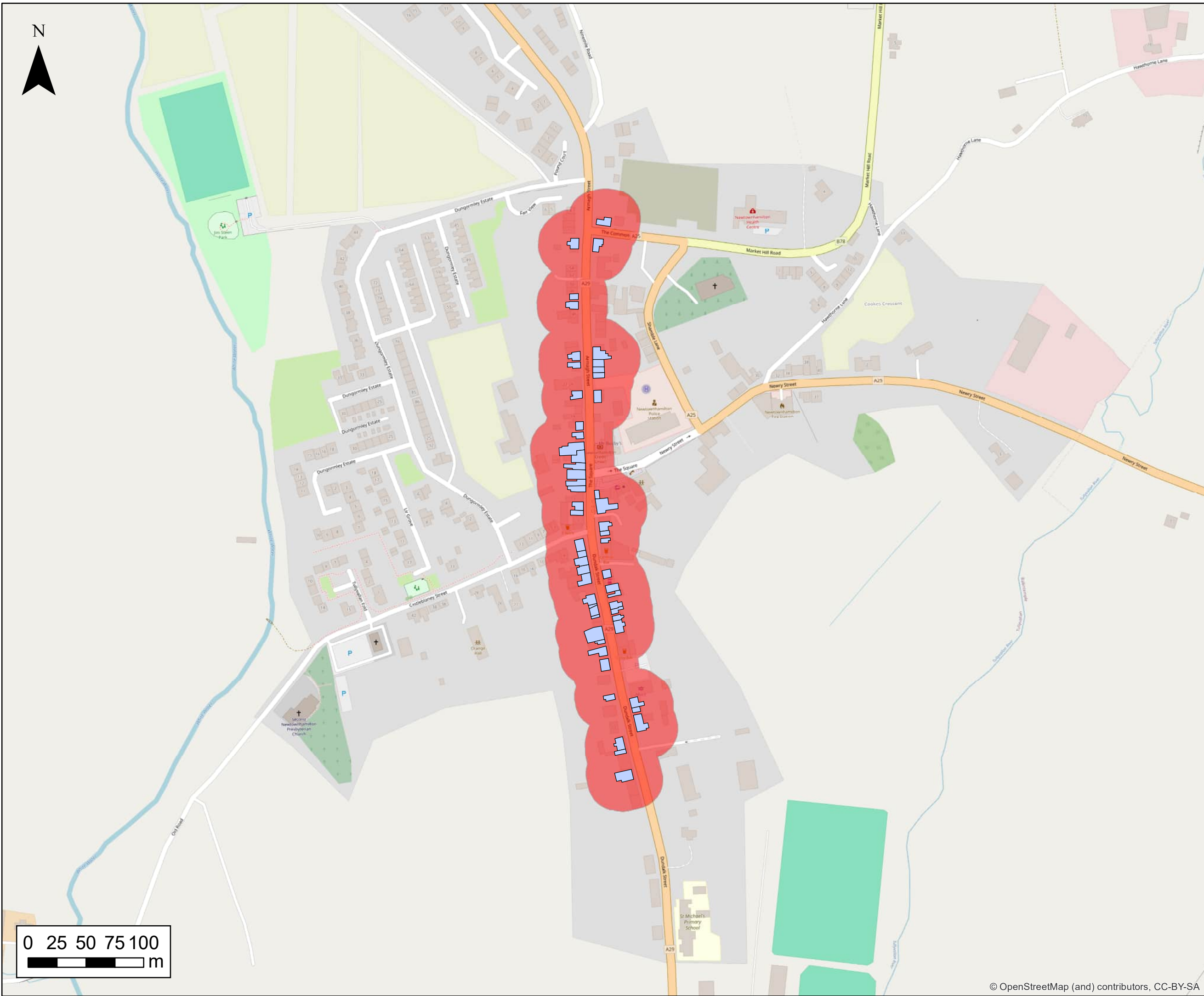
Scale @ A3: 1:3,000

N



### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings



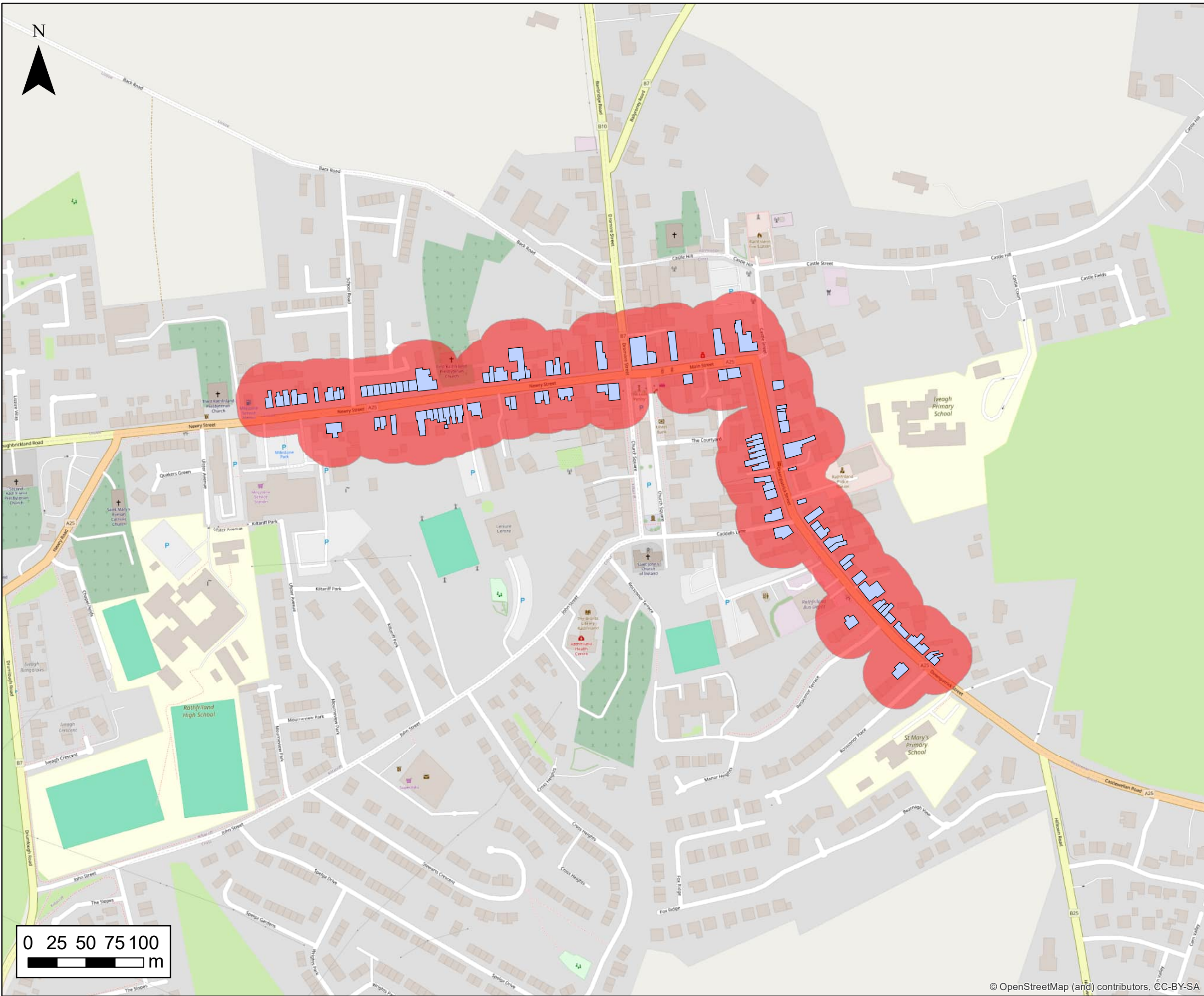
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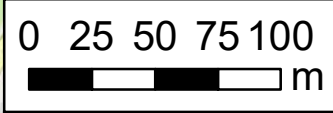
### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### CNMA 9 Newtownhamilton, Armagh Street / Dundalk Street

