

STATEMENT OF SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

FOR

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL (DRAFT) NOISE ACTION PLAN 2024-2028

In Line with the Requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive



Prepared for

Longford County Council

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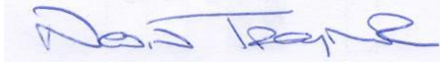
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This report refers, within the limitations stated, to the condition of the site at the time of the report. No warranty is given as to the possibility of future changes in the condition of the site. The report as presented is based on the information sources as detailed in this report, and hence maybe subject to review in the future if more information is obtained or scientific understanding changes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	Background	4
2.0	REGULATORY CONTEXT	6
2.1	Relevant Legislation – Nature Conservation	6
2.2	Relevant Legislation – Noise	7
3.0	METHODOLOGY	10
3.1	Appropriate Assessment	10
3.2	Statement of Competency	15
3.3	Desk Studies & Consultation	
3.4	Assessment Methodology	
4.0	Stage 1: Screening	16
4.1	Description of the Plan	16
4.2	Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites	13
4.3	AA Screening Matrix	23
5.0	APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION	18

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Article 6 of the EU Habitat's Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) requires that all plans and projects be screened for potential significant effects upon Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The aim of this screening process is to establish whether or not significant effects upon those designated sites are likely to arise from the proposed plan or project.

Traynor Environmental Ltd has been engaged by Longford County Council to undertake this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for the Longford County Council (Draft 1.7) Noise Action Plan 2024-2028. This screening exercise for Appropriate Assessment was carried out in order to identify whether any significant impacts on designated sites arising from the implementation of the Noise Action Plan are likely.

The Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 has been prepared by Longford County Council for major roads carrying more than three million vehicles per annum. This is the third Noise Action Plan devised for Co. Longford and it supersedes the 2018-2023 Noise Action Plan.

2.0 Regulatory Context

2.1 Relevant Legislation – Nature Conservation

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC) recognises that certain species of birds should be subject to special conservation measures concerning their habitats. The Directive requires that Member States take measures to classify the most suitable areas as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for the conservation of bird species listed in Annex 1 of the Directive. SPAs are selected for bird species (listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive), that are regularly occurring populations of migratory bird species and the SPA areas are of international importance for these migratory birds.

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) requires that Member States designate and ensure that particular protection is given to sites (Special Areas of Conservation) which are made up of or support particular habitats and species listed in annexes to this Directive.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of this Directive also call for the undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment for plans and projects not directly connected with or necessary to the management of, but which are likely to have a significant effect on any European designated sites (i.e. SACs and SPAs).

Appropriate Assessment and the Habitats Directive

Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora – the 'Habitats Directive' - provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Article 2 of the Directive requires the maintenance or restoration of habitats and species of European Community interest, at a favourable conservation status. Articles 3 - 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as *Natura 2000*. *Natura 2000* sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive sets out the decision-making tests for plans or projects affecting *Natura 2000* sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the

conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public."

Article 6(4) deals with the steps that should be taken when it is determined, as a result of appropriate assessment, that a plan/project will adversely affect a European site. Issues dealing with alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest and compensatory measures need to be addressed in this case.

Article 6(4) states:

"If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted."

Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."

The Appropriate Assessment Process

The aim of Appropriate Assessment is to assess the implications of a proposal in respect of a designated site's conservation objectives.

The 'Appropriate Assessment' itself is an assessment which must be carried out by the competent authority which confirms whether the plan or project in combination with other plans and projects will have an adverse impact on the integrity of a European site.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority as set out in Section 177U(1) and (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) as follows:

'(1) A screening for appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or application for consent for proposed development shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site.

(2) A competent authority shall carry out a screening for appropriate assessment under subsection (1) before—

(a) a Land use plan is made including, where appropriate, before a decision on appeal in relation to a draft strategic development zone is made, or

(b) consent for a proposed development is given.'

The competent authority shall determine that an Appropriate Assessment is not required if it can be excluded, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or project will have a significant effect on a European site.

Where the competent authority cannot exclude the potential for a significant effect on a European site, an Appropriate Assessment shall be deemed required.

Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the conclusions of the Appropriate Assessment Report (Natura Impact Statement (NIS)) should enable the competent authority to ascertain whether the plan or proposed development would adversely affect the integrity of the European site. If adverse impacts on the integrity of a European site cannot be avoided, then mitigation measures should be applied during the appropriate assessment process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site remain. Under the terms of the Habitats Directive consent can only be granted for a project if, as a result of the appropriate assessment either (a) it is concluded that the integrity of any European sites will not be adversely affected, or (b) after mitigation, where adverse impacts cannot be excluded, there is shown to be an absence of alternative solutions, and there exists imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project should go ahead.

Section 177(V) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) outlines that the competent authority shall carry out the Appropriate Assessment, taking into account the Natura Impact Statement (amongst any other additional or supplemental information). A determination shall then be made by the competent authority in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as to whether the plan or proposed development would adversely affect the integrity of a European site, prior to consent being given.

2.2 Relevant Legislation – Noise

The requirement of County Council's to prepare a Noise Action Plan (hereafter referred to as NAP) is set out for Member States under the Environmental Noise Directive (END) (2002/49/EC), a legal instrument for addressing adverse effects of environmental noise which have been transposed into Irish law¹ and require preparation of strategic noise mapping and implementation of NAPs. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the national competent authority responsible for implementing the END and will ultimately report noise mapping and action planning to the European Commission.

The END aims to provide for the implementation of a common EC approach to avoid, prevent, or reduce the harmful effects of exposure to environmental noise on a prioritised basis.

The Environmental Noise Directive ("END") (2002/49/EC) is the main European instrument which has been put in place to manage environmental noise and engage with the public. The END was transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2006, being revised in 2018 and amended in 2018.

¹ The END was transposed into Irish Law by the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006¹ (S.I. 140/2006) (the "Regulations"). The Regulations were revised by the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018² (S.I. 549/2018) and amended through the European Communities (Environmental Noise) (Amendment) Regulations 2021³ (S.I. 663/2021).

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Appropriate Assessment

This Statement of Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Stage 1) has been prepared with reference to the following:

- European Commission (2018). Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.
- European Commission (2021). Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- European Commission (2006). Nature and Biodiversity Cases: Ruling of the European Court of Justice.
- European Commission (2007). Clarification of the Concepts of: Alternative Solution, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence, Opinion of the Commission.
- Department of Environment, Heritage, and Local Government (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities.
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10;
- Draft Guidance Note for Noise Action Planning for the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018. Draft Version 2, January 2024;
- The AA has also been undertaken in consideration of the European Union (CJEU) judgment on Case C323/17 (People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta), which concluded that *"it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of the measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects [mitigation] of the plan or project on that site."*. Other caselaw relevant to Screening are Waddenzee (C127/02), Holohan and Others v An Bord Pleanála (C461/17) and Court of Appeal case C1/2009/0041/QBACF Citation No [2009] EWCA Civ. 1061.

The EC Guidance sets out a number of principles as to how to approach decision making during the process. The primary one is 'the precautionary principle' which requires that the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 should prevail where there is uncertainty.

When considering the precautionary principle, the emphasis for assessment should be on objectively demonstrating with supporting evidence that:

- There will be no significant effects on a Natura 2000 site;
- There will be no adverse effects on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site;
- There is an absence of alternatives to the project or plan that is likely to have an adverse effect to the integrity of a Natura 2000 site; and
- There are compensation measures that maintain or enhance the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

This translates into a four-stage process to assess the impacts, on a designated site or species, of a policy or proposal.

The EC Guidance states that "each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required". Consequently, the Council may not need to proceed through all four stages in undertaking the Appropriate Assessment.

The four-stage process is:

Stage 1: Screening – The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether or not these impacts are likely to be significant;

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment – The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts;

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions – The process which examines alternative ways of achieving objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site;

Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain – An assessment of the compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

In complying with the obligations set out in Articles 6(3) and following the guidelines described above, this screening statement has been structured as a stage by stage approach as follows:

- Description of the proposed plan;
- Identification of the Natura 2000 sites within the Zone of Influence of that plan;
- Identification and description of any individual and cumulative impacts on the Natura 2000 sites likely to result from the implementation of the plan.
- Assessment of the significance of the impacts identified above on site integrity. Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

3.2 Statement of Competency

This AA Screening report was carried out by Noreen McLoughlin, BA, MSc, MCIEEM. Noreen has an honours degree in Zoology and an MSc in Freshwater Ecology from Trinity College, Dublin and she has been a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management for over eighteen years. Noreen has over 20 years' experience as a professional ecologist in Ireland.

