

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

**Longford Local Economic &
Community Plan 2016 - 2022**



Planning & Environmental Consultants

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

This report has been completed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Longford Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2016 – 2022.

According to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidelines, issued in December 2009 and updated in 2010, on the implementation of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish Law under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (G.I. 94/1997), screening is required to examine the potential effects of all projects or plans, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, upon the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites. Where there is potential for significant or indeterminate effects on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs) as a result of the proposed plan or project, a Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment must be conducted by the competent authority, based on objective scientific information in the form of a Natura Impact Statement.

McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd. has been appointed to undertake a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Longford Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2016 – 2022 to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the plan, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

This report has been prepared following guidance and methodology from *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* provided by the European Commission (2001) and *Guidance on the Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland* provided by DEHLG (2009; 2010). In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant guidance was considered in preparation of this report: *Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission* provided by the European Commission (2007); *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats* provided by the European Commission (2013); and *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements* provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (2002).

2 COUNTY LONGFORD LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN 2016-2022

2.1 Description of Plan

The Longford Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2016 – 2022 was developed by Longford County Council through the Local Community Development Committee and the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee, in line with guidelines issued by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

The overall aim of the LECP is to support and encourage economic growth and regeneration, improve the quality of life through collaborative and sustainable community and rural development, strengthen sense of place and provide equality of opportunity for all residents of County Longford. The LECP is based on six high-level goals identified during the Plan's preparation:

1. Maximise economic activity, pursue new growth opportunities and support pathways to educational attainment.
2. Reduce poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion and promote equality in the community.
3. Improve prosperity, health/well-being and quality of life of the community.
4. Maximise the attractiveness of County Longford as a favourable place in which to live, visit, work and transact business.
5. Improve the level and quality of community identity and solidarity, civic pride and participation.
6. Utilise the natural, cultural and built environment in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

Each goal is broken down into a number of objectives and actions which are intended to promote and support economic development, and local and community development in Longford County. In order to support economic and community development, the LECP has been formulated with a framework of key sustainable economic development objectives (Appendix I) and sustainable community objectives (Appendix II). As part of the implementation and monitoring phases of the LECP, each action has been designed to contain clearly identifiable targets and desired outcomes with set implementation timescales. This provides a benchmark for the action plan against which achievements can be measured. It is envisaged that the successful implementation of the Plan will involve the active engagement of all stakeholders including the Local Authority, private and community sectors. The plan will be subject to annual review and adjustment as necessary.

2.2 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Longford County LECP is to promote and support the economic and community development of the county. This is provided through the actions detailed under each strategic objective. The setting of a project framework is carried out through other spatial plans in the county including the Longford CDP.

Longford County LECP shall bring forward county and lower scale actions to develop the county economically and in terms of community through the incorporation of actions from other higher tier plans and programmes.

2.3 Relationship with other Relevant Plans and Programmes

The Draft LECP sits within a hierarchy of land use forward planning strategic actions. The Draft LECP must comply with relevant higher level strategic actions and may, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions. A list of these Plans and strategies include:

- The National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020
- Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (MRPG's) 2010 - 2022
- Longford County Development Plan 2015 – 2021
- Longford Local Development Strategy (LEADER)
- Medium Term Economic Strategy 2014 – 2020
- Enterprise 2025 Strategy
- Food Wise 2015
- National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2020
- Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020
- Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2015 - 2017
- Environmental Protection Objectives

Examples of Environmental Protection Objectives include:

- EU Habitats Directive – the aim of which is to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of Member States
- Strategic Environmental Assessment – Under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 – 2011, the local authority is obliged to carry out a screening assessment for environmental effects arising from the implementation of the objectives and actions contained in the LECP.

3 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING ASSESSMENT

3.1 European Sites in the likely Zone of Impact of the plan

Using the GIS software, MapInfo (Version 10.0), Natura 2000 Sites within a 15 kilometre radius of County Longford were identified. The site synopsis and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were considered at the time of preparation of this report (15/06/2016). Details of these sites, including their distance from the proposed works, are provided in Table 3.1 below.

Initially, sites within a 15km radius of the area covered by the plan were identified (radius following Wilson *et al.* (2006)). In addition, using the precautionary principle, Natura 2000 Sites located outside the 15km buffer zone were taken into account and assessed for potential pathways for impact, particularly where hydrological connectivity could be established. In this case, the Environmental Protection Agency watermaps identified no hydrological connectivity between the plan area and Natura 2000 Sites outside the 15km radius. There is no potential for impacts on Natura 2000 Sites outside the 15km buffer, as there is no identifiable connectivity or pathways for significant effects.

Figure 3.1 shows all Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity of Longford County. Table 3.1 below, lists all Natura 2000 Sites that were considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact. The site synopses and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the National Parks and Wildlife Service website (www.npws.ie), were considered at the time of preparation of this report (15/06/2016)

Table 3.1. European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact of the LECP

