

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (CCGBC)

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Draft Harbours & Marinas strategy 2026–2036 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council provides a ten-year framework for the management, development and investment in 13 Council-owned harbours, marinas and slipways.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Draft Harbours & Marinas strategy 2026–2036 (CCGBC)

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

Aim of the Strategy

To provide safe working harbours. To prioritise investment to ensure safety and sustainability and where viable improve infrastructure to enhance user experience for local people, business and tourists to the area. To strengthen relationships with internal and external stakeholders and to use the harbours and marinas to promote healthy and vibrant communities and local economic development.

The Objectives of the Draft strategy

- To maintain safe working harbours and good quality infrastructure and facilities in harbours and marinas.
- To strengthen relationships with users and stakeholders and work in partnership to achieve common goals.
- To be a premium vibrant destination by supporting existing and developing leisure tourism and commercial sectors; making a significant contribution to the local and blue economy.
- To have a balanced budget whilst building the ability for investment and new initiatives in the harbours.
- To celebrate each harbour's natural and cultural heritage by integrating the harbours into the community and linking with the wider natural and cultural offering.
- To protect Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's (CCGBC) natural capital by operating best practice in environmental management in harbours.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

People living in rural coastal and island communities are more likely to experience specific impacts from the strategy. Harbours act as economic anchors for small settlements, supporting fishing, tourism, marine services and local employment. Improvements to safety, infrastructure and environmental management will benefit rural users that rely on the facilities covered in the strategy for recreation and well-being, employment and transport. Young people living in rural areas may gain increased and safer access to water-based sports, training and participation in activities and events. Older people and people with disabilities living in rural communities may benefit from improved accessibility and safer infrastructure. Island residents, particularly on Rathlin, will be affected by any changes to the ferry related infrastructure or harbour operations. Rural communities in the coastal areas where the harbours are located may face pressures from increased tourism, congestion and competition or parking and access during peak periods. Fee charges or digital only systems may have a greater impact on low-income rural households and those with limited connectivity. Overall, the strategy has the potential to strengthen rural coastal economies and well-being and provide enhanced social and economic benefit for local communities. The implementation of the strategy will however also require careful management and monitoring to ensure rural residents retain fair access to their local harbours and are not disadvantaged by wider commercial or tourism demands.
(Supporting information is contained in the attached Appendix A)

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

- Rural and island communities rely more heavily on harbours for daily life, transport, employment and access to services.
- Tourism pressure disproportionately affects small rural settlements (Ballintoy, Portballintrae, Rathlin) and may impact on ability of local people to access local harbours and marinas
- Fee changes may disproportionately affect rural low-income households
- Climate impacts (overtopping, erosion, storm intensity) are more severe at exposed rural sites
- Digital-only communication risks excluding rural residents with limited connectivity

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text" value="Community Safety, Environmental Resilience, Island connectivity, Engagement and Empowerment of local communities."/>

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

- Public consultation (April–December 2025) including town-hall events in Portrush, Ballycastle and Rathlin
- Online surveys via ESRI Survey123
- Stakeholder interviews with harbour staff, clubs, businesses and operators
- Tourism statistics (NISRA 2024–2025)
- Asset condition surveys (2025)
- Fee benchmarking and financial performance data
- Rathlin Island Action Plan 2016–2020
- Climate Change Action Strategy 2025–2050

In addition to research reports listed in Appendix A

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

- Sustainable rural economies (fishing, tourism, marine services)
- Greater engagement with local communities' users in the delivery of the strategy and action plan
- Affordable access for residents, fishers and clubs
- Protection from overtourism and congestion
- Reliable transport and connectivity (especially Ballycastle–Rathlin ferry)
- Environmental resilience (overtopping, erosion, climate change)
- Inclusive communication and consultation
- Balanced investment across rural and urban harbours
- Safe access for older people, disabled people and families
- Support for youth participation in water-based activities

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

N/A

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

When considering rural needs, the Council examined how the Strategy's proposals would affect rural and island communities who rely on harbours for employment, transport, recreation and access to services.

Evidence from condition surveys and SWOT analyses highlighted that rural harbours require investment to maintain safe access for fishing, clubs, older people and disabled users, who may have fewer alternative facilities than those in urban areas.