3.3 Desk Studies & Consultation

Information on the site and the area of the proposed development was studied prior to the completion of this statement. The following data sources were accessed in order to complete a thorough examination of potential impacts:

- National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Longford County Council – The (Draft) Noise Action Plan 2024-2028

3.4 Assessment Methodology

The proposed development was assessed to identify its potential ecological impacts and from this, the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the proposed development was defined. Based on the potential impacts and their Zoi, the Natura 2000 sites potentially at risk from direct, indirect, or in-combination impacts were identified. The assessment considered all potential impact sources and pathways connecting the proposed development to Natura 2000 sites, in view of the conservation objectives supporting the favourable conservation condition of the site's Qualifying Interests (QIs) or Special Conservation Interests (SCIs).

The conservation objectives relating to each Natura 2000 site and its QIs/SCIs are cited generally for SACs as "to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected", and for SPAs "to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA".

As defined in the Habitat's Directive, the favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range and area it covers within that range is stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future;
- The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:
- The population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Where site-specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) have been prepared for a European site, these include a series of specific attributes and targets against which effects on conservation condition, or integrity, can be measured. Where potential significant effects are identified, then these SSCO's should be considered in detail.

4.0 Stage 1: Screening

4.1 Description of the Plan

4.1.1 Longford Noise Policy

Longford County Council will seek to address environmental noise from major roads, as defined in the Environmental Noise Regulations, in the county. Longford Co. Council will endeavour to maintain satisfactory noise environments, where they exist and will have regard to the protection and improvement of the noise environment in the planning process. Longford County Council will endeavour that future developments include provisions to protect the population from the effects of environmental noise in the interests of residential amenity and public health.

4.1.2 Overview of Plan

Longford County Council (Draft 1.7) Noise Action Plan (2024-2028) has been prepared for major roads carrying more than three million vehicles per annum, which in County Longford comprises the following sections of roads:

- N4 from the County Boundary with Westmeath to the County boundary with Leitrim.
- N63 from its junction with the N4 at Lisnamuck, east of Longford Town to its junction with the R397 west of Longford Town.
- R198 from its junction with the N63 in Longford Town to Melview Junction Cross.
- N55 from junction with R392 in Ballymahon to Ballymahon Mart.
- R392 from junction with N55 at Creevagh, Ballymahon to Mercy Secondary School, Main St., Ballymahon.

The plan was prepared in accordance with the (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018, S.I. No. 549 of 2018 and the (Environmental Noise) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (S.I. No. 663/2021). These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise (END Directive). The aim of the Directive and the Regulations is to provide for the implementation of an EC common approach to avoid, prevent, or reduce on a prioritized basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. Adverse health effects of noise from road traffic can cause High Annoyance (HA), High Sleep Disturbance (HSD) and Ischaemic Heart Disease (IHD).

Noise mapping bodies and Action Planning Authorities were assigned responsibility under the regulations to draw up noise maps for the fourth round in 2023. Action plans are required in respect of the following sources of noise:

- Agglomerations with more than 100,000 inhabitants.
- Major airports with more than 50,000 movements per year.
- Major Railroads with more than 30,000 trains per year.
- Major Roads with a flow threshold of 3,000,000 vehicles per year.

The only noise source above that is applicable to Co. Longford, is *Major Roads With A Flow Threshold Of 3,000,000 Vehicles Per Year*.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), the noise mapping authority for major national roads, has prepared strategic noise maps for the national roads located within County Longford that were judged by the benefit of road traffic count data to have more than three million vehicles per year. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), acting on behalf of the Local Authority also organised strategic noise maps for regional roads above the threshold.

Strategic Noise mapping was then created using computer analysis. Results from this mapping are theoretical and predict the anticipated noise levels in the areas surrounding these roads. Geodirectory data was included in this analysis. From this, the population exposed to environmental noise generated by these roads was predicted.

The Noise Action Plan 2024, prepared by Longford Co. Council, attempts to control the existing noise environment, and protect the future noise climate within the action planning area. The Noise Action Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Regulations and is aimed at strategic long-term management of environmental noise from transport systems. The proposed measures are based on the results of Strategic Noise Maps which have been assessed to estimate the population exposure and harmful effects of noise in Longford County. The results of the assessment have been used to identify areas that shall be subject to noise management activities during the implementation of the Plan. These areas are referred to as Priority Important Areas. Longford County Council are committed to reviewing the requirement for noise mitigation in the Priority Important Areas within the lifecycle of the Noise Action Plan, including cost-benefit analysis where necessary and determining the reduction in harmful effects where practicable.