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)				
Lough Ree SAC (000440)	0km (south west)	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation [3150] ▪ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Alkaline fens [7230] ▪ Limestone pavements [8240] ▪ Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] ▪ Bog woodland [91D0] ▪ <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] ▪ 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Fortwilliam Turlough SAC (000448)	0km (south west)	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Turloughs [3180] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Lough Forbes Complex SAC (001818)	0km (west)	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation [3150] ▪ Active raised bogs [7110] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] 	<i>the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i>
Ardagullion Bog SAC (002341)	0km (east)	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] Bog woodland [91D0] 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie
Brown Bog SAC (002346)	0km(west)	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie
Clooneen Bog SAC (002348)	0km (west)	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] Bog woodland [91D0] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Moneybeg And Clareisland Bogs SAC (002340)	1.0km north east	Westmeath/ Meath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] 	
Corbo Bog SAC (002349)	3.0km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] ▪ 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie
Garriskil Bog SAC (000679)	3.8km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] ▪ 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie
Ballymore Fen SAC (002313)	4.3km south east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs SAC (000007)	6.4km north	Cavan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation [3150] ▪ Bog woodland [91D0] ▪ <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] ▪ 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
Lough Funshinagh SAC (000611)	7.4km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Lough Owel SAC (000688)	8.7km south east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard <i>oligo-mesotrophic</i> waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] Alkaline fens [7230] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
White Lough, Ben Loughs And Lough Doo SAC (001810)	10.3km north east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard <i>oligo-mesotrophic</i> waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Lough Lene SAC (002121)	11.0km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard <i>oligo-mesotrophic</i> waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i>
Ballynamona Bog And Corkip Lough SAC (002339)	11.4km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Turloughs [3180] ▪ Active raised bogs [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] ▪ Bog woodland [91D0] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
River Shannon Callows SAC (000216)	11.7km south	Westmeath/Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] ▪ Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] ▪ Limestone pavements [8240] ▪ Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] ▪ <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Carn Park Bog SAC (002336)	11.7km south	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie</p>
Ballinturly Turlough SAC (000588)	12.0km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Turloughs [3180] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i>
Crosswood Bog SAC (002337)	13.0km south	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site are available at www.npws.ie
Lough Croan Turlough SAC (000610)	13.0km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Lough Bane And Lough Glass SAC (002120)	13.1km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Scragh Bog SAC (000692)	13.3km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] Alkaline fens [7230] <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] <i>Drepanocladus vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss) [1393] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
Annaghmore Lough (Roscommon) SAC (001626)	13.4km west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alkaline fens [7230] <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Castlesampson Esker SAC (001625)	13.5km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Lisduff Turlough SAC (000609)	14.3km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i></p>
Special Protection Areas (SPA)				
Glen Lough SPA (004045)	0km east	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] 	<p>The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</i>
Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA (004061)	0km north east	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] ▪ Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i></p>
Lough Ree SPA (004064)	0km south west	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>) [A004] ▪ Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] ▪ Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] ▪ Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] ▪ Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] ▪ Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] ▪ Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] ▪ Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] ▪ Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067] ▪ Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] ▪ Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] ▪ Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] ▪ Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<i>the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i>
Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA (004101)	0km west	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p>
Lough Sheelin SPA (004065)	1.3km north east	Cavan/Meath /Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i></p>
Garriskil Bog SPA (004102)	3.9km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of</i></p>

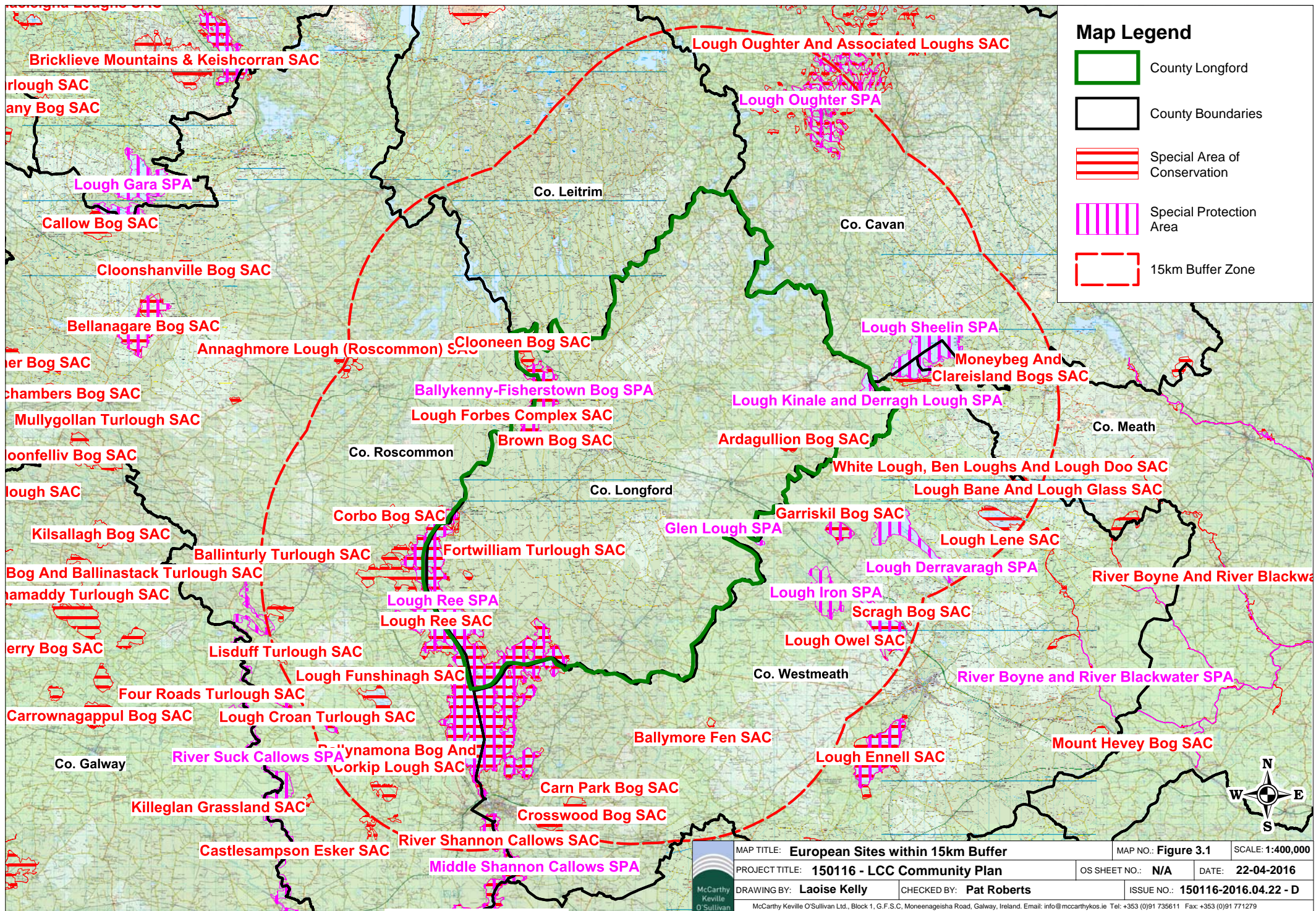
European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i>
Lough Iron SPA (004046)	4.2km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i></p>
Lough Derravaragh SPA (004043)	6.3km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i>
Lough Owel SPA (004047)	8.7km south east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] ▪ Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
Lough Oughter SPA (004049)	8.8km north	Cavan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i></p>
Middle Shannon Callows SPA (004096)	11.7km south	Westmeath/Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i>
Lough Croan Turlough SPA (004139)	12.9km south west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i></p>
River Suck Callows SPA (004097)	14.1km south west	Roscommon/ Galway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</i></p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of</i></p>