Scale @ A3: 1:3,000



N



### Legend

- Candidate Noise Management Area
- CNMA Buildings

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Checked:	MM	05/09/2025	
Approved:	MM	05/09/2025	



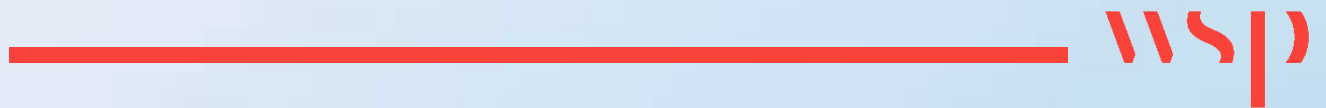
### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

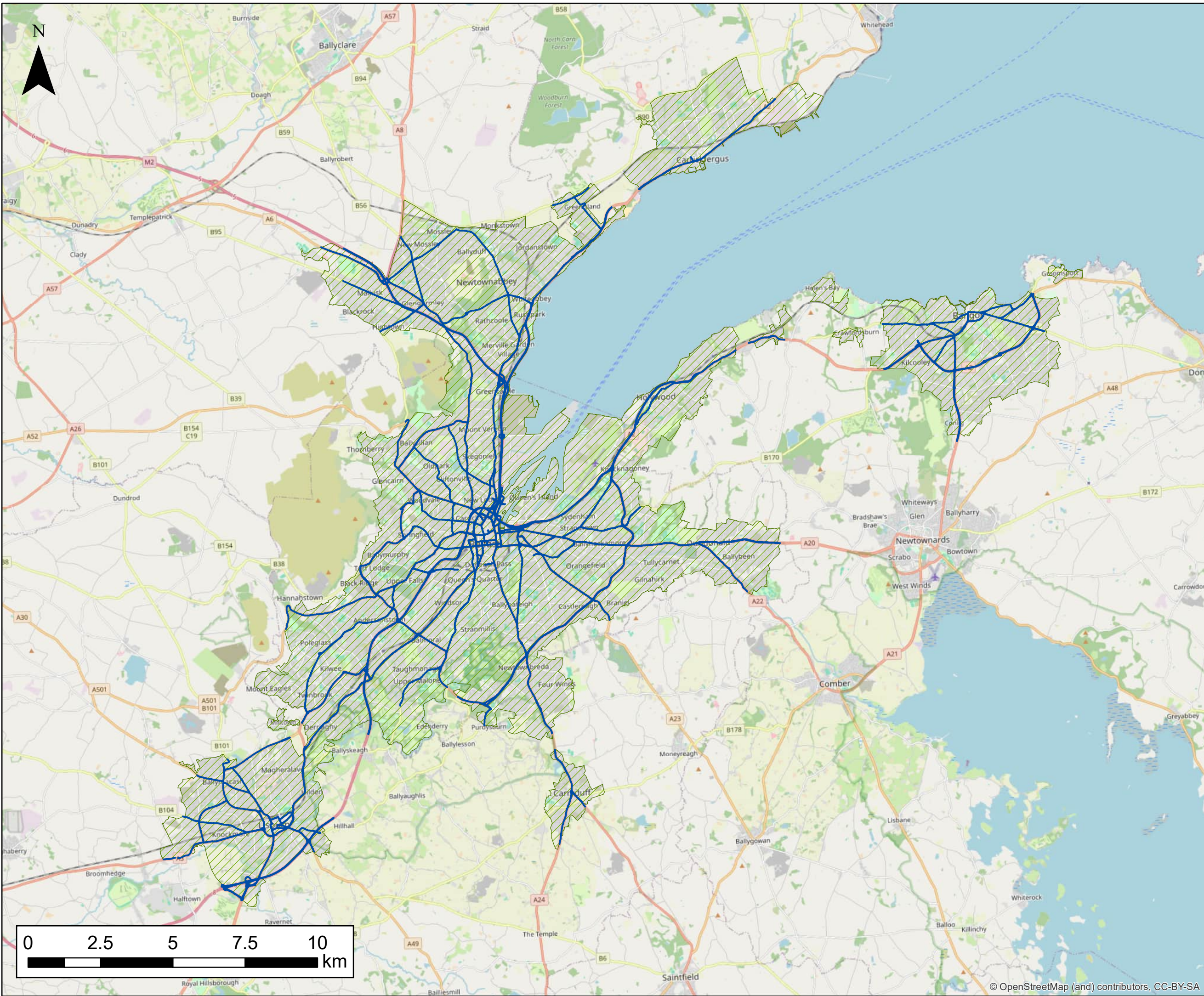
### CNMA 10 Rathfriland, Newry Street / Downpatrick Street