This Noise Action Plan is supported by a four-year programme for implementation (2024-2028), with progress reported to the EPA on an annual basis. The Plan is underpinned by a set of overarching noise policy principles outlined in the Longford Noise Policy Statement.

4.1.3 Methods Used in the Plan

Noise maps for County Longford are presented in terms of two noise indicators: L_{den} and L_{night} . L_{den} is the day-evening-night noise indicator and it represents the noise indicator for overall annoyance. It is based on day (07:00-19:00), evening (19:00-23:00) and night (23:00-07:00) time periods and it is weighted to account for extra annoyance in the evening and night periods. L_{night} is the night time noise indicator and is used in the assessment of sleep disturbance. It is based on night (23:00- 07:00) time period. Both of these indicators are based on year long averages of the day, evening and night time periods and each are plotted separately for the required roads in the County.

Calculations of supplementary noise indicators have also been undertaken, namely the $LA_{eq,16hr}$ (the annual average noise level for the daytime/evening periods, from 07:00 – 23:00 hours), which the EPA has approved as the appropriate noise indicator to inform the identification of Candidate Quiet Areas.

The Environmental Noise Regulations require that the Action Planning Authorities address "priorities" and "the most important area or areas" with a view to identifying "measures" that will help "avoid, prevent or reduce" the "harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise". The EPA Guidance provides further guidance on these concepts, and sets out a recommended approach following a three-step approach to identifying priorities:

1. **Important Areas (IAs)** – these are locations exposed to environmental noise which may be harmful to human health, as indicated by international guidance;
2. **Most Important Areas (MIAs)** – these locations are a subset of IAs where the health effects are highest, determined through a consideration of noise exposure levels and the number of people exposed to noise; and
3. **Priority Important Areas (PIAs)** – between 5 and 10 MIAs or group of similarly affected MIAs, identified, through a prioritisation process, as those which will be evaluated and addressed during the implementation of the NAP.

The process of identifying Important Areas (IAs), Most Important Areas (MIAs) and Priority Important Areas (PIAs) within the Longford County was Stage 1 of a two-stage process for the identification of areas to be subject to noise management activities, as set out in the EPA Guidance.

The process of identifying IAs within the County involved using the results of the strategic noise mapping to identify the noise-sensitive residential buildings and the estimated number of people exposed to L_{den} levels above the guideline values set by the EPA Guidance, which are in line with the 2018 WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines for

the European Region (ENG). This is followed by an automated process within Geographic Information System (GIS) software to identify the areas with the highest concentrations of people highly annoyed, referred to as the MIAs. The MIAs that are to be addressed during the implementation of the NAP 2024-2028 are referred to as PIAs.

Stage 2 of the process takes place during the implementation of the NAP, focussing on undertaking an assessment of noise mitigation measures for each of the identified PIAs.

Mitigation, Prevention and Protection Measures Included in the Plan

There are three types of approach in the NAP for reducing exposure of the existing and future populations of the Longford County to undesirably high noise levels: mitigation, prevention, and protection.

Mitigation refers to taking measures to reduce noise levels where members of the public are exposed to environmental noise levels that have the potential to be harmful to health and quality of life. Where noise levels are confirmed to be undesirably high in the selected PIAs Longford County Council will attempt to identify and evaluate measures to reduce the effects of noise exposure. However, it must be acknowledged that there is no dedicated national funding mechanism available for the implementation of measures that target noise mitigation along major roads. The implementation of measures in PIAs will be based on any proposed or scheduled road improvement works where practicable during the period of the NAP.

Prevention measures aim to avoid additional members of the community being exposed to undesirable noise conditions. In Longford County, these will primarily take the form of planning policy in respect of proposed residential developments and other noise sensitive buildings in potentially noisy environments (e.g. schools, hospitals), in particular adjacent to transportation infrastructure, and the consideration of noise where it might be excessive in the development of new public realm. The Longford Town -Local Transport Plan (October 2023) sets out strategies that are complementary to the objectives of the Noise Action Plan.

Protection measures relate to the preservation of favourably low environmental noise levels in publicly accessible areas, or areas that provide tranquillity, for citizens and communities through the investigation of CQAs and designation of "Quiet Areas".

