

# SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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FOR

## RELEVANT PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS

TO THE

## DRAFT LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

**for: Longford County Council**

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County Longford



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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AA</b>	Appropriate Assessment
<b>ACA</b>	Architectural Conservation Area
<b>CAFE</b>	Cleaner Air for Europe
<b>CFRAM</b>	Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management
<b>CORINE</b>	Co-ORDinated INformation on the Environment
<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistics Office
<b>DAFM</b>	Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine
<b>DCCA</b>	Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment
<b>DCHG</b>	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
<b>DEHLG</b>	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
<b>DHPLG</b>	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Agency
<b>EQS</b>	Environmental Quality Standard
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FPO</b>	Flora Protection Order
<b>GSI</b>	Geological Survey of Ireland
<b>NHA</b>	Natural Heritage Area
<b>NIAH</b>	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
<b>NTA</b>	National Transport Authority
<b>OPW</b>	Office of Public Works
<b>pNHA</b>	proposed Natural Heritage Area
<b>PAS</b>	Priority Action Substance
<b>RAL</b>	Remedial Action List
<b>RBD</b>	River Basin District
<b>RMP</b>	Record of Monuments and Places
<b>RPA</b>	Register of Protected Areas
<b>RSES</b>	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment
<b>SEO</b>	Strategic Environmental Objective
<b>SI No.</b>	Statutory Instrument Number
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area
<b>TPOs</b>	Tree Preservation Orders
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WFD</b>	Water Framework Directive

# Glossary

## Appropriate Assessment

The obligation to undertake Appropriate Assessment (AA) derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action (such as a plan or programme) or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European Site in view of its conservation objectives.

## Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources including inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems' (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992).

Flora is all of the plants found in a given area.

Fauna is all of the animals found in a given area.

## Environmental Problems

Annex I of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2001, on the assessment of the effects of certain Plans and programmes on the environment (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) requires that information is provided on 'any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme', thus, helping to ensure that the proposed strategic action does not make existing environmental problems worse.

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and ideal targets. If environmental problems are identified at the outset they can help focus attention on important issues and geographical areas where environmental effects of the plan or programme may be likely.

## Environmental Vectors

Environmental vectors are environmental components, such as air, water or soil, through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported, coming into contact with human beings.

## Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

## Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where there are significant negative effects, consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing such effects or, where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects. Mitigation measures can be roughly divided into those that: avoid effects; reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effects; repair effects after they have occurred; and compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones.

In the context of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, mitigation measures are clearly distinguished from compensatory measures. Compensatory measures are intended to offset the negative effects of the plan or project so that the overall ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 Network is maintained.

## **Natural Heritage**

The Heritage Act (1995) defines natural heritage as including flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks.

## **Protected Structure**

Protected Structure is the term used in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated Regulations (as amended) to define a structure included by a planning authority in its Record of Protected Structures. Such a structure shall not be altered or demolished in whole or part without obtaining planning permission or confirmation from the planning authority that the part of the structure to be altered is not protected.

## **Recorded Monument**

A monument included in the list and marked on the map which comprises the Record of Monuments and Places that is set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential in towns and all other monuments of archaeological interest which have so far been identified. Any works at or in relation to a recorded monument requires two months' notice to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

## **Scoping**

Scoping is the process of determining what issues are to be addressed, and setting out a methodology in which to address them in a structured manner appropriate to the plan or programme. Scoping is carried out in consultation with appropriate environmental authorities.

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it.

## **Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)**

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan and the alternatives can be evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if - in the case of adverse effects - unmitigated.



# Section 1 SEA: Introduction and Benefits

## 1.1 Introduction

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. It has been undertaken by CAAS Ltd. on behalf of Longford County Council. The purpose of this report is to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the adoption and implementation of the Plan.

Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before such decisions are made. *Environmental Impact Assessment*, or EIA, is generally used for describing the process of environmental assessment for individual projects, while *Strategic Environmental Assessment* or SEA is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans and programmes, which help determine the nature and location of individual projects taking place. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan or programme, in order to ensure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest appropriate stages of decision-making in tandem with economic, social and other considerations.

The SEA is being undertaken in order to comply with Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act, as amended.

## 1.2 Implications for the Planning Authority

The Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake SEA. Certain Proposed Material Alterations were determined as requiring full SEA. The SEA Screening Determination accompanies this SEA Environmental Report and the Proposed Material Alterations document. Appendix IV to this SEA Environmental Report comprises the SEA Screening Report that was prepared to inform the SEA Screening Determination.

This SEA Environmental Report provides the findings of the assessment and will be placed on public display alongside the Proposed Material Alterations. The Elected Members will be required to take account of this document, the Proposed Material Alterations and any submissions received on these after public display.

## 1.3 Why SEA? The Benefits

SEA is the planning authority's and the public's guide to what are generally the best areas for development in the County.

SEA enables the planning authority to direct development towards robust, well-served and connected areas in the County – thereby facilitating the general avoidance of incompatible areas in the most sensitive, least well-served and least well-connected areas.

SEA provides greater certainty to the public and to developers. Plans are more likely to be adopted without delays or challenges and planning applications are more likely to be granted permission. Environmental mitigation is more likely to cost less.

An overlay of environmental sensitivities in County Longford are shown on Figure 1.1.

The overlay mapping shows that environmental sensitivities are not evenly distributed throughout the County. Most of the County is identified as having low to moderate levels of sensitivity.

The most sensitive areas in the County include:

- The County's western and south western boundaries, reflecting the sensitive nature of the River Shannon and its Lough Forbes and Lough Ree, which are subject to various designations (including those relating to water, ecology and landscape), heavily protected and sources of flood risk;
- Other lakes and rivers throughout the County including Lough Kinale, Derragh Lough and Lough Gowna and the Rivers Camlin and Inny – as a result of water status, nutrient sensitivity, drinking water source, ecological designations and/or sources of flood risk;
- Peatland areas, due to their ecological, hydrological and amenity characteristics, such as

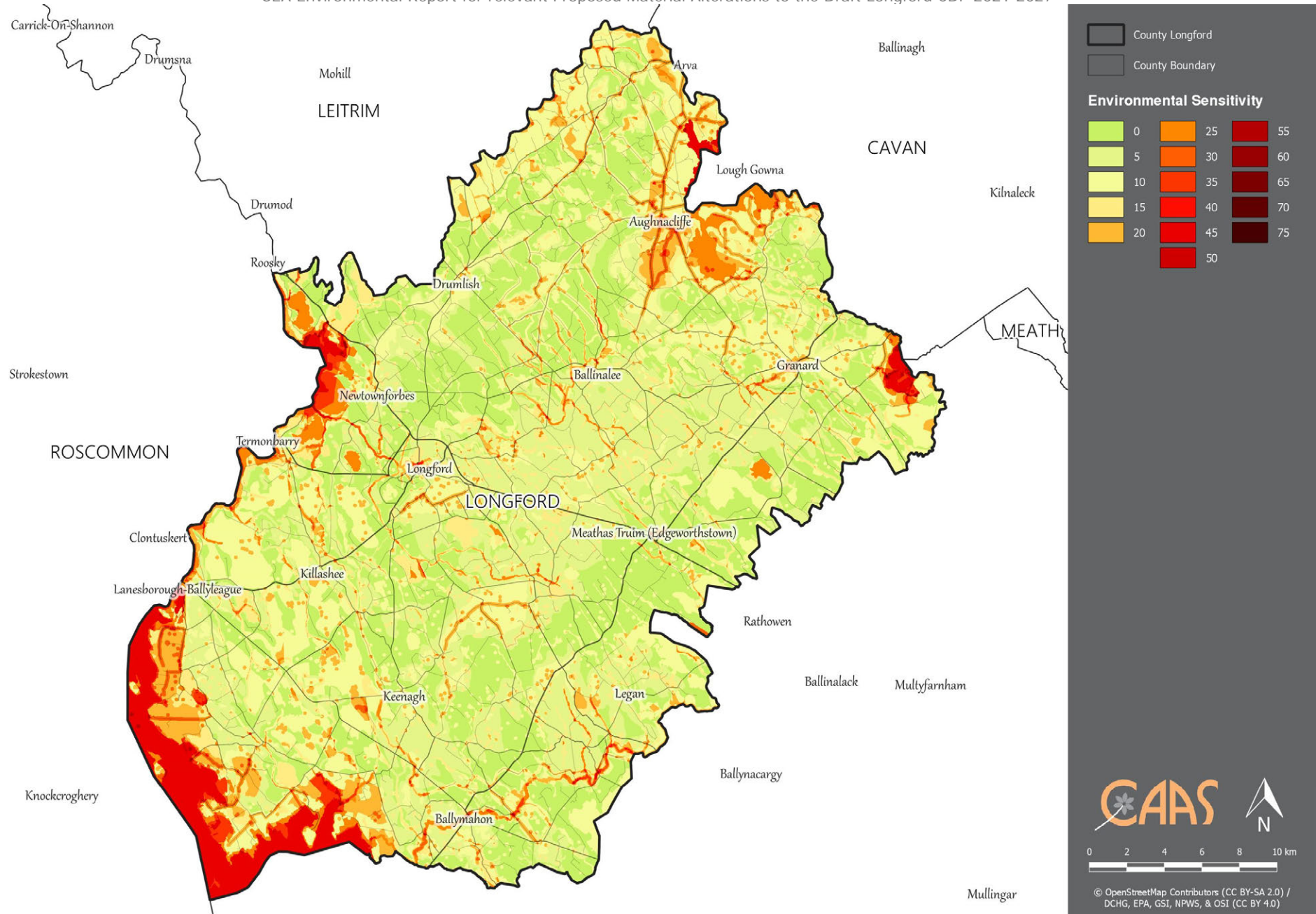
- Clooneen Bog, Ballykenney-Fisherstown Bog and Brown Bog; and  
Areas throughout the County on account of areas of elevated groundwater vulnerability.

The Draft Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate directs incompatible development away from the most sensitive areas in the County and focuses on directing: compact, sustainable development within the existing envelopes of the County's towns and villages; and sustainable development elsewhere, including in rural areas. Development of these generally more robust, well-serviced and well-connected areas of the County will contribute towards environmental protection and sustainable development, including climate mitigation and adaptation.

Compact development can be accompanied by placemaking initiatives to enable the County's towns and villages to become more desirable places to live – so that they maintain populations and services.

Compatible sustainable development in the County's sensitive areas is also provided for, subject to various requirements relating to environmental protection and management being met.





**Figure 1.1 Environmental Sensitivities that the County Development Plan directs incompatible development away from**  
CAAS for Longford County Council

## Section 2 The Draft Plan and associated Proposed Material Alterations

### 2.1 Introduction

The Longford County Development Plan is a land use plan and overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of County Longford over the six-year period 2021-2027. Not later than four years after the adoption of the Plan, the Council is required to review it and commence the preparation of a new Plan.

It is a policy objective of the Council to prepare a Local Area Plan (LAP) for Longford Town.