European Site	Distance from County Boundary (km)	County	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site has been designated (www.npws.ie on the 15/06/2016)	Conservation Objectives
				<i>the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it</i>



3.2 Assessment of Likely Effects on European Sites

Below is an assessment of likely effects of the plan on Natura 2000 Sites. This covers the possibilities of individual elements of the project impacting Natura 2000 Sites, along with direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the plan. Significance indicators, as outlined by the European Commission (2002), are also addressed.

3.2.1 Description of the Individual; Elements of the Project with Potential to give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

There are no elements of the Draft County Longford Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2022 that could give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 sites considered above. The goals have been screened out for one or more of the following reasons:

- The goal does not relate to land use or the physical environment and is concerned with service delivery, co-ordination and /or the promotion of networks.
- The objective is of a broad strategic nature that does not specify a quantum or location for future land use and development.

3.2.2 Description of any likely Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts of the Project on the Natura 2000 Sites

Any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the plan, both alone and in combination with other plans or projects, on the Natura 2000 Sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the Natura 2000 sites or key features of the site, resource requirements (such as water abstraction), emissions (disposal to land, water or air), excavations, transportation requirements and duration are presented in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 Likely Impacts of the Plan on the Natura 2000 Sites

Impact Type	Significance of impact
Size and Scale	Whilst the plan covers the Longford County administrative area, the objectives and actions are of a nature, type, size or scale such that they are unlikely to result in any negative impacts on any European site (even those that are located within the plan area boundary). In addition, any elements associated with their implementation will be subject to Appropriate Assessment (or Screening) where necessary and will be subject to the objectives of the Longford County Development Plan. No impacts as a result of size and scale are anticipated.
Land-take	Many objectives do not relate to a change in land use or the physical environment. Where objectives do relate to potential physical change it is of a broad strategic nature that does not specify a magnitude or location for future land use and development. The objectives and actions of the plan do not themselves specify any land take. Where they have the potential to influence any other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact on European Sites as a result of land-take any elements associated with their implementation will be subject to Appropriate Assessment (or Screening) where necessary and will have regard to the objectives of the Longford County Development Plan. No impacts as a result of land-take are anticipated.

Distance from the Natura 2000 Site or Key Features of the Site	Whilst the plan area encompasses some European sites, none of the objectives or actions of the plan are considered to have the potential to impact on any European sites as a result of the distance to any site. Similarly, the plan does not contain objectives or actions that influence other plans or projects that may potentially impact on European Sites by virtue of distance.
Resource Requirements	The objectives and actions of the plan do not relate to a specific project or development where resource requirements are quantifiable. The objectives relate to policies in a broad nature that do not specify the location for future land use and development. However, the objectives themselves do not involve any resource requirement of any kind. Neither do they have the potential to influence any other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact on European Sites as a result of resource requirement
Emissions	The objectives and actions of the plan do not themselves involve any emissions. Neither do they have the potential to influence any other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact on European Sites as a result of emissions
Excavation Requirements	The objectives and actions of the plan do not themselves involve any excavations. Neither do they have the potential to influence any other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact on European Sites as a result of excavations.
Transportation Requirements	The objectives and actions of the plan do not relate to a specific project or development where transportation requirements are quantifiable. Neither do they have the potential to influence any other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact on European Sites as a result of transportation.
Duration of Plan	The Longford County LECP will run from 2016 – 2022. However, no potential for impacts on European Sites have been identified as a result of the plan and therefore no impacts are anticipated as a result of the duration of the plan
Cumulative Impacts with other Projects or Plans	<p>The LECP was considered in combination with other plans and projects in the area that could result in cumulative impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Other plans considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021 ▪ Roscommon County Development Plan 2014-2020 ▪ Westmeath County development Plan 2014-2020 ▪ Cavan County Development Plan 2014-2020 ▪ Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021 ▪ Shannon International River Basin Management Plan <p>No cumulative impacts are predicted as each plan has a range of environmental and natural heritage policy safeguards in place. These safeguards to protect the natural environment and European Sites will also apply to the Longford County LECP. Therefore, as there will be no significant impacts associated with the LECP and it is considered unlikely to influence other plans or projects in a manner that could result in effects on any European site</p>

3.2.3 Likely Changes to the Natura 2000 Sites

Any likely changes to the Natura 2000 Sites are described below in Table 3.3 with reference to the following criteria outlined by the European Commission (2001): reduction of habitat area, disturbance to key species, habitat or species fragmentation, reduction in species density, changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality etc.) and climate change.