Consultation findings showed that affordability, congestion and capacity pressures can disproportionately affect rural residents, particularly in small settlements where tourism demand competes with local use.

The assessment of alternatives such as fee structures, concessionary rates and non-digital access routes was therefore important to ensure that rural households, low-income families and those with limited connectivity are not disadvantaged.

Climate resilience reviews identified that exposed rural and island locations face greater risks from overtopping, erosion and storm damage, meaning that rural communities may be more vulnerable to disruption if infrastructure is not prioritised. The Council also considered the need to protect essential local use, support rural economic activity, and ensure that investment is balanced across both rural and urban harbours.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

Concessionary/local rates for islanders and rural residents.

Visitor management plans for high-pressure rural sites.

Prioritisation of essential local use in berth allocation and scheduling.

Investment commitments for smaller rural harbours.

Multichannel communication (online, noticeboards, community groups).

Climate-resilient design prioritised at exposed rural and island locations.

Rural-sensitive monitoring indicators (local employment, congestion, satisfaction).

Recognition that many harbours operate at a deficit to deliver socioeconomic gain.

Protection of rural access to slipways, moorings and community facilities.

Greater engagement with local users' community in the implementation of the strategy and action plans.

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.



N/A

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.



Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	John Richardson
Position/Grade:	Head of Capital Works, Energy & Infrastructure
Division/Branch	Environmental Services
Signature:	
Date:	6 th March 2026
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Aidan McPeake
Position/Grade:	Director
Division/Branch:	Environmental Services
Signature:	
Date:	6 th March 2026

Appendix A Supporting Research and information Rural Needs Impact Assessment Draft Strategy for Harbours and Marinas CCGBC

In 2015, more than half of the Borough's population lived in its hubs (37%) and towns (17%), with 11% in villages and 34% in the small settlements and countryside. SES, (2018).

Causeway Coast & Glens, Local Development Plan 2030 Preferred Options Paper Sustainability Appraisal: Scoping Report

Of the 72 Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the council area, 46% are designated as rural (n33), 44% as urban (n32) and 10% (n7) mixed urban/rural. Source:

Dr Joanne Wallace, Socio-Economic Profile of CCGBC (February 2023)

The sectoral composition of Employee Jobs in the Borough is as follows - Agriculture (32.6%), Production (16.5%), Construction (8.2%) and Services (42.7%). Public sector jobs accounted for one quarter (n10,485; 25%) of all employee jobs in the Borough, lower than the NI average of 27%

Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market Action Plan 2023-2024

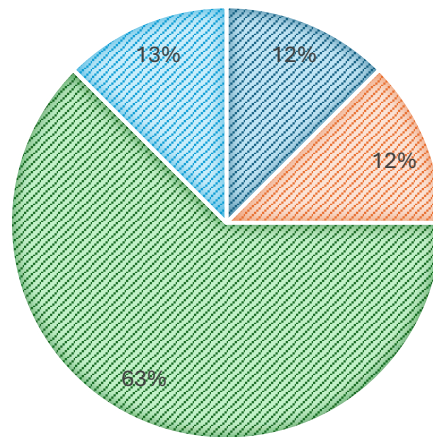
The harbours are often the economic anchors for rural settlements.

Draft Harbours & Marinas Strategy 2026–2036 Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Key Findings from Consultation Report with Local Communities Users and Business McCarthy Brown (2025)

- Investment in safety, infrastructure and environmental management for the benefit of existing and new users.
- Provide support for local economy enterprises (fishing, tourism, marine services) See diagram below Fig 1.
- Strengthen community engagement in the future of the harbours and in cultural and heritage initiatives
- Improved ferry infrastructure supporting island residents
- Provide opportunities for rural youth participation in water sports and training
- Improvements in access to sporting recreational activities and promoting healthy lifestyles
- Improved access to the harbours for older people and people with disabilities that may face rural isolation

HOW IMPORTANT ARE OUR HARBOURS & MARINAS TO YOUR BUSINESS?

■ Direct Contributor ■ Important ■ Pivotal ■ Somewhat important



Source Consultation on Draft Strategy McCarthy Brown (2025)

The finding demonstrates that 63% of the businesses surveyed stated that the harbours and marinas were important to local businesses in the rural coastal areas. The consultation findings reported are of a limited sample size however of those that did respond the majority considered the harbours to be of central importance to their business.