### 2.2 Content of the Plan

The Plan includes a Written Statement, that provides the development policies, Core Strategy and mandatory and discretionary objectives for different policy areas addressed by the Development Plan. The Written Statement is divided into 16 separate chapters setting out various policies and objectives under the headings of:

- Chapter 1: Introduction and Strategic Context
- Chapter 2: County Profile
- Chapter 3: Climate Change
- Chapter 4: Core, Settlement and Housing Strategies
- Chapter 5: Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Communications
- Chapter 6: Regeneration
- Chapter 7: Placemaking
- Chapter 8: Economic Development
- Chapter 9: Rural Economy
- Chapter 10: Tourism
- Chapter 11: Built and Cultural Heritage
- Chapter 12: Natural Heritage and Environment
- Chapter 13: Green Infrastructure
- Chapter 14: Landscape Character
- Chapter 15: Monitoring, Evaluation and Implementation
- Chapter 16: Development Management Standards

The Plan includes, at Appendix I, Land Use Zoning for Longford Town, Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon, Granard, Lanesborough, Aughnacliffe, Ballinallee, Drumlish, Keenagh, Legan, Newtownforbes, Abbeyshrule, Ardagh, Ballinamuck and Clondra. For full detail on zonings and settlement provisions please refer to the main Draft Plan document. The Plan also

includes development envelopes for 27 Rural Settlement Clusters.

### 2.3 Overall Vision and Aims

The Vision of the Plan is: 'to set out a framework for the sustainable physical development of the County, ensuring the conservation and protection of the built and natural environment, while providing in an equitable manner for all our people within the County'. As such the Plan provides for an overall strategy for the social, economic, cultural and physical development of the County. In order to achieve this, the Plan aims to:

1. Implement relevant national and regional development policy provisions at a County level;
2. Strengthen and develop the economic, social and cultural life of the county in a way that can be sustained to safeguard the quality of life for future generations;
3. Provide a development framework which defines acceptable forms of development and appropriate locations.

### 2.4 Core Strategy Strategic Aims

The Plan identifies the following eight Core Strategy Strategic Aims:

- Aim 1: To provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Longford over the plan period.
- Aim 2: To demonstrate that the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 is consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional policy objectives set out in the National Planning Framework and Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and other national guidelines and policies.
- Aim 3: To identify the appropriate quantum, location and phasing of development considered necessary to provide for future population growth over the plan period in accordance with National Planning Framework and Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.
- Aim 4: To provide alignment and integration between strategic planning and settlement policy and the prioritisation of physical infrastructure investment.
- Aim 5: To secure future growth opportunities within County Longford through optimising the

County's economic, social and physical development.

- Aim 6: To coordinate the development of land identified in this Core Strategy in a manner that supports public transport and existing services and to prioritise sequential development of settlements, including the development of infill and brownfield lands.
- Aim 7: To provide a framework for determining the scale, phasing and location of new development having regard to existing services and planned infrastructural investment over the coming years.
- Aim 8: To provide a framework within which the provision of sustainable infrastructure, amenities, economic investment and development can take place to maximise the use of resources in the plan area.

## 2.5 Proposed Material Alterations

The Proposed Material Alterations are outlined in detail in the accompanying Proposed Material Alteration document. The "Alteration References" provided in this report can be used to locate this detail in the accompanying Proposed Material Alteration document.

Alterations proposed include those relating to maps, including land use zoning, and text.

The Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake SEA and the alterations below were determined as requiring full SEA. The SEA Screening Determination accompanies this SEA Environmental Report and the Proposed Material Alterations document. Appendix IV to this SEA Environmental Report comprises the SEA Screening Report that was prepared to inform the Determination. Proposed Material Alterations requiring SEA and consideration in this SEA Environmental Report are as follows:

Proposed Material Alteration Ref. <sup>1</sup>	
CH 10.2	CH 12.13
CH 10.3	CH 12.14
CH 10.21	CH 12.16
CH 12.1	CH 13.2
CH 12.2	CH 13.4
CH 12.3	Appendix 1 PMAs
CH 12.4	
CH 12.5	Appendix 6 PMAs: AP.6.2, AP.6.4, AP.6.5
CH 12.7	
CH 12.9	
CH 12.11	

<sup>1</sup> For detail please refer to Proposed Material Alterations document.

## 2.6 Strategic work undertaken by the Council to ensure contribution towards environmental protection and sustainable development

Far in advance of both the submission of the pre-Draft Plan to the Elected Members for approval and the placing of the Draft Plan on public display, Longford County Council undertook various works in order to inform the preparation of the Plan.

The findings of this strategic work have been integrated into the Plan and will contribute towards both environmental protection and management and sustainable development within the County.

Strategic work undertaken by the Council includes background work in relation to Plan Strategies and other provisions for a variety of sectors, including:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
- Core Strategy;
- Settlement Strategy;
- Housing Strategy;
- Retail Strategy;
- Sustainable mobility provisions;
- Infrastructure and Green Infrastructure provisions;
- Provisions for Sustainable Mobility.
- Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas;
- Landscape Designations;
- Economic Development; and
- Climate Action.

The undertaking of this SEA process and associated Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes were part of this strategic work and contributed towards the integration of environmental considerations into individual Plan provisions as detailed in Section 9 of this report.

## **2.7 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes**

It is acknowledged that many of the major issues affecting the County's development are contingent on national policy and government funding.

The Draft Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, sits within a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use planning, infrastructure, sustainable development, tourism, environmental protection and environmental management. The Plan must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions and will, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions. These documents include plans and programmes such as those detailed in Appendix I<sup>2</sup> (see also, Section 4 "Environmental Baseline", Section 5 "Strategic Environmental Objectives", Section 6 "Description of Alternatives" and Section 9 "Mitigation Measures"). These documents have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSE for the Eastern and Midlands Region sets out objectives for land use planning, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been subject to environmental assessment and must be implemented through the County Development Plan.

As required by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the Draft County Development Plan is consistent with and conforms with national and regional policies, plans and programmes, including the NPF and the RSE for the Eastern and Midlands Region. The County Development Plan may, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions, such as the

Local Area Plans that will be subject to their own lower-tier environmental assessments.

In order to be realised, projects included in the County Development Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix I is not intended to be a full and comprehensive review of EU Directives, the transposing regulations or the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The information is not exhaustive and it is recommended to consult the Directive, Regulation, Plan or Programme to become familiar with the full details of each.

## Section 3 SEA Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach

The preparation of the Plan, SEA, AA and SFRA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the SEA, AA and SFRA have informed the Plan. The process is currently at a stage where the findings of this report will be placed on public display as part of the required statutory public consultations. AA and SFRA documents will also accompany the Plan on public display. Submissions made on the Plan and associated documents, including SEA and AA documents, will be responded to and updates made to the documents where relevant.

Submissions made on the Plan will be responded to and the Plan will be updated as appropriate. When the Plan is finalised, the SEA, AA and SFRA documents will be finalised. Final documents will include an SEA Statement, which will include information on how environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan, and an AA Conclusion Statement. The Plan will be implemented and environmental monitoring – as well as planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects – will be undertaken.

### 3.2 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

#### 3.2.1 Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Stage 2 AA are being undertaken alongside the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The emerging conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European

Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.<sup>3</sup>

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

The Proposed Material Alterations are accompanied by an AA Natura Impact Report, which has informed this SEA Environmental Report.

#### 3.2.2 Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

Many elements of Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment as detailed in the EPA's (2013) Practitioner's Manual have been aligned with in the undertaking of the SEA for the Plan. These include:

##### Scoping

- Biodiversity-relevant issues were identified for consideration at scoping stage and these are now detailed in Section 4.
- Reference to a zone of influence is provided at Section 4.

##### Baseline

- Biodiversity data sources relevant for this local level assessment have been identified and datasets collated/gathered.
- The biodiversity baseline addresses designated sites and other habitats and species of ecological value.
- AA information has been incorporated into the SEA baseline.

##### Alternatives

- Impacts upon biodiversity are considered under each of the alternatives and potential conflicts can be mitigated.

##### Impact assessment

- Effects on biodiversity are identified and assessed and the AA considers the interrelationship between biodiversity and potential effects on European Sites.

##### Mitigation and monitoring

- Taking into account all measures contained within the Plan, all the proposed mitigation measures deriving from the various processes were generally consistent and compatible.
- Indicators and associated targets have been included in SEA for monitoring European Sites.

<sup>3</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:  
(a) no alternative solution available,

(b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and  
(c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

#### **Reporting**

- This SEA ER addresses all biodiversity-related considerations relevant for this level of assessment.
- This SEA ER contains all biodiversity-relevant information, data, figures and maps relevant for this level of assessment.
- This SEA ER has been informed by the AA findings.

#### **Communication and consultation**

- Submissions received have been taken on board.
- The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

### **3.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

SFRA is being undertaken to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations. The SFRA process has informed this report.

The SFRA has considered the Proposed Material Alterations and finds that all Proposed Material Alterations, apart from one, comply with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). Proposed Material Alteration Reference AP.1E.18 does not comply with the Guidelines as it proposes incompatible New Residential Zoning in an area of elevated flood risk that would fail the Justification Test under the Guidelines.

### **3.4 Scoping**

The scope of environmental issues to be dealt with by the SEA of the Plan together with the level of detail to which they are addressed was broadly decided upon taking into account the collection of environmental baseline data and input from environmental authorities. Scoping allowed the SEA to become focused upon key issues relevant to the environmental components that are specified under the SEA Directive<sup>4</sup>.

All relevant environmental authorities identified under the SEA Regulations as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by the Council (as part

of the SEA scoping process at pre-Draft Plan stage) indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to the Council<sup>5</sup>.

Submissions made by the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Meath County Council, Monaghan County Council, and Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine influenced the scope of the assessment undertaken, the findings of which are included in this report.

### **3.5 Alternatives**

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment. In accordance with this requirement, alternatives for the Plan are identified and assessed in Sections 6 and 7.

### **3.6 Preparation of the Draft Plan and Members’ Amendments**

The preparation of a pre-Draft Plan, for the consideration of Members in advance of public display was informed by the SEA, AA and SFRA processes.

Advice relating to Members’ Motions to amend the pre-Draft Plan was provided to the Members for their consideration in advance of agreeing amendments.

Taking into account, inter alia, the advice on Motions and the SEA, AA and SFRA documentation for the pre-Draft Plan, the Members agreed to amend the pre-Draft Plan by resolution, in agreement with the Planning Department.

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<sup>4</sup> These components comprise biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

<sup>5</sup> The following authorities were notified: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Culture,

Heritage, and the Gaeltacht; Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government; Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; Environmental Protection Agency; Meath County Council; and Monaghan County Council.

An earlier version of the SEA Environmental Report was updated in order to take account of these amendments, which were relatively minor in the context of the framework provided by the Plan.

### **3.7 Environmental Report**

This SEA Environmental Report predicts and evaluates the likely significant effects of the Proposed Material Alterations and the alternatives.

The Environmental Report provides Longford County Council, stakeholders and the public with a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of implementing the Proposed Material Alterations.

This Environmental Report has been informed by recommendations contained in submissions to date. The SEA Environmental Report prepared for the Draft Plan will be finalised in advance of adoption of the Plan taking into account, among other things, the content of this SEA Environmental Report.

Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects posed by the Draft Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, are identified in Section 9 – these have been integrated into the Plan.