Table 3.3 Likely Changes to the Natura 2000 Sites

Potential Change	Significance of change
Reduction of Habitat Area	No reduction in habitat area is anticipated as a result of the Longford County LECP
Disturbance to Key Species	No disturbance to key species is anticipated as a result of the Longford County LECP
Habitat or Species Fragmentation	No habitat or species fragmentation is anticipated as a result of the Longford County LECP
Reduction in Species Density	No reduction in species density is anticipated as a result of the Longford County LECP
Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value	No changes in key indicators of conservation value are anticipated as a result of the Longford County LECP
Climate Change	It is not anticipated that the Longford County LECP will result in significant impacts on climate change

3.2.4 Likely Impacts on Natura 2000 Network as a Whole

Given the nature and scale of the Longford County LECP it is considered that there will be no adverse effect on any Natura 2000 site. None of the qualifying species or habitats of any Natura 2000 Sites will be affected.

3.2.5 Indicators of Significance as a Result of the Identification of Effects

Indicators of significance (following European Commission (2001)) are provided in Table 3.4 for any impacts identified in terms of habitat loss, fragmentation, disruption to processes, disturbance to species and changes to key elements of the site.

Table 3.4 Indicators of Significance as a Result of the Identification of Effects

Indicators of Significance as a Result of the Identification of Effects	
Loss	There will be no loss of habitat within any Natura 2000 site as a result of the Longford County LECP.
Fragmentation	There will be no habitat fragmentation within any Natura 2000 site as a result of the Longford County LECP.
Disruption	There will be no significant disruption to processes within any Natura 2000 site as a result of the Longford County LECP.
Disturbance	There will be no significant disturbance to fauna within any Natura 2000 site as a result of the Longford County LECP.
Changes to Key Elements of the Site	There will be no changes to key elements within any Natura 2000 site as a result of the Longford County LECP.

3.2.6 Likely Significant Impacts or Indeterminate Impacts of the Plan on Natura 2000 Sites

No significant impacts are likely as a result of the Longford County LECP on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site.

4 ARTICLE 6(3) SCREENING STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this Screening Assessment are presented following the European Commission guidance and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (European Commission, 2001; DEHLG, 2009; 2010).

Name and Location of Natura 2000 sites

The location of Natura 2000 Sites within the 15km buffer of the Longford County LECP is shown in Figure 3.1. The distances of Natura 200 sites from the area of interest are provided in Table 3.1.

Description of Project

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report related to the Draft Longford County Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2022

Is the plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites?

- No

Are there any plans or projects that together with the plan being assessed could affect Natura 2000 sites?

- No, on the basis that the plan as proposed will have no significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, cumulative impacts are not anticipated.

4.1 Assessment of Significance of Effects

Describe how the project is likely to affect Natura 2000 sites

The plan as proposed will not significantly affect any Natura 2000 sites.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant

There is no element of the Longford County Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2020 that could give rise to impacts on Natura 2000 sites. The goals have been screened out for one or more of the following reasons:

- The goal does not relate to land use or the physical environment and is concerned with service delivery, co-ordination and /or the promotion of networks
- The goal is of a broad strategic nature which does not specify a quantum or location for future land use and development

4.2 Data Collected to Carry Out Assessment

In preparation of the assessment, the following sources were used to gather information:

National Parks and Wildlife Services www.npws.ie

National Biodiversity Data Centre www.biodiversityireland.ie

Environmental Protection Agency www.epa.ie

Longford County Council www.longfordcoco.ie

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European Commission (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission. European Commission, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

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O'Neill, F.H., Martin, J.R., Devaney, F.M. and Perrin, P.M. (2013) The Irish semi-natural grasslands survey 2007-2012. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 78. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Ireland.

Wilson, S. (2006) Appropriate Assessment of plans. Levett-Therivel Sustainability Consultants, Treweek Environmental Consultants and Land Use Consultants, UK.

Relevant legislation

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds

SI 359/1996 European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) (Amendment) Regulations 1996

SI 94/1997 European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997

SI 94/1999 Flora (Protection) Order 1999

SI 30/2000 Planning and Development Act 2000

SI 30/2010 Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010

SI 19/2010 Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2010

SI 477/2011 European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011

Appendix I

Economic Proposed Objectives and Actions

Objective	Action
<p>1.1 Create the environment that attracts inward investment, increasing employment opportunities in Co. Longford</p>	<p>Ensure IDA's Regional Action Plan fully reflects competitive strengths of the Midlands Region as an investment location</p> <p>Identify viable Regional Sectoral ecosystems that can be developed as reference clusters to help attract further inward investment</p> <p>Work closely with existing FDI clients to retain and strengthen their presence through continued company transformation</p> <p>Develop appropriate property solutions through the provision of industrial buildings and sites in designated locations to cater for predicted future demand</p> <p>Develop a Diaspora tool-kit for engaging with Longford's business Diaspora to determine opportunities for inward investment</p> <p>Actively engage with and support ConnectIreland in the roll out of its Community Partnership Programme</p> <p>Monitor inward investment announcements to ensure as equitable a Regional distribution as possible</p> <p>Work closely with Local, Regional and National enterprise authorities in developing marketing materials to promote the Region as a robust economic entity</p> <p>Consider a range of initiatives designed to highlight County Longford as a dynamic business County</p> <p>Establish an inter-agency group to facilitate sharing of information and ensure a co-ordinated and proactive approach to attracting inward investment</p> <p>Continue to develop a strong 'Brand Longford' which portrays Longford County as an attractive place to invest, live and work</p> <p>Determines a Workforce inventory that maps the Counties strengths, identifies future trends and inputs into a broader Regional workforce inventory</p>
<p>1.2 Increase innovation capability and capacity and develop</p>	<p>Foster an innovation culture through the development of a Regional Innovation Forum</p>