Scale @ A3: 1:3,000



# Appendix D

## MODELLED ROADS IN ROUND 4





### Legend

-  Major Roads
-  Belfast Agglomeration

This Figure presents only Major Roads within the Belfast Agglomeration to maintain clarity.

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Checked:	EO	28/05/2026	
Approved:	EO	28/05/2026	

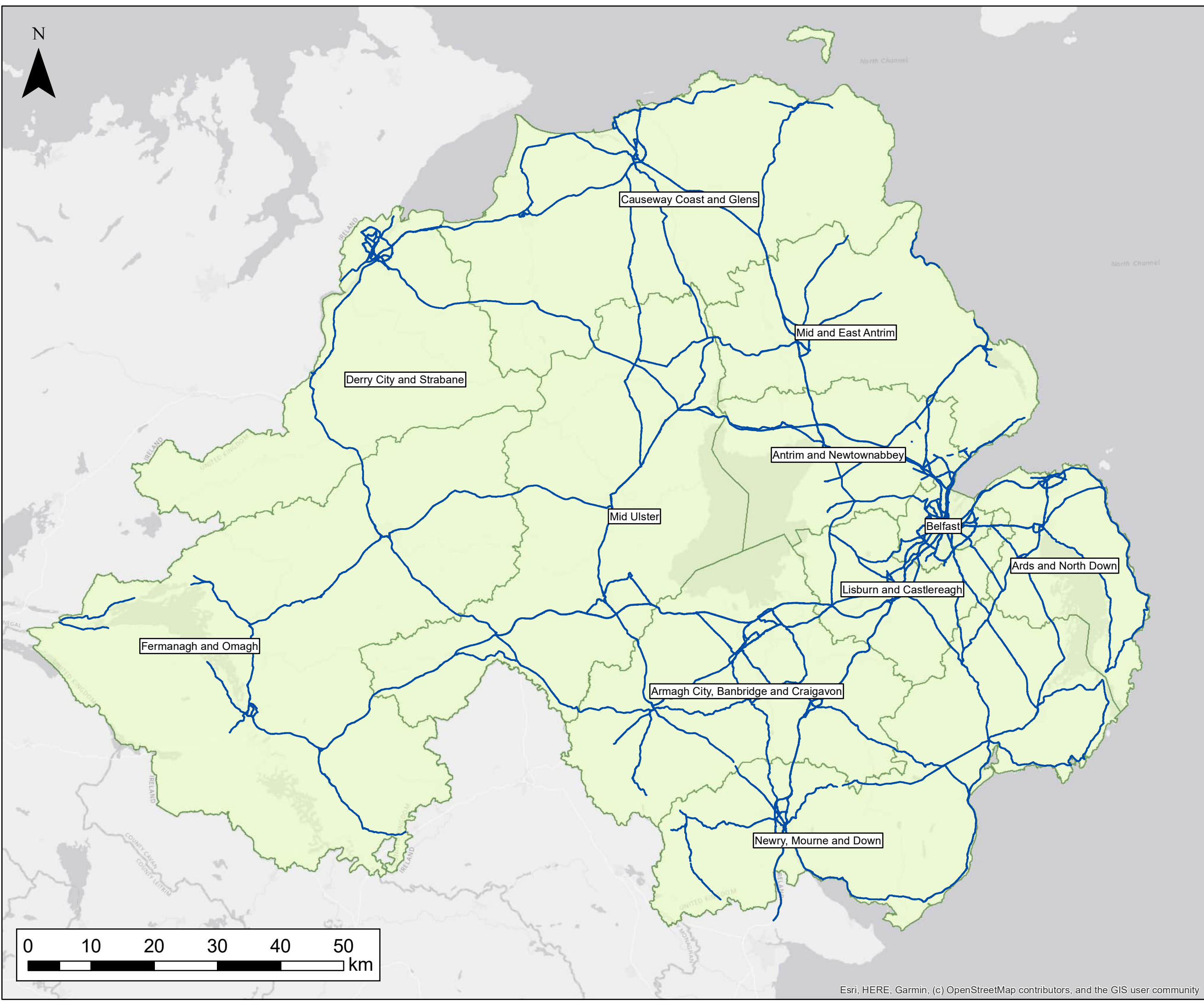


### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round



### Belfast Agglomeration - Major Roads

Scale @ A3: 1:120,000

N



### Legend

-  Major Roads
-  Local Government Districts

This Figure presents only Major Roads to maintain clarity.

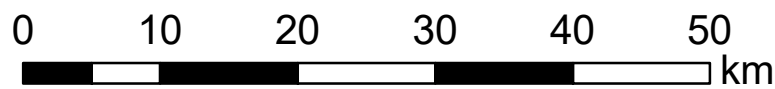
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Checked:	EO	28/05/2026	
Approved:	EO	28/05/2026	



### Roads Noise Action Plan Fourth Round

### Northern Ireland - Major Roads

Scale @ A3: 1:550,000



# Appendix E

## CONSULTEE LIST



## Appendix E - Stakeholder Consultee List for Round 4

Consultee	Contact
Action Cancer	info@actioncancer.org
Action for Children	nioffice@actionforchildren.org.uk
ADD-NI	info@addni.org
Advice NI	Kevin@adviceni.net
Age NI	info@ageni.org
Ageing Research and Development Division (IPH)	leah.friend@publichealth.ie
Alliance Party of NI	alliance@allianceparty.org
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	policy@allianceparty.org
Alzheimers Society	Martin.Reilly@alzheimers.org.uk
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk
Antrim and Newtownabbey Council	elaine.girvan@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk
Ards and North Down Borough Council	Sian.McConnell-Porter@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council	equality@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk
Assembly Library	dan.hull@niassembly.gov.uk
Asthma and Lung UK NI	NorthernIreland@asthmaandlung.org.uk
Autism Initiatives	catherine.oconnor@ai-ni.co.uk
Autism Network NI	derek.doherty9@btinternet.com