The SEA Environmental Report prepared for the Draft Plan will be finalised in advance of adoption of the Plan taking into account, among other things, the content of this SEA Environmental Report and any submissions received during the process.

The Environmental Report is required to contain the information specified in Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004), as amended (see Table 3.1).

No significant difficulties have been encountered during the undertaking of the assessment to date.

There was limited water services information available for some settlements within the County however objectives requiring the provision of appropriate levels of water services alongside new development have been integrated into the Draft Plan.

There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the Plan area with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term “unassigned status” applies in respect of these waterbodies. The SEA ensured that the Plan contains measures that will contribute towards the maintenance and improvement of status of all water bodies within the zone of influence.

### **3.8 SEA Statement**

On finalisation of the Plan, an SEA Statement will be prepared that will include information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan, highlighting the main changes to the Plan that resulted from the SEA process;
- How the SEA Environmental Report and consultations have been taken into account, summarising the key issues raised in consultations and in the Environmental Report indicating what action was taken in response;
- The reasons for choosing the Plan in the light of the other alternatives, identifying the other alternatives considered, commenting on their potential effects and explaining why the Plan as adopted was selected; and
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing of the Plan.

**Table 1.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report**

<b>Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report</b>	<b>Corresponding Section of this Report</b>
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 2, 5 and 8
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, particularly those relating to European protected sites	Section 4
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or National level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the Plan	Sections 5, 7, 8, 9 and Appendix I
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment	Sections 7 and 8
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme	Section 9
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken (including any difficulties)	Sections 3, 6, 7, 8 and Appendix II
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Appendix IV Non-Technical Summary
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section



## Section 4 Environmental Baseline

### 4.1 Introduction

Reflecting the specifications in the SEA Directive, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment for the following environmental components are described in this section: biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

This description includes information that is relevant to lower tier planning, environmental assessments and decision-making<sup>6</sup>.

Given the potential for impacts beyond the County boundary, the spatial scope of the SEA takes into account the zone of influence (15km or greater where relevant) of the Plan area.

### 4.2 National Reporting on the Environment

The EPA's *"Ireland's Environment – An Assessment 2016"* report provides an integrated assessment of the overall quality of Ireland's environment, the pressures being placed on it and the societal responses to current and emerging environmental issues. This report has informed various parts of the environmental baseline provided below. The key environmental challenges or messages identified by the report are:

#### Environment and Health and Wellbeing

Recognising the benefits of a good quality environment to health and wellbeing.

#### Climate Change

Accelerating mitigation actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement adaptation measures to increase resilience in dealing with adverse climate impacts.

#### Implementation of Legislation

Improving the tracking of plans and policies and the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation to protect the environment.

#### Restore and Protect Water Quality

Implementing measures that achieve ongoing improvement in the environmental status of water bodies from source to the sea.

#### Sustainable Economic Activities

Integrating environmental sustainability ideas and performance accounting across economic sectors and sectoral plans should be a key policy for growth.

#### Nature and Wild Places

Protecting pristine and wild places that act as biodiversity hubs, contributing to health and wellbeing, and providing tourism opportunities

#### Community Engagement

Informing, engaging and supporting communities in the protection and improvement of the environment.

The report highlights that high-quality green and blue spaces are not just for nature but are for peoples' health and wellbeing, particularly in the context of an increasingly urban society and increasing settlement densities.

### 4.3 Sustainable Development Goals

Implementation of the Plan will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016. These Goals include:

- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems,

<sup>6</sup> Note that Article 5 of the SEA Directive, in accordance with the established European principle of subsidiarity, requires that the Environmental Report includes the information that may reasonably be required taking into account, inter alia,

the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment.

sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

#### 4.4 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of a new Plan including Material Alterations

In the absence of a new Plan it is uncertain how permission for new development would be applied for and considered.

The 2015-2021 Plan has contributed towards environmental protection within County Longford. If the 2015-2021 Plan was to expire and not be replaced by the 2021-2027 Plan, this would result in a deterioration of the County's planning and environmental protection framework. Although higher level environmental protection objectives – such as those of various EU Directives and transposing Irish Regulations – would still apply, the deterioration of this framework would mean that new development would be less coordinated and controlled.

As a result, there would be a decreased likelihood in the extent, magnitude and frequency of positive effects occurring, including:

- Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats.
- Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.
- Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.
- Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management.
- Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, including air and water.
- Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination the highest standards of remediation, and where appropriate to consultations with the EPA and other relevant bodies, will be required to resolve any instances of environmental pollution created by contaminated land.
- Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations.
- Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.
- Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.

- Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.
- Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments.
- Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth.
- Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart buildings, cities and grids.
- Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to:
  - Sustainable compact growth;
  - Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport;
  - Drainage, flood risk management and resilience;
  - Sectors including agriculture, residential heating and infrastructure;
- Sustainable infrastructure design solutions including energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).
- Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements.
- Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within existing settlements by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration.
- Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.
- Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.
- Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.
- Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.
- Potential for riverbank erosion.
- Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.
- Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.
- Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).
- Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).
- Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).
- Increases in waste levels.
- Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.
- Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter.
- Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives.
- Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality.
- Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors.
- Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.
- Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.
- Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.

As a result, there would be an increased likelihood in the extent, magnitude and frequency of adverse effects on all environmental components occurring, including:

- Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:
  - Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;
  - Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and
  - Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.

## 4.5 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services<sup>7</sup>

County Longford's **natural capital** comprises its renewable and non-renewable resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals) that combine to yield a flow of ecosystem services that provide benefits to people. These benefits can include clean air and water, a stable climate, protection from floods, food, resources for fuel, building materials, clothes and medicines, recreation. Managing natural capital so that it can continue to deliver the ecosystem services that give us these benefits is important in order to ensure sustainable development. Unmanaged natural capital risks the continued degradation and depletion of these assets, and in turn, of their capacity to provide the economy and society with the ecosystem benefits that they depend on. These services also regulate climate, regulate water flows (e.g. through wetlands and forests), sequester and store carbon in peatlands and improve soil quality for crops.

In recognition of the need to manage natural capital, provisions have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards management of air quality, noise pollution, light pollution, water quality and integrated catchment management.

Ecosystems are multifunctional communities of living organisms interacting with each other and their environment. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human well-being (ecosystem services) either directly or indirectly contributing towards human wellbeing. There are four main types; provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services. Provisioning services are the products obtained from ecosystems such as food, fresh water, wood, fibre, genetic resources and medicines. Regulating services are defined as the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes such as climate regulation, natural hazard regulation, water purification and waste management, pollination or pest control. Support services highlight the importance of ecosystems to provide habitat for migratory species and to maintain the viability of gene-pools. Cultural services include non-material benefits that people obtain from ecosystems

such as spiritual enrichment, intellectual development, recreation and aesthetic values<sup>8</sup>.

In preparing the Draft Plan and developing policy objectives, the Council have followed these ecosystem services approach principles:

- a) Consideration of natural systems - by using knowledge of interactions in nature and how ecosystems function (including at Plan Chapter 12: Natural Heritage and Environment);
- b) Taking into account of the services that ecosystems provide - including those that underpin social and economic well-being, such as flood and climate regulation (including at Plan Chapter 3: Climate Change and Chapter 5: Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Communications), resources for food, fibre or fuel (including at Plan Chapter 9: Rural Economy), or for recreation, culture and quality of life (including at Plan Chapter 7: Placemaking, Chapter 11: Built and Cultural Heritage, Chapter 13: Green Infrastructure and Chapter 14: Landscape Character);
- c) Involving people - those who benefit from the ecosystem services and those managing them need to be involved in decisions that affect them. Public consultation has informed the preparation of the Draft Plan which will be further refined before adoption, taking into account submissions/observations made on the Draft Plan during public display.

The following natural capital and ecosystem services issues are relevant to this SEA and have been taken into account in the provisions of the Draft Plan:

- Air quality;
- Noise pollution;
- Light pollution;
- Water quality and integrated catchment management including interactions with soil;
- Soil and vegetation carbon, which helps to regulate greenhouse gas emissions;
- Soil/geological storage of water, contributing towards flood control;
- Land supporting food production; and
- Natural resources supporting energy production and recreation.

<sup>7</sup> This section includes content taken from the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, 2019)

<sup>8</sup> <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/topics/ecosystem-services>

## 4.6 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

### 4.6.1 Overview

Information on biodiversity and flora and fauna that is relevant to project planning and development and associated environmental assessment and administrative consent of projects includes available information on designated ecological sites and protected species, ecological connectivity (including stepping stones and corridors) and non-designated habitats.

Ecological sensitivities located within the County include aquatic and terrestrial ecology, associated with the County's extensive network of wetlands comprising:

- Rivers, streams, canals and riparian zones (such as River Shannon, River Erne, River Inny, River Camlin and Royal Canal);
- Wet woodlands, marshes, lakes and ponds;
- Loughs (such as Lough Ree, Lough Forbes, Lough Gowna and Lough Glen); and
- Bogs and turloughs (such as Fortwilliam Turlough, Ardagullion Bog and Clooneen Bog).

These habitats support a variety of species and ecosystems that contribute to the biodiversity of County Longford.

Ecological designations in County Longford include:

- Special Protection Areas<sup>9</sup>;
- Special Areas of Conservation<sup>10</sup>;
- Natural Heritage Areas<sup>11</sup> and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas<sup>12</sup>;
- Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas<sup>13</sup>;
- RAMSAR sites<sup>14</sup>;
- Flora Protection Order (FPO)<sup>15</sup> sites;
- Important Stands of Trees<sup>16</sup>;
- Ecological connectivity and networks;
- CORINE Landcover<sup>17</sup>;
- Peatlands, lakes, canals, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, eskers and hedgerows data; and
- Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance<sup>18</sup>.

The zone of influence of the Plan beyond the County area with respect to impacts upon ecology via surface waters upon ecological resources – including designated ecology – can be estimated to be areas within 15 km of the County boundary and all downstream areas of catchments which drain the County.

Potential overlaps in designations and settlements/zoning and sites of importance to birds associated with the zoning of lands adjacent to these sites have been also considered by the SEA and AA.

### 4.6.2 European Sites

European Sites in the County occur in the greatest concentrations along the main waterways and wetlands. European Sites comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation<sup>19</sup> (SACs); and

<sup>9</sup> For more detail refer to Section 4.6.2.

<sup>10</sup> For more detail refer to Section 4.6.2.

<sup>11</sup> For more details refer to Section 4.6.3.

<sup>12</sup> For more detail refer to Section 4.6.3.

<sup>13</sup> For more detail refer to Sections 4.6.6 and 4.9.7.

<sup>14</sup> The Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Water Fowl Habitat, was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. The main aim of the Convention is to secure the designation by each contracting state of wetlands in its territory for inclusion in a list of wetlands of international importance for waterfowl. This entails the commitment of each contracting state to a policy of protection and management of the designated wetlands, and of formulating and implementing planning so as to promote the conservation of designated wetlands and, as far as possible, the wise use of wetlands in its territory. Ireland presently has 45 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Wetlands), with surface areas of 66,994 hectares. **There is one Ramsar site partially within the Plan area: Lough Glen (Site number: 849), as shown on Figure 4.3.**

<sup>15</sup> The Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 (S.I. No. 356 of 2015) gives legal protection to 65 species of bryophytes in the Republic of Ireland (25 liverworts and 40 mosses). **There are three locations within the Plan area subject to FPOs for a type of moss (*Ephemerum cohaerens*): Elfeet; Lismacmanus; and Lough Gowna.**

<sup>16</sup> For more detail refer to 4.13.4

<sup>17</sup> Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface.