sustainable competitive advantages from identified sectoral strengths	<p>Support the development of the Midlands Manufacturing Technologies Campus (MMTC) as a concerted response towards building Regional competitiveness and innovation capacity in Midlands</p> <p>Recruit innovative high potential start-ups for the New Frontiers Programme run through the MIRC</p> <p>Identify and explore opportunities for Longford based companies to avail of the span of Research Facilities and Programmes available through AIT</p> <p>Consider provision of incubation facilities to support early-stage FDI companies &/or 2nd stage indigenous companies graduating from MMTC/MIRC</p> <p>Identify opportunities to avail of EU funding such as Horizon 2020 funding specifically designed to support company innovation and research & development activities</p> <p>Develop programmes to encourage local innovation, R&D and identification of market opportunities in emerging sectors</p> <p>Support and fast-track the development of an Innovation Hub that allows new start-ups to interact in a creative working environment</p> <p>Provide relevant, timely and up-to-date information and business resources to meet client research needs</p> <p>Hold an Annual Summer School/‘Think Tank’ that might attract a National/International audience</p> <p>Investigate the introduction of the ‘<i>Charette</i>’ concept for developing innovative projects across a range of disciplines where feasible</p> <p>Develop linkages between FDI, large, small and local indigenous companies to identify possible synergies, partnerships and sub-supply opportunities.</p> <p>Work with new and existing indigenous companies to increase exports and target new markets.</p> <p>Identify and/or contribute to EU funded programmes with potential to lead to increased economic activity in the County.</p> <p>Contribute to the Regional Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy Project that looks to define areas of competitive advantage for a distinct Upper Shannon Region.</p> <p>Identify opportunities centred around key Flagship projects to generate enhanced economic activity</p> <p>Identify and support the establishment of sectoral clusters that allow opportunity for constructive networking and inter-firm co-operation enabling the County to promote clusters with a critical mass to a wider audience</p>
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Objective		Action
		<p>Foster the bundling of product or service delivery that can lead to synergies or cooperative gain for companies involved.</p> <p>Prioritise the establishment of an Economic Forum comprising successful Longford business people working inside / outside the County both nationally and internationally (i.e. New York Diaspora) to guide economic strategy over the duration of the LECP</p>
1.3	Promote a strong culture of entrepreneurship and create an enabling environment for small business development.	<p>Create a business environment where investor needs are met in a responsive and pro-active manner strengthening County Longford's pro-business reputation</p> <p>Support all SMEs/Micro Enterprises in County Longford to reach their full potential by adopting a case management approach</p> <p>Build the capacity of a number of micro-enterprises to allow them graduate to the Enterprise Ireland portfolio of client companies</p> <p>Promote local entrepreneurs as wealth creators and positive role models in our community</p> <p>Maintain improvements in local enterprise service delivery through production of an annual Local Enterprise Plan.</p> <p>Promote enterprise creation to specific target groups such as youth, females, migrants, unemployed, active aged, construction sector etc.</p> <p>Enhance Student Entrepreneurship Initiatives through Student Enterprise Programmes at both primary and secondary levels</p> <p>Support the creation and development of Social Enterprises where they are identified as the most appropriate business structure</p> <p>Support the potential development of the Creative industries</p> <p>Establish a methodology to ensure that all enterprises are aware of the enterprise supports available from relevant agencies</p> <p>Advise companies on quality accreditation standards and the public procurement process</p> <p>Promote and assist the delivery of cost savings through energy efficient programmes and training for businesses, community groups and public sector organisations in County Longford</p>
1.4	Enhance employability and	<p>Deliver targeted support measures to facilitate enhanced female participation in employment and self-employment</p>

Objective		Action
	entrepreneurial potential of different sectoral groups	<p>Provide support and guidance to long term unemployed to develop sustainable small businesses</p> <p>Design and deliver a series of apprenticeship, internship, job path and taster programmes to tackle youth unemployment rates</p> <p>Design and deliver a series of pre-employment programmes to enhance employability of early schools leavers and those with low education attainment</p> <p>Establish specific support measures to support employment initiatives among the traveller community</p> <p>Design and deliver a series of pre-employment programmes to prepare people for opportunities in emerging industries/sectors.</p> <p>Design and provide training and mentoring supports specifically designed for persons setting up a new enterprise.</p> <p>Support the development of youth programmes that stimulate creative and inventive thinking</p> <p>Support development of a niche 3rd Level Outreach Programme(s) with specific education programmes designed and delivered within Co. Longford</p>
2.1	Identify initiatives that will reduce barriers causing social exclusion and encourage a positive culture around minority groups and their participation	<p>Investigate the establishment of an integration service to maximise the economic opportunity presented by the influx of migrants to Co. Longford</p> <p>Adopt the Age Friendly Business Recognition Scheme</p>
4.1	To develop critical enabling	Prioritise strategic locations for development to enhance Longford's appeal as an investment location

Objective	Action
infrastructure that enhances Longford's viability as a business location	<p>Enhance existing business parks and evaluate the need for new serviced business parks in various urban centres in the County</p> <p>Support implementation of the National Broadband Plan identifying and address areas of critical need with an increase in no. of businesses with access to high-speed broadband</p> <p>Prioritise plans for the following (i) To extend the M4 dual carriageway along the identified corridor from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath to Dromad, Co. Leitrim; (ii) Upgrade the N55</p> <p>Contribute and support the development of the Midlands Regional Energy Hub</p> <p>Attract mains gas infrastructure to County Longford</p> <p>Promote and support the sustainable use and viability of Abbeyshrule Airport and expanded facilities</p> <p>Provide and promote rural transport services</p> <p>Identify sustainable transport provision (to include cycling and the provision of cycle networks) which facilitates unemployed people to access training and employment</p> <p>Advocate and promote development of 1st class specialist facilities on site of St. Joseph's Hospital, Longford Town</p>
5.1	Develop a thriving tourism sector that contributes significantly to
	Explore opportunities for the development of EU tourism projects which can create viable inter-regional connections