4.2 Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government, a list of Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the plan have been identified and described according to their site synopsis, qualifying interests, and conservation objectives. In addition, any other sites further than this, but potentially within its Zone of Interest were also considered. The Zone of Interest may be determined by an assessment of the connectivity between the application site and the designated areas by virtue of hydrological connectivity, atmospheric emissions, flight paths, ecological corridors etc.

For significant effects to arise, there must be a potential impact facilitated by having a source, i.e., the proposed development and activities arising out of its construction or operation, a receptor, i.e., the European site and its qualifying interests and a subsequent pathway or connectivity between the source and receptor, e.g., a water course. The likelihood for significant effects on the European site will largely depend on the characteristics of the source (e.g., nature and scale of the construction works), the characteristics of the existing pathway and the characteristics of the receptor, e.g., the sensitivities of the Qualifying Interests (habitats or species) to changes in water quality.

There are 39 Natura 2000 designated sites either within County Longford or within 15km of the plan area, i.e., the Longford County Boundary. These designated areas and their closest points to the Longford county boundary are summarised in Table 1 and maps showing their locations relative to the application site are shown in Figures 1 and 2. A full description of these sites can be read on the website of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (npws.ie).

The Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO's) of each site were also consulted to inform the assessment. Since the conservation objectives for the European Sites focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the QIs of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential effects of the plan against the QIs of each site.

Site Name & Code	County	Distance	Qualifying Interests	Conservation Objectives
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)				
Lough Ree SAC (000440)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation [3150] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Bog woodland [91D0] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000440.pdf

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 	
Fortwilliam Turlough SAC (000448)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turloughs [3180] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000448.pdf
Lough Forbes Complex SAC (001818)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation [3150] • Active raised bogs [7110] • Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] • Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] • Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001818.pdf
Ardagullion Bog SAC (002341)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] • Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] • Bog woodland [91D0] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002341.pdf
Brown Bog SAC (002346)	Within	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 Rhynchosporion [7150] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002346.pdf
Clooneen Bog SAC (002348)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] • Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] • Bog woodland [91D0] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002348.pdf
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] • Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002340.pdf

				sites/conservation_objectives/CO002340.pdf
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 Rhynchosporion [7150] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002349.pdf
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 Rhynchosporion [7150] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000679.pdf
Ballymore Fen SAC (002313)	4.3km south-east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002313.pdf
Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs SAC (000007)	6.4km north	Cavan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition – type vegetation [3150] Bog woodland [91D0] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000007.pdf
Lough Funshinagh SAC (000611)	7.4km south-west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000611.pdf
Lough Owel SAC (000688)	8.7km south-east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard oligo-mesotrophic 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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000688.pdf
White Lough, Ben	10.3km north-east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at

Loughs And Doo SAC (001810)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001810.pdf
Lough Lene SAC (002121)	11.0km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002121.pdf
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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002339.pdf
River Shannon Callows SAC (000216)	11.7km south	Westmeath/ Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Molinia</i> 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> (Alno-Padion, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000216.pdf
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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002336.pdf
Ballinturly Turlough SAC (000588)	12.0km south-west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000588.pdf

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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002337.pdf
Lough Croan Turlough SAC (000610)	13.0km south-west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000610.pdf
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 <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002120.pdf
Scragh Bog SAC (000692)	13.3km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] Alkaline fens [7230] <i>Euphydrys aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] <i>Drepanocladus vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss) [1393] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000692.pdf
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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001626.pdf
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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001625.pdf
Lisduff Turlough SAC (000609)	14.3km south-west	Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turloughs [3180] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000609.pdf