<sup>18</sup> For more details refer to Section 4.6.5.

<sup>19</sup> SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

- Special Protection Areas<sup>20</sup> (SPAs).

The SEA uses the same zone of influence cited in the AA; a 15 km buffer around the County (see sites within this zone mapped on Figure 4.1) and sites with potentially significant hydrological links beyond the 15 km buffer.

There are 12 European Sites (eight SACs and four SPAs) designated within and adjacent to the County, including:

- Ardagullion Bog SAC<sup>21</sup> (002341);
- Brown Bog SAC<sup>22</sup> (002346);
- Clooneen Bog SAC<sup>23</sup> (002348);
- Derragh Bog SAC<sup>24</sup> (002201);
- Fortwilliam Turlough SAC<sup>25</sup> (000448);
- Lough Forbes Complex SAC<sup>26</sup> (001818);
- Lough Ree SAC<sup>27</sup> (000440);
- Mount Jessop Bog SAC<sup>28</sup> (002202);
- Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA<sup>29</sup> (004101);
- Glen Lough SPA<sup>30</sup> (004045);
- Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA<sup>31</sup> (004061); and
- Lough Ree SPA<sup>32</sup> (004064).

Other relevant European sites connected to the County via hydrological links but beyond the 15 km buffer (also shown on Figure 4.2.) include:

- Upper Lough Erne SPA (UK9020071)<sup>33</sup>;
- Upper Lough Erne SAC (UK0016614)<sup>34</sup>;
- Donegal Bay SPA (004151)<sup>35</sup>;

- Lough Derg North-East Shore SAC (002241)<sup>36</sup>;
- Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA (004058)<sup>37</sup>;
- Lower River Shannon SPA (002165)<sup>38</sup>; and
- River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004077)<sup>39</sup>.

For more detail on European Sites please refer to the AA Natura Impact Report that accompanies the Proposed Material Alterations and this SEA Environmental Report.

#### 4.6.3 Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated due to their national conservation value for ecological and/or geological/geomorphological heritage. They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. NHAs are designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Proposed NHAs (pNHAs) were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

There are six NHAs<sup>40</sup> and seventeen pNHAs<sup>41</sup> designated within, partially within or adjacent

<sup>20</sup> SPAs have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) - referred to as the Birds Directive - due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the EU.

<sup>21</sup> **Sensitive features include:** raised bog; degraded raised bog; and rhynchosporion vegetation.

<sup>22</sup> **Sensitive features include:** raised bog; degraded raised bog; and rhynchosporion vegetation.

<sup>23</sup> **Sensitive features include:** active raised bog; degraded raised bog; rhynchosporion vegetation; and bog woodland.

<sup>24</sup> **Sensitive features include:** degraded raised bog; and bog woodland.

<sup>25</sup> **Sensitive features include:** turloughs.

<sup>26</sup> **Sensitive features include:** natural eutrophic lakes; raised bog; degraded raised bog; rhynchosporion vegetation; and alluvial forest.

<sup>27</sup> **Sensitive features include:** natural eutrophic lakes; orchid-rich calcareous grassland; active raised bog; degraded raised bog, alkaline fens; limestone pavement; old oak woodlands; bog woodland; and otter.

<sup>28</sup> **Sensitive features include:** degraded raised bog; and bog woodland.

<sup>29</sup> **Sensitive features include:** Greenland white-fronted goose.

<sup>30</sup> **Sensitive features include:** whooper swan.

<sup>31</sup> **Sensitive features include:** pochard, tufted duck and wetland and waterbirds.

<sup>32</sup> **Sensitive features include:** little grebe; whooper swan; wigeon; teal; mallard; shoveler; tufted duck; common scoter; goldeneye; coot; golden plover; lapwing; common tern; and wetland and waterbirds.

<sup>33</sup> **Sensitive features include:** whooper swans.

<sup>34</sup> **Sensitive features include:** alluvial forests; otter; natural eutrophic lakes; and old sessile oak woods.

<sup>35</sup> **Sensitive features include:** great northern diver; light-bellied brent goose; common scoter; sanderling; and wetland and waterbirds.

<sup>36</sup> **Sensitive features include:** juniper scrub; cladium fens; alkaline fens; limestone pavement; alluvial forests; and yew woodlands.

<sup>37</sup> **Sensitive features include:** cormorant; tufted duck; goldeneye; common tern; and wetland and waterbirds.

<sup>38</sup> **Sensitive features include:** mudflats and sandflats; coastal lagoons; reefs; Atlantic salt meadows; alluvial forests; freshwater pearl mussel; sea lamprey; brook lamprey; river lamprey; salmon; common bottlenose dolphin; and otter.

<sup>39</sup> **Sensitive features include:** cormorant; whooper swan; light-bellied brent goose; shelduck; wigeon; teal; pintail; shoveler; scaup; ringed plover; golden plover; grey plover; wetland and waterbirds.

<sup>40</sup> **Aghnamona Bog (000422); Rinn River (000691); Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough (000985); Cloonageeher Bog (001423); Forthill Bog (001448); and Mount Jessop Bog (001450).**

<sup>41</sup> **Lough Ree (000440); Brown Bog (000442); Clooneen Bog (000445); Derrymore Bog (000447); Fortwilliam Turlough (000448); Lough Bannow (000449); Lough Gowna (000992); Lough Slawn (001443); Derry Lough (001444); Lough Naback (001449); Glen Lough (001687); Lough Forbes Complex (001818); Lough Bawn (001819); Cordara Turlough (001821); Carrickglass Demense**

to the County. These sites are also mapped on Figure 4.3.

#### 4.6.4 Land Cover Mapping

CORINE<sup>42</sup> land cover mapping for the County is shown on Figure 4.4. The most dominant land cover types are pastures<sup>43</sup> and peat bogs.

Categories from CORINE mapping that may indicate areas with the potential for Annex I habitats (see Figure 4.5), include:

- Peat bogs;
- Natural grassland;
- Water bodies;
- Mixed forests;
- Coniferous forest;
- Broad-leaved forest;
- Inland marshes;
- Stream courses;
- Water bodies;
- Transitional woodland and scrub; and
- Land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation.

#### 4.6.5 Other Sites of High Biodiversity Value

The wetland areas in County Longford include a range of high biodiversity value habitats, such as raised and cutover bogs, marshes, swamps, turloughs, fens, wet woodlands, lakes and ponds.

Turloughs are semi-natural habitats that are virtually unique to Ireland. They generally flood in winter and dry out in summer, but there may be other sporadic rises in response to high rainfall. Turloughs are considered to be of high conservation value for their plant, invertebrate (both terrestrial and aquatic) and bird communities. Some turloughs are located within priority habitats and accordingly are listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. There are two turloughs of particular significance in the County: Cordara Turlough

pNHA (001821) and Fortwilliam Turlough SAC (000448).

A fen is a wetland system with a permanently high-water level at or just below its surface. Its principal source of nutrients is from surface or groundwater and the substrate is an alkaline to slightly acidic peat soil. The habitat occurs frequently in County Longford and is often associated with floodplains or cutover bogs.

Marshes are found on level ground near slow-flowing river banks, lake shores, and in other places where mineral or shallow peaty soils are waterlogged, and where the water table is close to ground level for most of the year and tend to be comparatively species-rich especially with herbs. Marsh areas are found throughout County Longford.

Peatlands are unique systems comprising of peat soil providing as significant carbon stores and supporting a range of unique species. Cutover bog is a variable habitat, or complex of habitats, that can include mosaics of bare peat and re-vegetated areas with woodland, scrub, heath, fen and flush or grassland communities. It occurs where part or all of the original peat has been removed through turf cutting, by the traditional hand method or mechanically, for either domestic or commercial purposes. The habitat is widespread surrounding industrially and traditionally cutover raised bogs in County Longford.

A survey of wetland sites undertaken in 2017 identified that the area of wetland sites mapped in Longford covered an area of 203 km<sup>2</sup> (18.6% of land area) with 29 wetland sites identified within areas designated for nature conservation and 252 outside of designated areas.<sup>44</sup>

A further 2019 conservation evaluation of sites surveyed in 2017, found that the 18 of these wetland sites in County Longford are of 'county' or 'local importance'.<sup>45</sup> Two sites have been

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**(001822); Ardagullion Bog (002069); and Royal Canal (002103).**

<sup>42</sup> The CORINE (Coordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data series was devised as a means of compiling geo-spatial environmental information in a standardised and comparable manner. CORINE has become a key data source for informing environmental and planning policy on a national and European level. The main land cover type in Ireland is agricultural land including forestry, which accounts for two-thirds of the national landmass. Most of this is permanent grassland pastures. Peatlands and wetlands are the second most widespread land cover type, covering almost one-fifth of the country.

While forested areas cover about one-tenth of the country. Despite rapid development in the past two decades, Ireland's landscape is predominantly rural and agricultural.

<sup>43</sup> Agriculture is the predominant land use in County Longford with approximately 7,273 hectares of farmed land.

<sup>44</sup> Foss, P.J., Crushell, P. and Gallagher, M.C. (2017) *Counties Longford and Roscommon Wetland Study*. Report prepared for Longford and Roscommon County Councils.

<sup>45</sup> These sites mapped on Figure 4.5 include: Lough Sallagh (LF44); Black Lough (LF53); Killeen Ponds (LF130); Killeen Lough (LF131); Ballin Lough (LF132); Killeen Bog (LF133); Aghagreagh Bog (LF134); Clonbroney Bog Woodland

ranked as being of a 'county conservation value' (Ballin Lough and Killeen Bog) and five sites were ranked as being of 'high local conservation value' (Lough Sallagh; Black Lough; Killeen Lough; Currygrane Lough; and Killeen Pond North-Ballin Lough). These sites are shown on Figure 4.5.

Hedgerows are also a valuable resource in the countryside, benefiting agriculture, wildlife, the environment, tourism, and the general community. The network of hedges across the country provides links between surviving fragments of other wildlife habitats, thereby allowing the movement and dispersal of species through otherwise hostile agricultural landscapes. The Longford Hedgerow Study (2006) identified 9,903 km of hedgerows in County Longford and it remains a valuable resource for identification and conservation of these habitats in the County.

The proposed Mid Shannon Wilderness Park covers area of Lough Ree, the Rivers Shannon, Inny and Camlin, the Royal Canal, Newcastle Wood and other forests and the future rehabilitated Bord na Móna bogs. The project aims to strengthen the integration of tourism and natural heritage, and to reconcile tourism development with conservation of biodiversity.

It is also proposed to create a dedicated Lough Ree Biosphere Reserve, due to rich natural heritage of the lake, raised bogs and wetlands. The proposed Biosphere Reserve project is a collaboration between the relevant Local Authorities including Longford County Council, Bord na Móna and the National Parks and Wildlife Services, Waterways Ireland and Fáilte Ireland. It is intended to achieve the UNESCO Biosphere status during the life time of the Plan.<sup>46</sup>

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(LF135); Cloonfin Lough (LF136); Knockmoody Bog (LF137); Currygrane Wet Woodland (LF182); Currygrane Lough (LF183); Cloonfin South (LF186); Ballybrien Wetland (LF254); Killeen Pond (North) – Ballin Lough (LF283); Listraghee Lough (LF284); Ballyreaghan Quarry Pond (LF288); and Drummeel Farm Pond North (LF289).