Objective	Action
economic, social and cultural development	<p>Support and underpin National & Regional Strategies designed to grow tourism numbers in the Midlands Region</p> <p>Oversee the development and implementation of a clear Tourism Strategy for County Longford</p> <p>Build and promote a Longford Tourism Brand around products that have capacity to deliver significant visitor numbers to the County</p> <p>Support the development of National/European Tourism Project(s) to become a significant tourism destinations In Ireland</p> <p>Identify and develop sustainable projects within Longford that offer potential to expand on the tourism product offering in the County</p> <p>Support the development of the tourist accommodation product in Longford</p> <p>Explore the potential to utilise worked-out bog lands to develop a National Wetlands Park</p> <p>Support the development of a tourist visitor centre in Granard based around the Motte.</p> <p>Support water tourism by sustainably developing the infrastructure on our water courses and the development of Lanesborough as a premier water recreation and fishing destination</p> <p>Harness and develop the potential of the Blueway Brand.</p> <p>Complete the development of a network of integrated themed trails to include the Rebel, Literary, Edgeworth and South Longford trails</p> <p>Support the development of restoration works to the 'White Bridge', Newcastle Woods, Ballymahon</p> <p>Co-ordinate and support a calendar of festivals and events that have ability to attract visitors from outside County Longford.</p>
6.1 Develop a vibrant economy in the county through the	Prepare and implement a robust Local Development Strategy

Objective	Action
implementation of rural development initiatives	<p>Support CEDRA in its efforts to deliver a jobs creation strategy for rural counties such as County Longford</p> <p>Expand the reach of programmes designed to support successful diversification of farm family enterprises</p> <p>Support actions designed to achieve Origin Green status for food & drinks companies in County Longford</p> <p>Promote innovative and sustainable opportunities in agricultural, food, crafts and the agri-tech industries.</p> <p>Animate the agricultural sector towards further diversification into renewable production</p> <p>Explore the potential to utilise worked-out bog lands to deliver renewable energy solutions</p> <p>Support the Governments Rural Charter that commits to support Rural regeneration and underpin the future sustainable development of Ireland's rural communities</p>
6.2 Revitalise, regenerate and improve the urban environment and develop vibrant urban centres in County Longford	<p>Prepare and implement a Regeneration Plan for Longford Town and County</p> <p>Focus on the Connolly Barracks Site and environs as a priority flagship Regeneration project and take all necessary actions to ensure revitalisation of this site and surrounding area</p> <p>Progress the delivery of the 'Stalled Sites' initiative throughout the County</p> <p>Improve the business landscape in the various towns by addressing undeveloped or derelict areas</p> <p>Support the expansion of existing retail and commercial outlets within town and village centres, consistent with the Retail and Core Strategies</p> <p>Promote and implement retail/business incentive schemes in Longford Town and other areas.</p> <p>Support efforts to improve performance in National benchmark awards such as IBAL and Tidy Towns</p> <p>Achieve Purple Flag status for Longford Town and in turn other urban areas</p>
6.4 Ensure that economic development is underpinned by a	<p>Support the development of key arts, cultural and tourism facilities that underpin local economic performance</p>

Objective	Action
robust social and cultural fabric	<p>Strengthen relationships and partnership agreements with government agencies to protect and sustain national investment in arts infrastructure regionally</p> <p>Support the development of a dedicated gallery for the exhibition of visual arts and research the potential delivery of an arts hub with artist's studios and supports for the creation of work</p> <p>Promote the range of library services and support the development of a new library in Edgeworthstown.</p> <p>Develop and support youth, educational and recreational facilities to enhance Longford's appeal to working families</p> <p>Promote and facilitate the development of local markets devoted to the sale of local agricultural and craft produce</p>

Appendix II

Local & Community Proposed Objectives and Actions

Objective		Action
1.1	Provide measures to promote additional employment opportunities in County Longford	<p>Support ConnectIreland in rolling out its community partnership programme to create jobs</p> <p>Ensure the delivery of the Youth Employment Initiative Pilot Project</p> <p>Support delivery of the Employment motivation programme to young people</p>
1.2	Support the development of entrepreneurship across all sectors of society	<p>Collaborate with target groups to develop Enterprise supports</p> <p>Develop Enterprise initiatives with a local approach to unemployment to include people with disabilities who cannot participate on DSP activation programmes</p> <p>Continue to promote and support programmes for female entrepreneurs</p> <p>Develop 'Age Friendly' Start Your Own Business and Social & Senior Enterprise programmes</p> <p>Investigate the potential for an awards scheme to recognise the contribution and potential of Travellers and New Communities entrepreneurs</p>
1.3	Provision of programmes to	