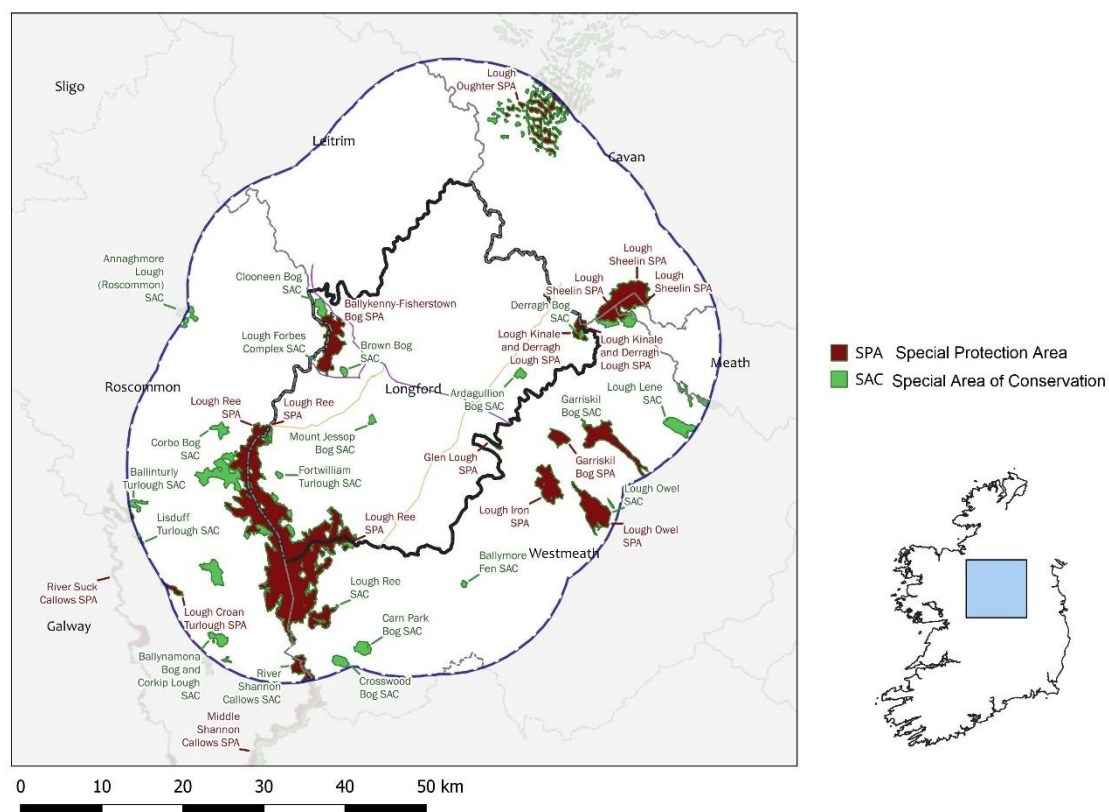
				sites/conservation_objectives/CO000609.pdf
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)				
Glen Lough SPA (004045)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] 	The generic conservation objective for this designated site is as follows: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:
Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA (004061)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	The generic conservation objective of this designated site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA A second conservation objective for this site is: 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
Lough Ree SPA (004064)	Within	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] 	The generic conservation objective of this designated site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA A second conservation objective for this site is: To maintain or restore the

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat of the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it
Ballykenny Fisherstown Bog SPA (004101)	Within	Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] 	The generic conservation objective of this designated site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA
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] 	The generic conservation objective of this designated site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA A second conservation objective for this site is: 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.
Garriskil Bog SPA (004102)	3.9km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] 	The generic conservation objective of this designated site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA
Lough Iron SPA (004046)	4.2km east	Westmeath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) for this site are available at

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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] 	https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004046.pdf
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: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is: 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</p>
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>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA</p> <p>A second conservation objective for this site is: 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</p>
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] 	<p>The generic conservation objective of this designated site is:</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	Conservation Interests for this SPA A second conservation objective for this site is: 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
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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004096.pdf
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] 	The generic conservation objective of this designated site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA A second conservation objective for this site is: 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
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] 	Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs)m for this site are available at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004097.pdf

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	
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Table 1 – Natura 2000 Sites Within 15km / Zone of Influence of the Plan

Figure 1 – The Application Site (Pinned) in relation to the Natura 2000 Sites Within 15km. Longford Road Network Included.

4.3 AA Screening Matrix

The AA Screening Matrix (based on the Guidance in "Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC" is presented below in Table 2.