<sup>46</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

<sup>47</sup> Nutrient sensitive areas are those waterbodies listed in accordance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment (UWWT) Directive 91/271/EEC on Urban Wastewater Treatment and transposing Regulations. The waterbody containing the

#### 4.6.6 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies that must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs). Some of these are mapped on Figure 4.6. These designations include:

- WFD Nutrient Sensitive Areas<sup>47</sup> in the County including sections of rivers and lakes, such as Lough Ree on the River Shannon, the River Camlin and the River Hind (County Roscommon), as shown on Figure 4.6
- WFD Surface Water in Nutrient Sensitive Areas<sup>48</sup> in the County including lake and river waterbodies as shown on Figure 4.6
- WFD Groundwater in Nutrient Sensitive Areas<sup>49</sup> in the County; and
- WFD Drinking Water Surface Water Bodies<sup>50</sup> including rivers (such as: Camlin; Inny; and Shannon Upper) and lakes (such as: Forbes; Gowna North; and Kinale) as shown on Figure 4.6. Groundwater beneath the entire County is also included.

There are a number of water dependent habitats in the County which have been listed on the Register – these relate to designated SACs and SPAs (see Section 4.6.2).

#### 4.6.7 Existing Problems

Ireland's Article 17 report on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (DCHG, 2019) identifies various Irish, EU-protected habitats and species to be of unfavourable status and many to be still declining, although it also identifies that a range of positive actions are underway. Categories for

sensitive area is used to represent the nutrient sensitive area.

<sup>48</sup> Areas designated as sensitive under the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and and transposing Regulations.

<sup>49</sup> Groundwater bodies that intersect with areas designated as sensitive under the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and and transposing Regulations.

<sup>50</sup> Various water bodies are used for drinking water abstraction in accordance with European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (SI No. 278/2007).



pressures and threats on Ireland's habitats and species identified by the report comprise:

- Agriculture;
- Forestry;
- Extraction of resources (minerals, peat, non-renewable energy resources);
- Energy production processes and related infrastructure development;
- Development and operation of transport systems;
- Development, construction and use of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructure and areas;
- Extraction and cultivation of biological living resources (other than agriculture and forestry);
- Military action, public safety measures, and other human intrusions;
- Alien and problematic species;
- Mixed source pollution;
- Human-induced changes in water regimes;
- Natural processes (excluding catastrophes and processes induced by human activity or climate change);
- Geological events, natural catastrophes;
- Climate change; and
- Unknown pressures, no pressures and pressures from outside the Member State.

The Plan includes measures to contribute towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna and associated ecosystem services.

Previous changes in land uses arising from human development have resulted in a loss of biodiversity and flora and fauna however, legislative objectives governing biodiversity and fauna were not identified as being conflicted with.

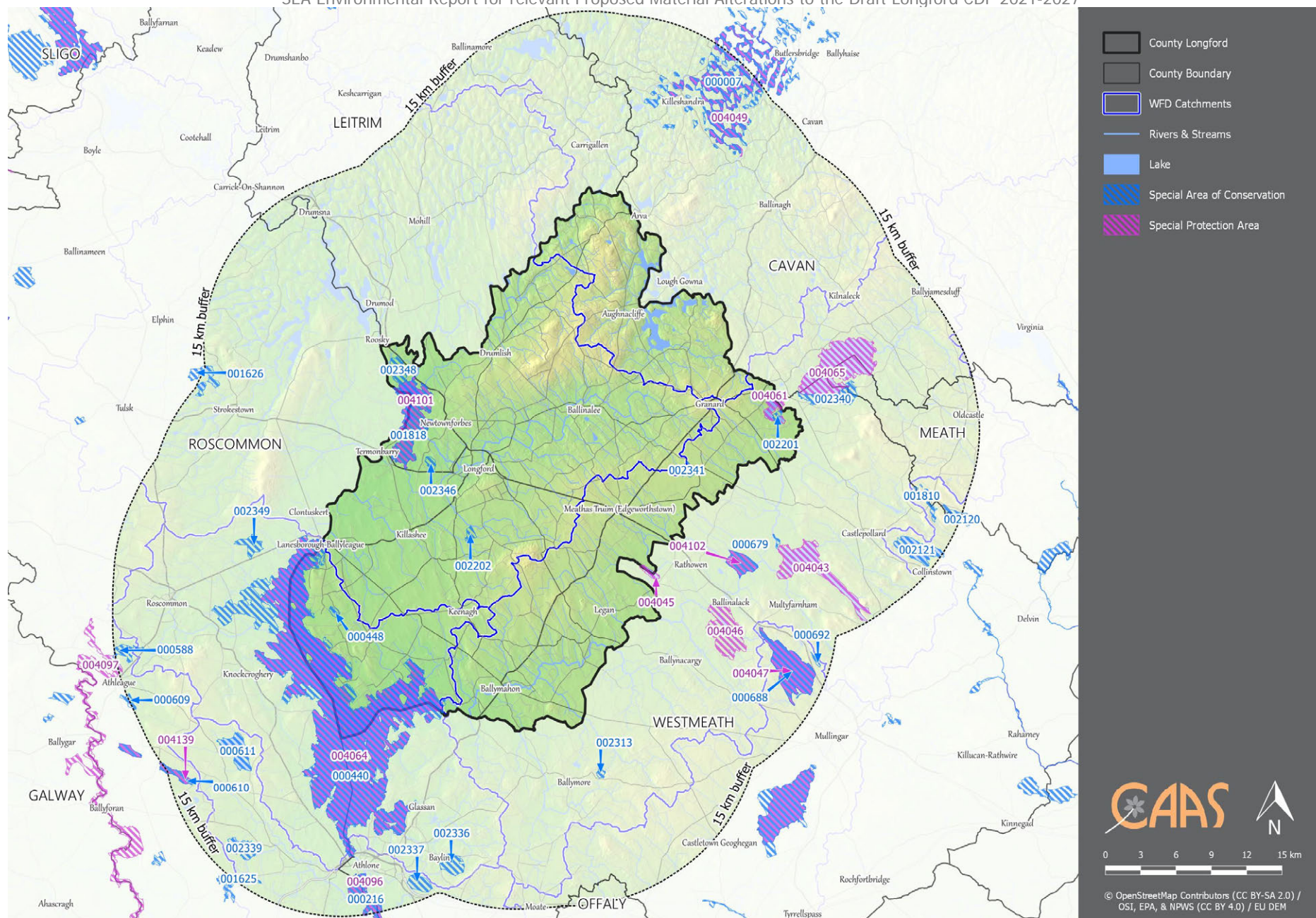
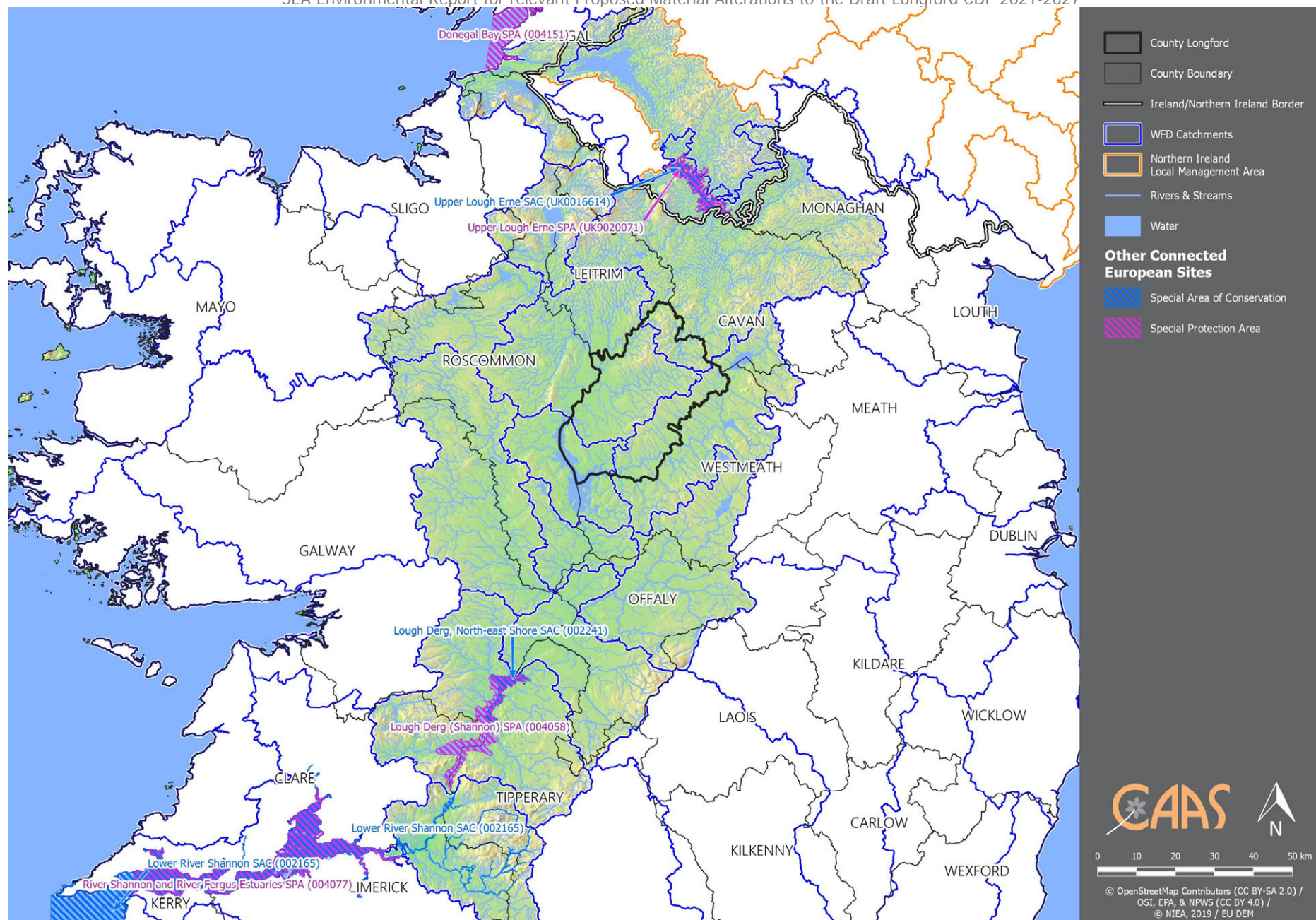