	<p>address educational disadvantage and skills and training deficits and lifelong learning</p>	<p>Provide education opportunities to supplement mainstream education services through the Youthreach programme and LCRL's CLYS 'Top Class Programme'</p> <p>Promote and support the engagement of traveller children in early years education</p> <p>Seek to allocate additional resources to the Adult Literacy Programme</p> <p>Develop and implement programmes such as 'Failte Isteach' for those with poor English levels and develop supports to those statutory and community agencies already providing supports around English as a second language for target group</p> <p>Promote and support programmes such as the Back to Education Initiative and the development of additional Bridging Courses</p> <p>Develop supports for community and adult education providers already providing formal and non-formal education to targeted disadvantaged groups and who have already identified the barriers to participation in lifelong learning (childcare, transport, peer & financial support etc.)</p> <p>Support existing providers of education and training to lone parents to continue to deliver targeted supports, taking into account the known barriers of childcare, transport and rural isolation</p> <p>Promote the Utilisation of SICAP funding LEADER funding to support existing providers to develop programmes and enable access to 3rd level education on an outreach basis</p> <p>Conduct a Countywide agency training audit & explore opportunities for further training interventions including specific skills, apprenticeship & community based training to meet requirements of the individual learner/labour market</p> <p>Determine a Workforce inventory that maps the Counties strengths, identifies future trends and inputs into a broader Regional workforce inventory</p> <p>Establish a "Skills Co-operative" to include target groups and focus on the needs of potential flagship developments</p> <p>Deliver mentoring Programmes for young Travellers</p> <p>Investigate the introduction of the 'Charette' concept for developing innovative projects across a range of disciplines where feasible</p> <p>Support the ongoing development of pre-school and after school services in Co. Longford</p> <p>Provide additional supports for community childcare facilities in disadvantaged areas</p>
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Objective		Action
		Support development of a family resource centre within Longford town
2.1	Identify initiatives that will reduce the barriers causing social exclusion and encourage a positive culture around minority groups and their participation	<p>Build community capacity by providing training through the LEADER Local Development Strategy</p> <p>Address social exclusion and equality issues by empowering disadvantaged communities through implementation of the SICAP programme</p> <p>Establish and support community and voluntary groups through the Public Participation Network and implementation of its Work plan</p> <p>Pilot an information and meeting hub through the branch library network</p> <p>Support the ongoing work of LCRL's Longford Volunteer Centre</p> <p>Encourage all implementing bodies of the LECP to have appropriate representation from minority groups on all their various working groups and committees</p> <p>Expand the Yellow Flag Programme</p> <p>Support the work of the Traveller Inter agency group Investigate the provision of an Integration Service for New Communities</p> <p>Encourage all implementing parties of the LECP to ensure all publications/websites are written in the 'Plain English' quality standard</p> <p>Designate as a priority the development of a comprehensive Youth Work Plan for the County</p> <p>Support the work of the Comhairle na nOg</p> <p>Provide relevant supports to youth groups and clubs</p> <p>Develop a directory of services for children and young people with special needs in County Longford</p> <p>Investigate the feasibility of additional youth workers for the County</p> <p>Investigate the feasibility of a dedicated teen parent support service</p> <p>Support the development of positive programmes for young people in Youth Arts and Theatre, Outdoor Activities, Youth Cafes, Tour Guides, FRC's, Scouts, Community Games</p> <p>Support implementation of the Age Friendly Work Plan</p> <p>Investigate the re-introduction of a dedicated counselling service for teens in Longford</p>

Objective		Action
2.2	Ensure that the LECP and the Other Actions of the LCDC Give Due Regard to Equality and Human Rights	Investigate the development of a Charter & roll out of Equality training for all frontline staff in all LECP implementation bodies Implementation of all actions in the LECP will be regularly monitored regarding their compliance with the Equality & Human Rights Statement
3.1	Improve the quality and availability of	Support the implementation and the targets of the Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2015-2017

Objective		Action
	services across a range of Health Service providers	<p>Provide a comprehensive range of community health services</p> <p>Roll out a series of targeted community based health promotion programmes particularly in rural areas</p> <p>Continue to provide Clinical Home Support and intervention based on needs assessments</p> <p>Support the work of the County Longford Drugs and Alcohol Forum</p> <p>Continue to implement and develop substance abuse education programmes</p> <p>Seek to provide Drug and Alcohol Assessment, Treatment, Rehabilitation & support services for Adults & under 18's</p> <p>Prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm</p> <p>Implementation of the Longford Sports Partnership Strategy</p> <p>Implement programme aimed at addressing the health needs of Travellers</p> <p>Provide a comprehensive range of positive mental health and suicide prevention services and support the 'Connecting for Life – Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce suicide (2015-2020) at a County level' and the work of the Longford Suicide Resource Officer</p> <p>Adopt and promote the 'Little Things' HSE Mental Health Programme</p> <p>Promote and expand specific programmes targeted at improving mental health such as Green Gyms and Communities on the Move</p> <p>Implement Stop Smoking Initiatives in accordance with Healthy Ireland</p> <p>Formalise implementation & coordination of the 'Community First Responders' Programme in Co. Longford</p> <p>Expand the Healthy Relationships Workshop Programme to include more Transition Year groups and Youth Groups</p> <p>Continue discussions with the HSE regarding the potential development of an acquired brain injury unit on the site of St. Joseph's Longford Town</p>
3.2	Provide a safe and secure environment for all in both urban and rural areas	<p>Prepare a 6 year Crime Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Support the structured programmes that are already in place e.g. Garda Schools Programme and LEAP</p>

Objective		Action
		<p>Target local crime reduction and prevention initiatives, working with communities and business groups</p> <p>Increase the number of community alert and text alert areas in the county</p> <p>Increase the number of community guards working with young people at risk</p> <p>Develop guidelines to create safe and secure design and layout of urban areas</p> <p>Adopt the Crime Prevention Ambassador Programme, or similar alternative programme</p> <p>Hold a series of anti-social behaviour community clinics</p> <p>Facilitate crime diversionary programmes throughout County Longford as an outreach provision from Longford Town</p> <p>Provide supports to agencies working in the area of Gender Based Violence to raise local awareness of this crime and associated impact on the victim, their children and the wider community</p>
3.3	Provision of adequate housing provision to meet the needs of all	Provide social housing units through a range of delivery mechanisms in accordance with the Social Housing Strategy 2020*