Autism NI	Kelly.maxwell@autismni.org
Bahá í Council for Northern Ireland	bcni@bahai.org.uk
Ballybeen Women's Centre	info@ballybeenwomenscentre.org
Barnardos NI	megan.stith@barnardos.org.uk
Base 2 NIACRO	niacro@niacro.co.uk
Belfast Butterfly Club	transbutterflyclub@gmail.com
Belfast City Council	equality@belfastcity.gov.uk
Belfast City Council Youth Forum	belfastcityyouthcouncil@belfastcity.gov.uk
Belfast Harbour	HR@belfast-harbour.co.uk

Consultee	Contact
Belfast International Airport	ocs@bfs.aero
Belfast Islamic Centre	info@belfastislamiccentre.org.uk
Belfast Migrants Centre	management@migrantcentreni.org
Bishop of Down and Connor	dcoffice@downandconnor.org
British Association for shooting & Conservation	nire@basc.org.uk
British Deaf Association	busdeve.niscot@bda.org.uk
British Red Cross	contactus@redcross.org.uk
Bryson Charitable Group	info@brysongroup.org
Bryson Intercultural	scaldwell@brysongroup.org
Bryson Intercultural 2	skelly@brysongroup.org
Business Services Organisation - HSC, Equality Unit	Equality.Unit@hscni.net
Cancer Focus NI	hello@cancerfocusni.org
Cancer Lifeline	info@cancerlifeline.info
Carafriend	admin@cara-friend.org.uk
Carers NI	info@carersni.org
Cause for Mental Health	info@cause.org.uk
Causeway Coasts and Glens Council	cathy.watson@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk
Census NISRA	census.nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk
Centre for Effective Services (CES) NI	nioffice@effectiveservices.org
Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation NI 2 technical@ciht.org.uk	Roisin.Boyle@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk
Children in Northern Ireland (CiNi)	info@ci-ni.org.uk
Childrens Law Centre	info@childrenslawcentre.org
Childrens Law Centre	fergalmcferran@childrenslawcentre.org
Children's Law Centre 3	emmamurray@childrenslawcentre.org
Chinese Welfare Association	office@cwa-ni.org
Chrysalis Women's Centre	chrysaliscentre93@outlook.com