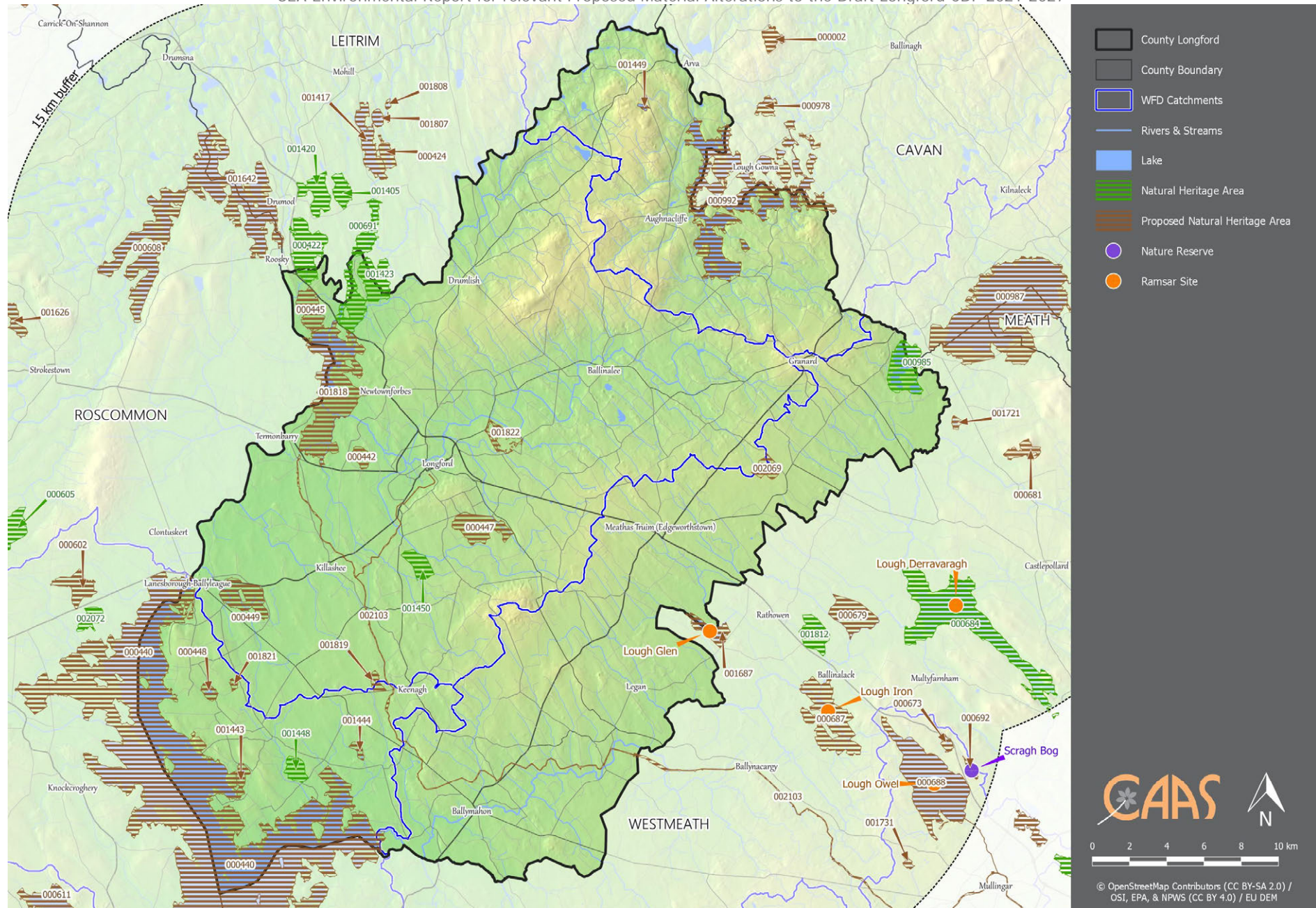
Figure 4.1 European Sites within and within 15 km of the County





**Figure 4.2 European Sites connected to the County but beyond 15 km of the County**

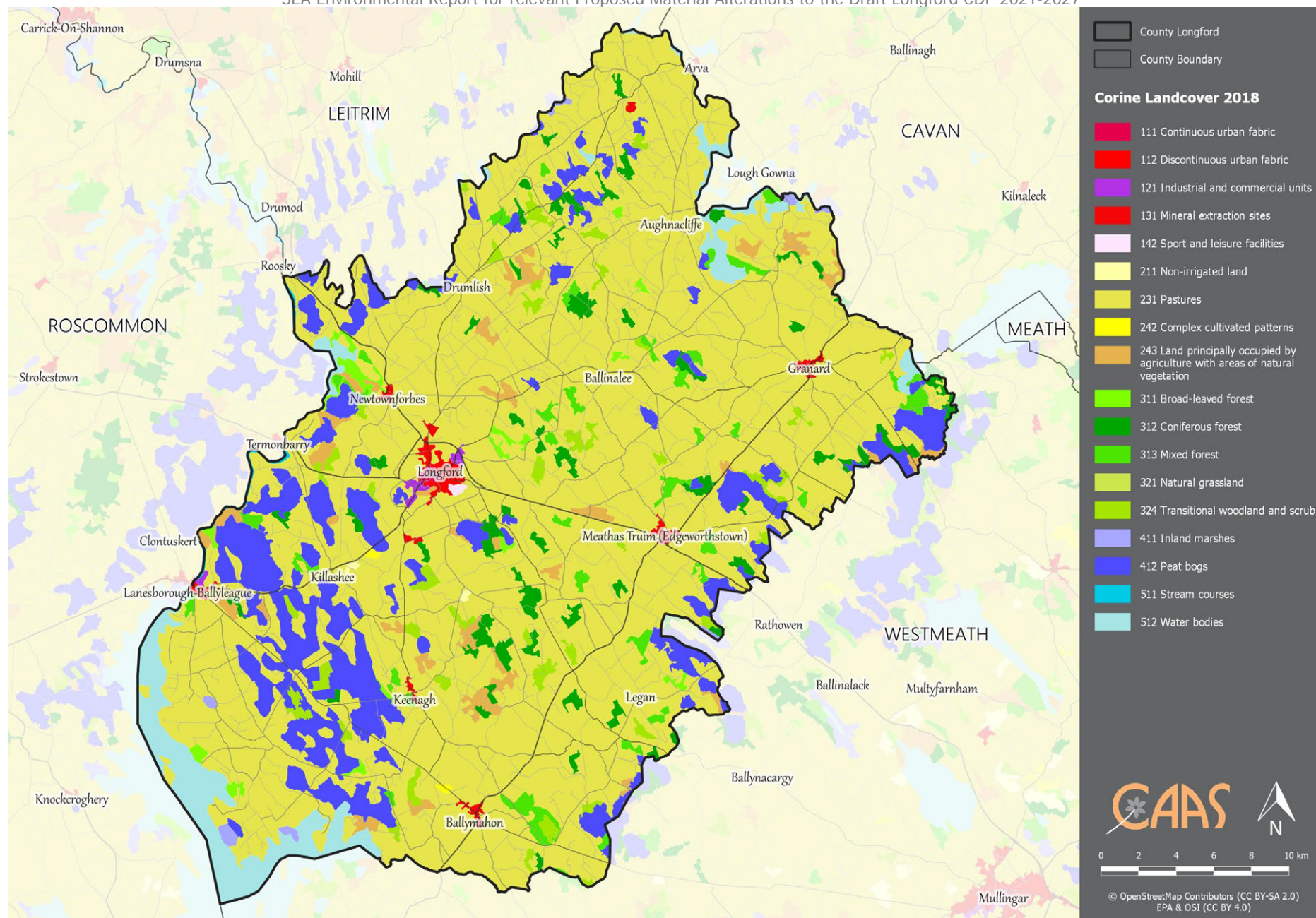




**Figure 4.3 Natural Heritage Areas, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Other Designations**

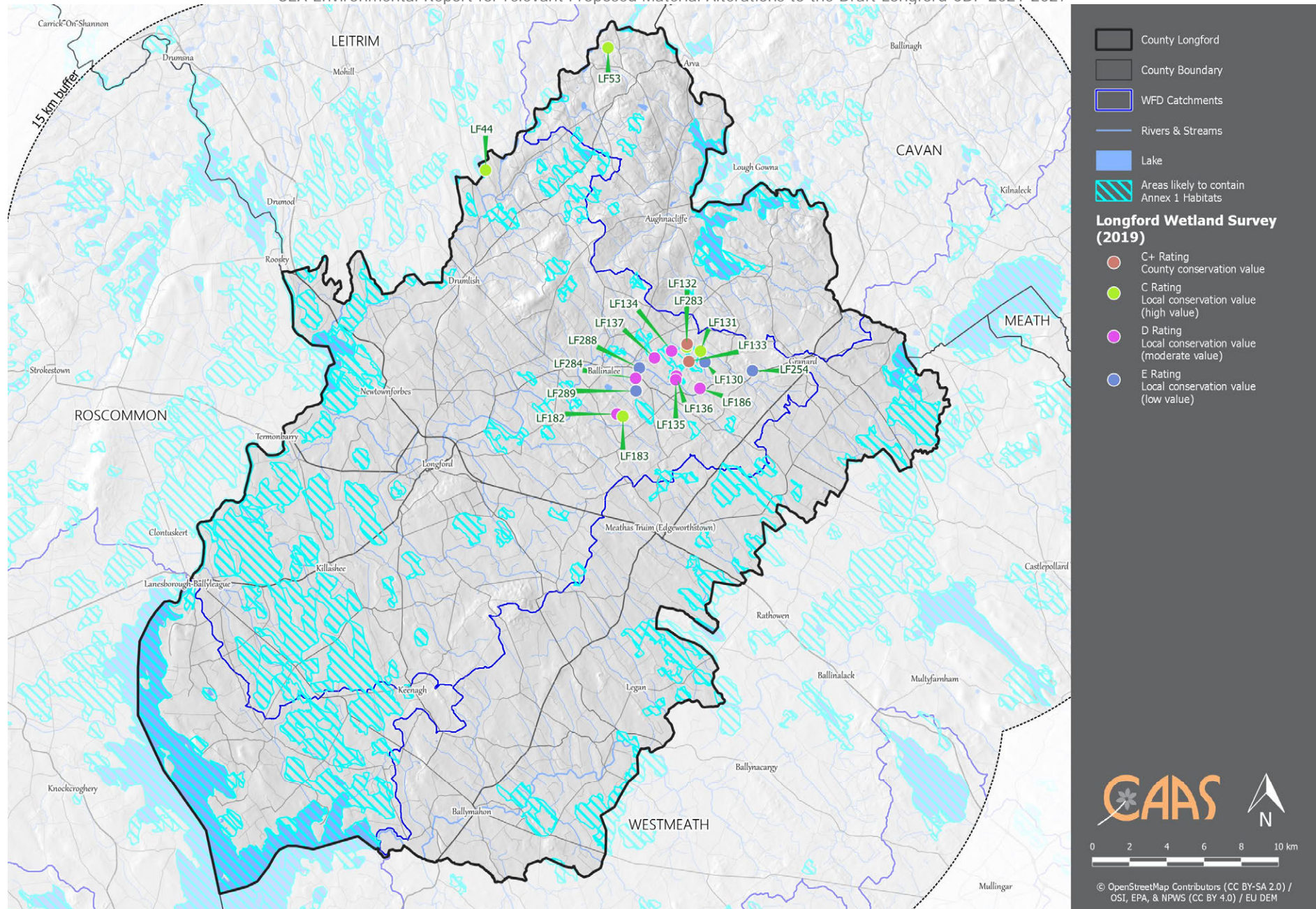
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**Figure 4.4 CORINE Land Cover 2018**