Objective		Action
	sectors of the community	<p>Meet the identified housing needs of people with disabilities locally where they are currently living in the community and or in a congregated setting*</p> <p>Provide social housing units which meet the needs of the elderly*</p> <p>Identify and meet the accommodation needs of the Traveller Community in accordance with Traveller Accommodation Plan 2014-2018*</p> <p>Address the needs of Homeless Persons as set out in the 'Implementation Plan on the State's Response to Homelessness May 2014 to December 2016'*</p> <p>Support the work of the Regional Support Service</p> <p>Ensure compliance with Private Rented Standards as set out by PRTB</p> <p>Develop a programme of work to upgrade social housing stock (includes heating systems)</p> <p>Promote availability of the following grants:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobility Aids - Housing Adaptation Grants for People with Disability - Housing Aids for Older Persons <p>Ensure Community Houses are made available by the Council where deemed appropriate</p> <p>In cases of Domestic consider the expertise of the referring Domestic Violence Support Service in determining the level of risk/danger to which a client is exposed.</p> <p>Support the introduction of Realistic Rent Allowances and parity across Local Authority areas relative to available accommodation</p>
4.1	Provision of adequate critical infrastructure	Support increased use of ICT by the community through the LEADER rural development programme

Objective		Action
	to meet the needs of enterprise and all sectors of the community	<p>Support the provision of Broadband services to serve all areas of the county through the implementation of the National Broadband Plan and the Connected Communities Initiative</p> <p>Promote and support the sustainable use and viability of Abbeyshrule Airport</p> <p>Investigate the development of a transport and travel information hub</p> <p>Investigate opportunities for maximising existing transport resources e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - school transport - development of a link with local community bus providers - expanding pilot Community Car Scheme <p>Identify sustainable transport provision which facilitates unemployed people to access training and employment</p> <p>Identify sustainable transport provision which facilitates persons travelling to healthcare appointments outside of the county</p>
5.1	Identify initiatives that will encourage a positive culture around community participation	Oversee hosting an information session to share information and encourage participation and networking of target groups.
6.1		

Objective	Action
<p>Preservation of the natural environment of Longford</p>	<p>Protect the natural environment by ensuring balance between conservation and development through the implementation of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the County Development Plan - the Biodiversity Action Plan - the National Pollinators Plan <p>Protect and improve water quality in our lakes and rivers by the implementation of the River Basin Management Plans</p> <p>Promote and implement sustainable waste management through the implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan</p> <p>Promote and support development of renewable energy initiatives through the LEADER Rural Development Programme</p> <p>Implementation of sustainable transport initiatives to reduce dependence on car usage</p> <p>Promote and support water conservation initiatives through the LEADER rural development programme</p> <p>Reduce annual energy usage through collaboration with the Midland Energy Agency</p> <p>Protection and improvement of local biodiversity initiatives through the LEADER rural development programme</p> <p>Support the refurbishment and upgrading of facilities including energy efficiency (to include social housing)</p> <p>Develop an awareness campaign and dissemination of information regarding biodiversity and appropriate hedge cutting times</p> <p>Continue to investigate solutions to address the problem of Japanese Knotweed within County Longford and progress this to a wider Invasive Species project</p>
<p>6.2 Revitalise, regenerate and improve the urban environment and develop vibrant urban centres in Co. Longford</p>	<p>Prepare and implement a Regeneration Plan for Longford Town and County and deliver other transformational projects as determined by the Regeneration Section</p> <p>Deliver transformational projects determined by the Regeneration Section</p> <p>Achieve Purple Flag status for Longford Town and in turn other urban areas</p> <p>Establish Age Friendly Town in the County through the Age Friendly Programme</p> <p>Support efforts to improve performance and participation by groups and businesses in National benchmark awards such as IBAL and Tidy Towns, National Pride of Place</p>

Objective	Action
<p>6.3 Promotion and Preservation of the Arts, Culture and Heritage of Longford</p>	<p>Implement the Longford Arts Plan</p> <p>Complete an audit of Arts and culture provision in the County and address deficits in provision</p> <p>Ensure that investment in the Arts is protected and that partnerships are built with relevant supporting agencies</p> <p>Promote and encourage a stronger appreciation of our heritage and culture through a participatory programme of cultural activities and encouragement of collaborations with educational institutions and health services</p> <p>Implementation of the Longford Library Development Plan</p> <p>Support a suite of festivals and event support schemes including Diaspora Events</p> <p>Animate Longford's public realms through a year round programme of festivals and events</p> <p>Protect the natural environment by ensuring balance between conservation and development through the implementation of the County Development Plan</p> <p>Promote the natural, built and cultural heritage of the county through the implementation of the County Longford Heritage Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan</p> <p>Continue to develop a network of additional walking and cycle routes</p> <p>Strengthen relationships and partnership agreements with government agencies to protect and sustain national investment in arts infrastructure regionally</p> <p>Support development of a dedicated gallery for exhibition of visual arts and research the potential delivery of an arts hub with artist's studios and supports for the creation of work</p>
<p>6.4 Improve the quality of the built and physical environment and provide good quality community,</p>	<p>Support the work of the Village Enhancement Plans</p> <p>Promote and implement universal access policies in County Longford</p>

Objective	Action
recreational and amenity facilities	<p>Conduct a Seating Audit in towns, villages and Countywide amenities</p> <p>Consider further facility development in various amenity areas throughout the County</p> <p>Investigate the feasibility of the provision of modern sports campus in Higginstown, Granard</p> <p>Maximise multi-use of existing community facilities</p> <p>Provide capacity building training to community groups to enable them to manage their community facilities more efficiently</p> <p>Maximise public realm improvements in the various towns in Co. Longford</p> <p>Provide Dog Litter Disposal facilities in recreation spaces and continue to monitor by-laws</p> <p>Adopt a Road and Community Cleanup programme</p> <p>Carry out a parking audit to include:- Examination of parking provision within the Municipal Districts Audit and monitoring the condition of disabled parking bays/Age Friendly spaces and their signage</p> <p>Support the development of a new library in Edgeworthstown.</p>