Consultee	Contact
Church of Ireland	synod@rcbcoi.org
City of Derry Airport	info@cityofderryairport.com
CO3 Chief Officers 3rd Section	info@co3.bz
Coiste-na n-iarchimi	info@coiste.com
Coleraine Harbour	harbourcoleraine@gmail.com
Commissioner for Older People NI	Kieran.Teague@copni.org
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)	eliza@caj.org.uk
Committee on the Administration of Justice 2	equalitycoalition@caj.org.uk
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)	daniel@caj.org.uk
Community Development & Health Network NI	kathymartin@cdhn.org
Community Development & Health Network NI	joannemorgan@cdhn.org
Community Places	hello@communityplaces.info
Community Restorative Justice Ireland	Chloe.brooks@crjireland.org
Community Transport Association (CTA)	frances@ctauk.org
Confederation of British Industry (CBI) NI	Northern.Ireland@cbi.org.uk
Confederation of Community Groups	rjackson@ccgnewry.org
Conservation Volunteers NI	R.Shearman@tcv.org.uk
Consumer Council	info@consumercouncil.org.uk
Contact a Family NI	nireland.office@cafamily.org.uk
Crossroads Care - Caring for Carers (NI) Ltd	info@crossroadscare.co.uk
Cruse Bereavement Care	Thelma.Abernethy@cruse.org.uk
Cruse Bereavement Care (NI) 2	Rachel.McIlroy@cruse.org.uk
CTC/ National Cycling Charity	cycling@ctc.org.uk
Democratic Unionist Party	info@dup.org.uk
Department for Communities	equality.unit@communities-ni.gov.uk
Department for the Economy	equalityunit@economy-ni.gov.uk

Consultee	Contact
Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs	equality@daera-ni.gov.uk
Department of Education	DE.Equality@education-ni.gov.uk
Department of Finance	equality@finance-ni.gov.uk
Department of Health	equality@health-ni.gov.uk
Department of Justice	DOJESSS@justice-ni.gov.uk
Derry City and Strabane District Council	equality@derrystrabane.com
Derry Well Woman	info@derrywellwoman.org
DFI Equality Unit	equality@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk
Disability Action NI	hq@disabilityaction.org
Disability Action NI	nualatoman@disabilityaction.org
Disabled Drivers Association NI	ddanir.club@gmail.com
Disabled Motoring UK	info@disabledmotoring.org
Down's Syndrome Association	enquiriesni@downs-syndrome.org.uk
Eastern Health and Social Services Board	pr.ehssb@hscni.net
Education Authority	equality.unit@eani.org.uk
Education of Deaf and Blind Society	info@jordanstownschoool.org
Employers' Forum on Disability (NI)	info@efdni.org
Engage with Age	Eamon.Quinn@engagewithage.org.uk
Enniskillen Airport Limited	alan@cathcart.uk
Equality Coalition	equalitycoalition@caj.org.uk
Equality Commission For NI	information@equalityni.org
Falls Community Council	info@fallscouncil.com
Falls Women's Centre	susan@fallswomenscentre.org
Federation for Small Businesses	FSBNI@fsb.org.uk
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	consultations@fermanaghomagh.com
Fermanagh Community Transport	jason@fermanaghcommunitytransport.com

Consultee	Contact
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