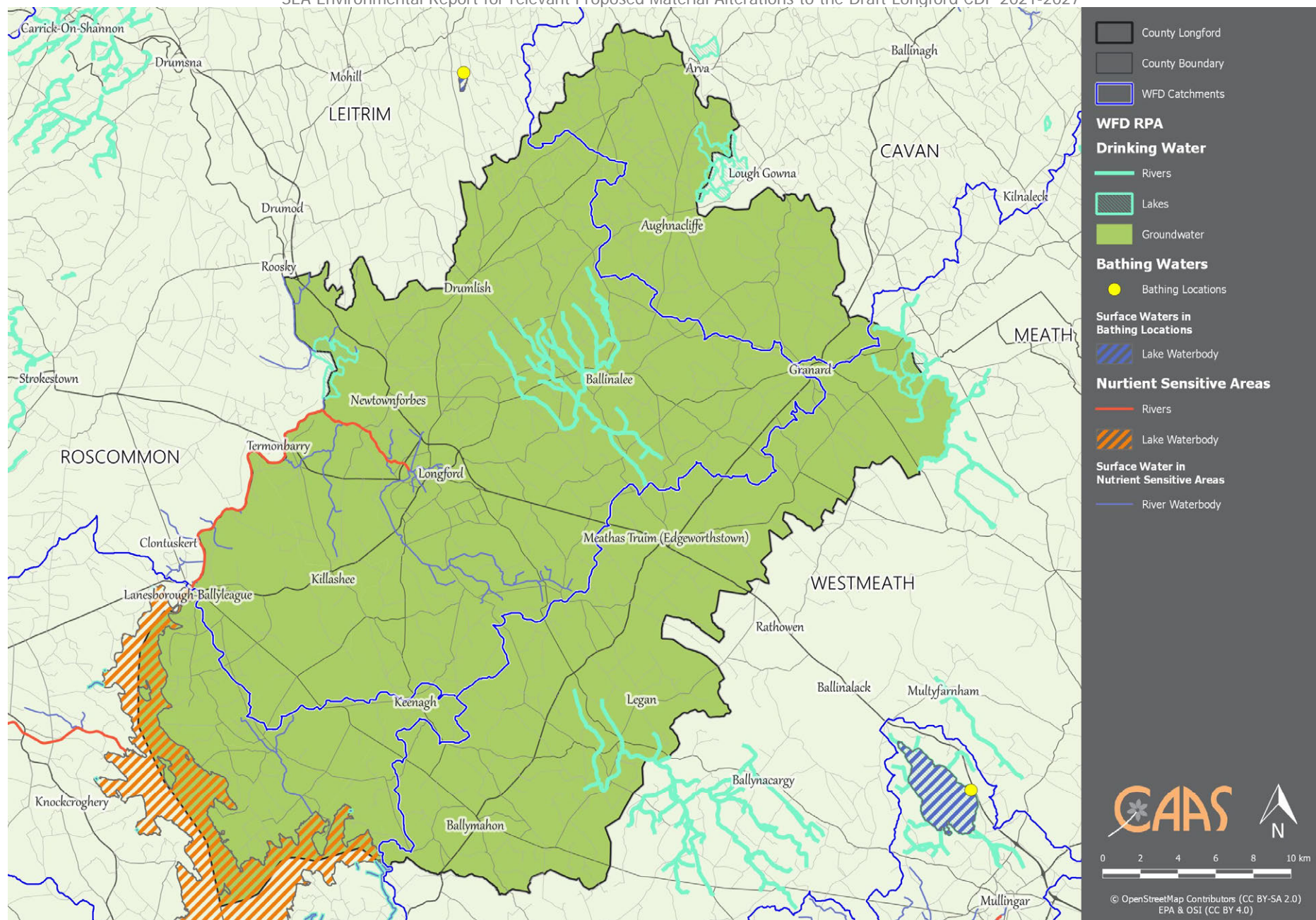




**Figure 4.5 Wetland Survey (2019) sites and Areas with the potential for Annex I Habitats**

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**Figure 4.6 WFD Register of Protected Areas**

## 4.7 Population and Human Health

### 4.7.1 Population

In the 2016 Census the total population of County Longford was identified as being 40,873 persons, showing the trends of an increase in total population in the County by c. 4.8% (1,873 persons) since the previous Census.

In the 2016 Census the population distribution across urban and rural areas in the County was identified as being 13,957 persons (34.2%) in urban settlements and 26,916 persons (65.85%) in smaller towns, villages and in the rural remainder of the County.

By 2031 the NPF Implementation Roadmap states that the population of County Longford is set to be in the range of 46,000-47,000. At the higher projected growth rate, this means that the population of the County will grow by approximately 6,120 people from its 2016 base (or 5,120 people at the lower rate). By 2026, it is envisaged that the population of County Longford will grow by 4,627 people at the higher projected rate to reach 45,500 (or 3,627 people at the lower rate).<sup>51</sup>

The provision of additional housing over the Plan period is dictated by the Core Strategy that guides where new development should be allocated in accordance with national and regional strategies and policies, including the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for Eastern and Midland Region.

The Draft Plan designates a hierarchy of the County's settlements as follows:

- Key Town (Longford);
- Self-Sustaining Growth Towns (Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon);
- Self-Sustaining Towns (Granard and Lanesborough);
- Towns and Villages (Aughnaccliffe; Ballinalee; Drumlish; Keenagh; Legan; and Newtownforbes); and
- Rural
  - Serviced Rural Villages (Abbeyshrule; Ardagh; Ballinamuck; and Clondra)
  - Rural Settlement Clusters (Abbeylara; Ballycloughan; Ballywillan; Barry;

- Bunlahy; Carrickboy; Carriglass;
- Colehill; Coolarty; Cullyfad;
- Derraghan; Dring; Drumhaldry;
- Enybegs; Forgney; Killashee;
- Kilnatraun; Legga; Lisryan; Melview;
- Moydow; Moyne; Mullinalaghta;
- Newtowncashel; Ratharney;
- Stonepark; and Taghshinny);
- Open Countryside.

Longford Town is identified as a Key Town by the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031. It acts as a key population and employment centre for the surrounding hinterland as well as a gateway to the Northern and Western Region. In the 2016 Census the total population of Longford Town was identified as being 10,008 persons and it is projected that it will grow by additional 1,938 persons by 2027. Longford Town is identified as the settlement targeted for the most growth over the Plan period, with sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional growth.

Both Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon form 'Self-Sustaining Growth Towns', functioning as centres of important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for these town and surrounding rural hinterlands, as well as their ability to support the Key Town of Longford Town and the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone. The 2016 Census recorded the populations of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon as being 2,072 and 1,877 persons respectively, with both settlements firmly established as the second most populated towns in the County and considered as urban areas.

The new population provided for in the Draft Plan will interact with various environmental components. Potential interactions include:

- Increase in demand for wastewater treatment at the municipal level;
- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes;
- Increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction from the rivers;
- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive areas; and
- Potential effects on water quality.

### 4.7.2 Human Health

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water

<sup>51</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027



or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent land uses for example. These factors have been considered with regard to the description of: the baseline of each environmental component; and the identification and evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

### 4.7.3 Existing Problems

There is historic and predictive evidence of flooding in various locations across the County (see information on Strategic Flood Risk Assessment at Section 4.9.8).

The greatest health risk from radiation in Ireland is caused by radon. The presence of radon gas, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils, occurs across the country. It accounts for more than half of the total radiation dose received by the Irish population. As a known carcinogen, in the same category as tobacco smoke and asbestos it is a cause of lung cancer. Exposure to radon for long periods or at high concentrations can lead to lung cancer. The number of homes within the County with radon levels above the reference level is within the normal range experienced in other locations across the country<sup>52</sup>.

Information on the status of groundwaters and surface waters is provided under Section 4.9 while compliance issues in relation to water services are detailed under Section 4.11.9.

## 4.8 Soil

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural

resource because it develops over very long timescales. It is an extremely complex, variable and living medium and performs many vital functions including: food and other biomass production, storage, filtration and transformation of many substances including water, carbon, and nitrogen. Soil has a role as a habitat and gene pool, serves as a platform for human activities, landscape and heritage and acts as a provider of raw materials. Such functions of soil are worthy of protection because of their socio-economic as well as environmental importance. Soils in any area are the result of the interaction of various factors, such as parent material, climate, vegetation and human action.

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources. Although a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive was withdrawn in 2014, the importance of sustainable soil management was recognised in the Seventh Environment Action Programme, where sustainable land management is to be achieved by 2020.

Luvissols<sup>53</sup> and peat-based soils are the two most dominant soil types across the Plan area (see Figure 4.7). Other soil types identified include:

- Alluvial soils<sup>54</sup> (in the flood plains of rivers and streams);
- Brown podzol<sup>55</sup> (mainly in the north-east of the Plan area);
- Surface Water Gleys<sup>56</sup> (in depressions in the upper reaches of river valleys in both uplands and lowlands);
- Brown earths<sup>57</sup> (in the south-west and north-west of the Plan area); and
- Rendzina<sup>58</sup> (in the south-east of the Plan area).

Peatlands are a very characteristic habitat in County Longford, with groundwater and rain fed peat soils being a prominent and typical feature in the landscape. There are many areas of peat across the Plan area, with concentrations of these in the west and north-west and east. The County has significant areas of important boglands of regional and national importance, such as Corlea Bog and Trackway,

<sup>52</sup> Mapping available at <http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap>

<sup>53</sup> Luvisol soils are generally fertile, widely used for agriculture and associated with significant accumulation of clay.

<sup>54</sup> These are associated with alluvial (clay, silt or sand) river deposits.

<sup>55</sup> Brown podzol soils are characterised by dark brown humus-mineral soil covered with a thin mat of partly decayed leaves

<sup>56</sup> Surface Water Gleys are wetland soils with slowly permeable horizons resulting in seasonal waterlogging.

<sup>57</sup> Brown earths are well drained mineral soils, associated with high levels of natural fertility.

<sup>58</sup> Rendzina soils are shallow calcareous soils with hard rock or skeletal material comprising coarse fragments.

which includes an Iron Age bog road dated back to 148 B.C. Rain-fed (ombrotrophic) and groundwater-fed (minerotrophic) peat soils occurring in the Plan area are subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.6).

The GSI have a suite of data sources available that would be useful in planning and assessing individual projects with regard to the environmental topic(s) of soil and/or material assets. These include:

- Bedrock mapping;
- Quaternary and Physiographic mapping; and
- National Aquifer and Recharge mapping.

#### 4.8.1 Geological Sites

Geological Survey of Ireland coordinates the Irish Geological Heritage Programme, which seeks to identify and select sites of geological interest within each county across the country. The audit of County Geological Sites in County Longford was completed in 2015. There are 15 County Geological Sites in County Longford, as mapped on Figure 4.8, with a concentration of these in the north-east and south-east parts of the Plan area<sup>59</sup>. Many of these County Geological Sites include quarries.

#### 4.8.2 Potentially contaminated lands and landfill sites

In the absence of mitigation, contaminated materials have the potential to adversely impact upon human health, water quality and habitats and species.