Brief Description of the Plan
<p>Longford County Council (Draft) Noise Action Plan (2024-2028) has been prepared for major roads carrying more than three million vehicles per annum, which in County Longford comprises the national road:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N4 from the County Boundary with Westmeath to the County boundary with Leitrim. • N63 from its junction with the N4 at Lisnamuck, east of Longford Town to its junction with the R397 west of Longford Town. • R198 from its junction with the N63 in Longford Town to Melview Junction Cross. • N55 from junction with R392 in Ballymahon to Ballymahon Mart. • R392 from junction with N55 at Creevagh, Ballymahon to Mercy Secondary School, Main St., Ballymahon.
Identification of Natura 2000 Sites
<p>Natura 2000 sites within County Longford and within 15km / Zone of Influence of the County were considered in Table 1 and Section 4.2. There are 39 Natura 2000 sites within the plan area.</p>
Is the plan directly connected with, or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 site(s)?
<p>The Plan is not directly connected with, or necessary to, the conservation management objectives of the above listed Natura 2000 sites in Section 4.2.</p>
Describe the individual elements of the NAP (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the European Sites.
<p>Noise can be a principal source of disturbance for species listed as QIs of SACs and SPAs. The purpose of the NAP is to provide a strategic long-term management of environmental noise from traffic on major routes within the County, particularly where the noise exposure levels have the potential to induce harmful effects on human health. This will require reduction of existing environmental traffic noise where practical and also protection of the future noise climate in areas not currently impacted by traffic noise. The NAP does not propose any measures which could increase or negatively affect existing noise levels in the county and subsequently within Natura 2000 sites. As a consequence of the measures included in the NAP, any reduction in noise in areas near to, or within Natura 2000 sites will ultimately contribute to a beneficial effect in these sites and their QI features. The potential noise impacts that arise from future development works will be assessed in their own right through Planning and Licensing processes, including through Environmental Impact Assessments, Strategic Environmental Assessments, Appropriate Assessments, and application of relevant Guidance relating to noise.</p>

Describe any likely direct, indirect, or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the nearby Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:

Size and scale: The NAP will have no significant effects upon Natura 2000 sites by virtue of its size and scale. No Significant Effects Likely.

Land-take: There will be no land-take from any Natura 2000 site. NO Significant Effects Likely.

Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site: There are 39 Natura 2000 sites within the Zone of Influence / 15km of the plan boundary. No Significant Effects Likely.

Resource requirements (water abstraction etc.): There will be no resource requirements from any Natura 2000 site. No Significant Effects Likely.

Excavation requirements: There will be no excavation requirements from any Natura 2000 site. No Significant Effects Likely.

Transportation requirements: There will be no excavation requirements from any Natura 2000 site. No Significant Effects Likely.

Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc: The Plan pertains to the period covering 2024-2028. No Significant Effects Likely.

Describe any likely changes to the nearby Natura 2000 sites arising as a result of:

Reduction of habitat area: There will be no reduction of habitat area in any Natura 2000 site.

Disturbance to key species: There will be no disturbance to key species in any Natura 2000 site.

Habitat or species fragmentation: There will be no habitat or species fragmentation in any Natura 2000 site.

Reduction in species density: There will be no reduction in species density in any Natura 2000 site.

Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.): There will be no changes in key indicators of conservation value in any Natura 2000 site.

Describe any likely impacts on the nearby Natura 2000 sites as a whole in terms of:

Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of the site: It is not considered likely that there will be any significant impacts on the key relationships that define the structure or function of the Natura 2000 sites identified.

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

Loss - Estimated percentage of lost area of habitat: None

Fragmentation: None

Disruption & disturbance: None

Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.): None

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project of plan being assessed could affect the site? (In-Combination Impacts/Effects)

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combinations with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European Sites. The following plans have been considered:

- Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (Replacing Regional Planning Guidelines; will commence in 2019 and will be adopted over lifetime of the Plan)
- Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

The County Longford NAP when considered on its own will have no significant effects upon the Natura 2000 sites within the Zone of Influence of the plan boundary and therefore, the potential for in-combination effects to arise when the NAP plan is considered with the implementation of the plans cited above, or other plans / projects is low.

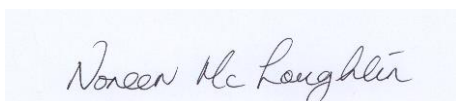
5.0 Appropriate Assessment Conclusion

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, the relevant case law, established best practice and the precautionary principle, this AA Screening Report has examined the details of the County Longford Noise Action Plan in relation to the relevant Natura 2000 sites within 15km / Zone of Influence of the County.

At this stage of the AA process, it is for the competent authority, i.e., Longford County Council, to carry out the screening for AA and to reach one of the following determinations:

- a) AA of the plan is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European sites;
- b) AA of the plan is not required if it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European sites.

It is of the opinion of the author that an AA of the plan is not required as it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information provided in this report, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European sites.



Noreen McLoughlin, MSc, MCIEEM



Nevin Traynor BSc. Env, H. Dip I.T