As is the case with other urban and semi-urban areas across the country, there is potential for contamination at sites within County Longford, especially where land uses occurred in the past in the absence of environmental protection legislation.

Historic landfill sites in the County include those at:

- Drumlish;
- Ballymulvey;
- Cartron Big;
- Ballymaurice; and
- Longford Town.

Other historic landfill sites in the County can be found on the EPA's Section 22 Register of the Waste Management Act.

#### 4.8.3 Source Protection Areas

Source Protection Area delineation provides an assessment of the land area that contributes groundwater to a borehole or spring. Source reports have been undertaken by the GSI on behalf of Local Authorities since the mid-1990s. The Public Supply Source Protection Areas comprises Source Protection Areas around groundwater abstraction points that are managed by Irish Water to supply Public Water Supply Schemes across Ireland. The objective of the Source Protection Areas is to provide protection by placing tighter controls on activities within all or part of the zone of contribution of the source. The Zone of Contribution is the land area that contributes water to the well or spring. The Inner Protection Area (SI) is designed to protect against the effects of human activities that might have an immediate effect on the source and, in particular, against microbial pollution. The Outer Protection Area (SO) is encompassing the remainder of the zone of contribution to the groundwater abstraction point (e.g. borehole or spring). The Group Scheme Preliminary Source Protection Areas comprises Zones of Contribution to groundwater abstraction points that supply Group Water Schemes across Ireland that are affiliated to the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and that supply more than 15 people. The Zones of Contribution are preliminary protection areas around groundwater abstractions, but are not full Source Protection Areas.

Groundwater bodies are important water supply sources for private wells, group schemes and local authority supplies and for use in a range of commercial activities. Groundwater directly and indirectly contributes to and sustains a variety of important ecosystems. This is particularly the case in rural areas that are not served by public or group water schemes, with private bored wells being the only source of supply. In this regard, the 2016 Census recorded approximately 1,640 dwellings as having a private well supply source. Given limited surface water, the demand for

<sup>59</sup> Individual audited site reports for County Longford are available from the GSI ([www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)).

groundwater will increase, particularly in meeting the demands for drinking water. Accordingly, it is essential that known sources of groundwater used for drinking supply are protected from pollution in County Longford.<sup>60</sup>

There is one Source Protection Area identified within County Longford, Newtown Cashel Spring Source Protection Zone, as shown on Figure 4.8.

#### **4.8.4 Landslides**

The term "landslide" describes a wide variety of processes that result in the downward and outward movement of materials such as rock, debris, earth, mud and peat under the force of gravity. Issues such as existing ground conditions, slope stability and storage of excavated material have the potential to influence susceptibility to landslides/bog bursts. The potential impacts of landslides include loss of human life/injury, flooding, pollution of watercourses and impacts upon aquatic biodiversity.

The Plan area has several locations with a history of landslide events<sup>61</sup>, as shown on Figure 4.9. These events include: a bog near Newtownforbes (1883); Bog of Rine near Camlin River (1808); Tomisky Bog (2009); and more recently, two events in an area of raised peat in Ballymakeeggan (2016) and Moydow (2016).

The GSI have identified that most of the Plan area has relatively low levels of landslide susceptibility, as shown on Figure 4.9.

#### **4.8.5 Existing Problems**

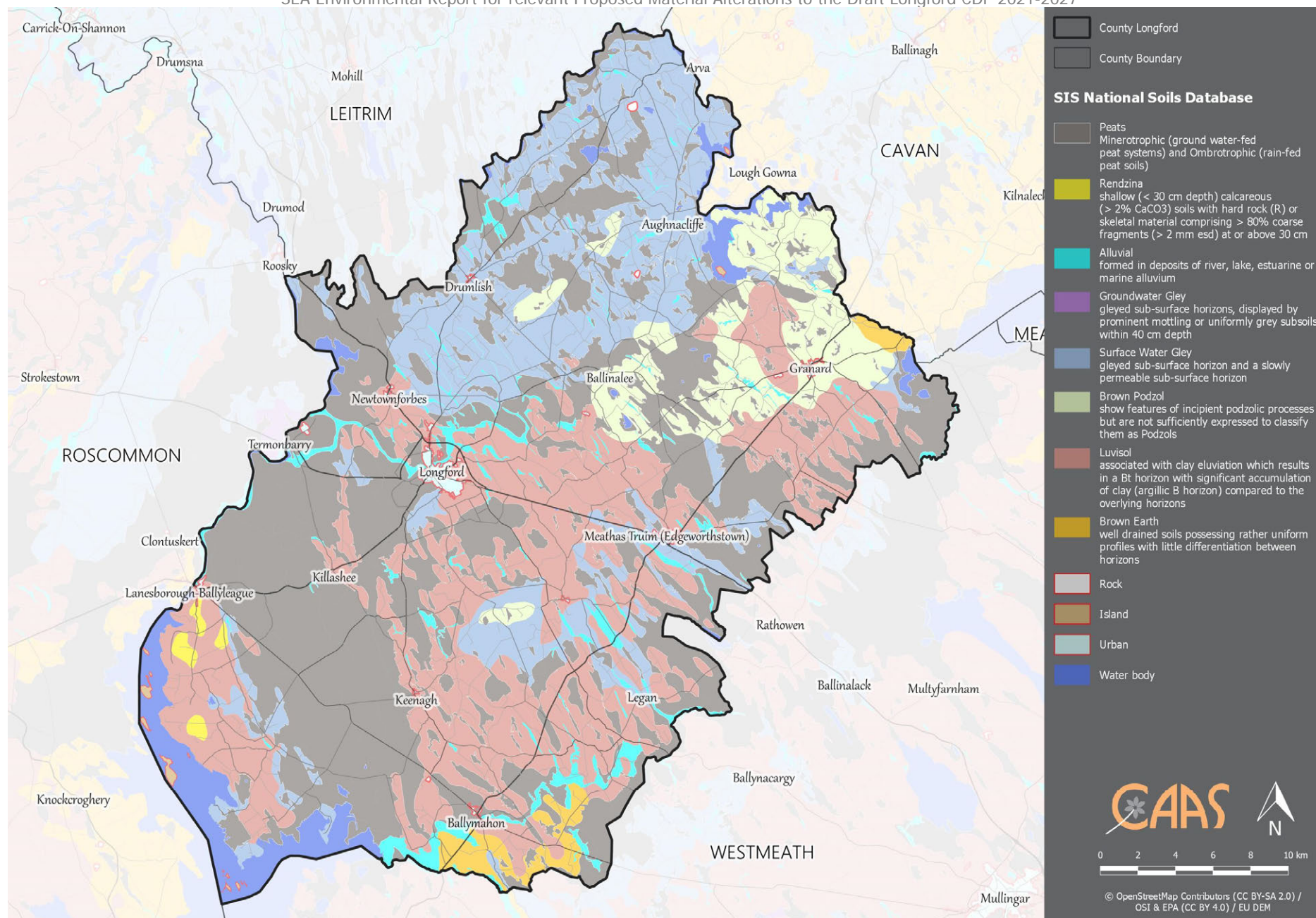
Legislative objectives governing soil were not identified as being conflicted with.

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<sup>60</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

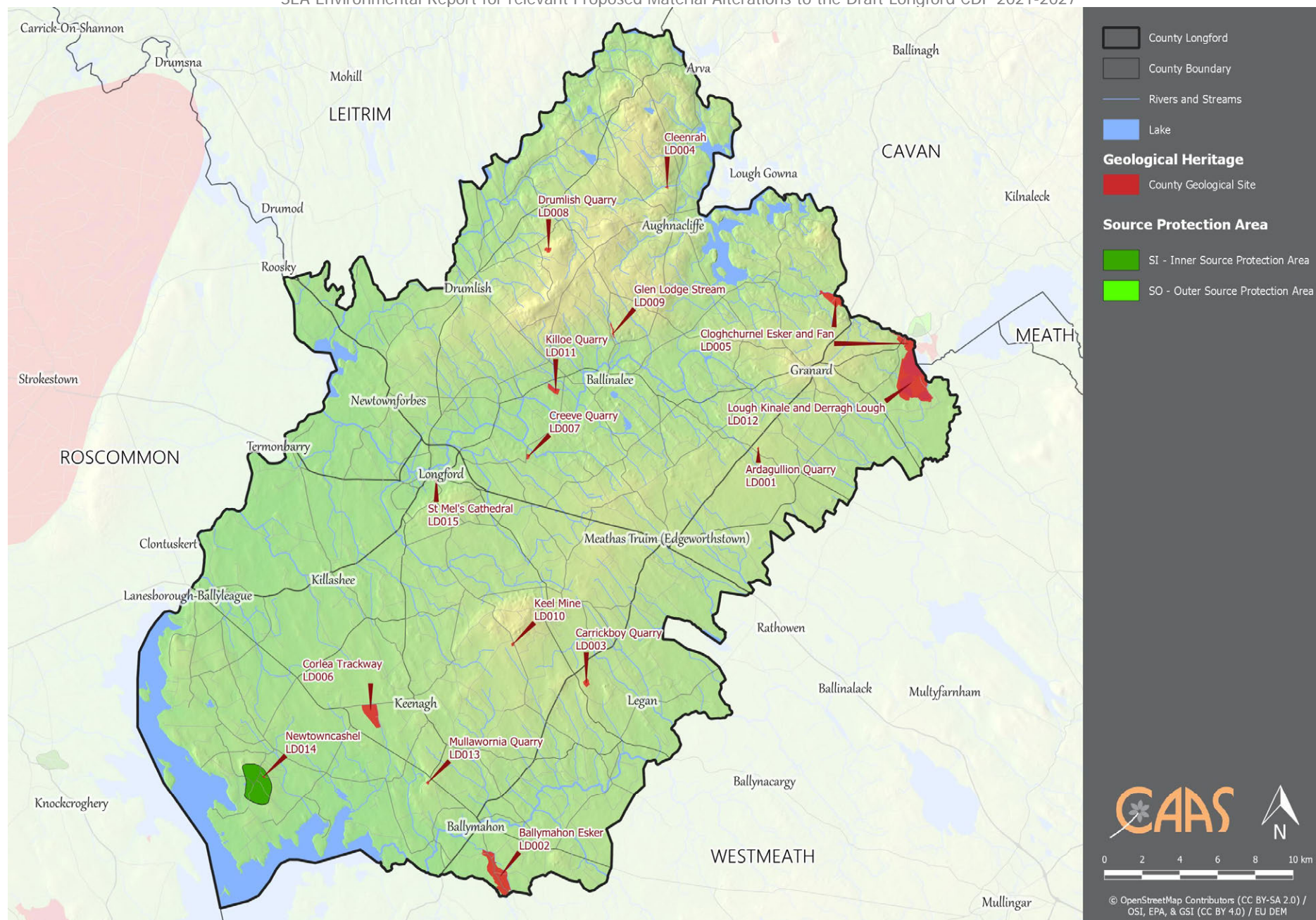
<sup>61</sup> Over 2,500 landslide events are recorded in the National Landslides Database available from GSI ([www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)). This

dataset also includes Landslide Susceptibility Mapping to assist in the identification of areas that are likely to experience land sliding.

**Figure 4.7 Soil Type**

CAAS for Longford County Council

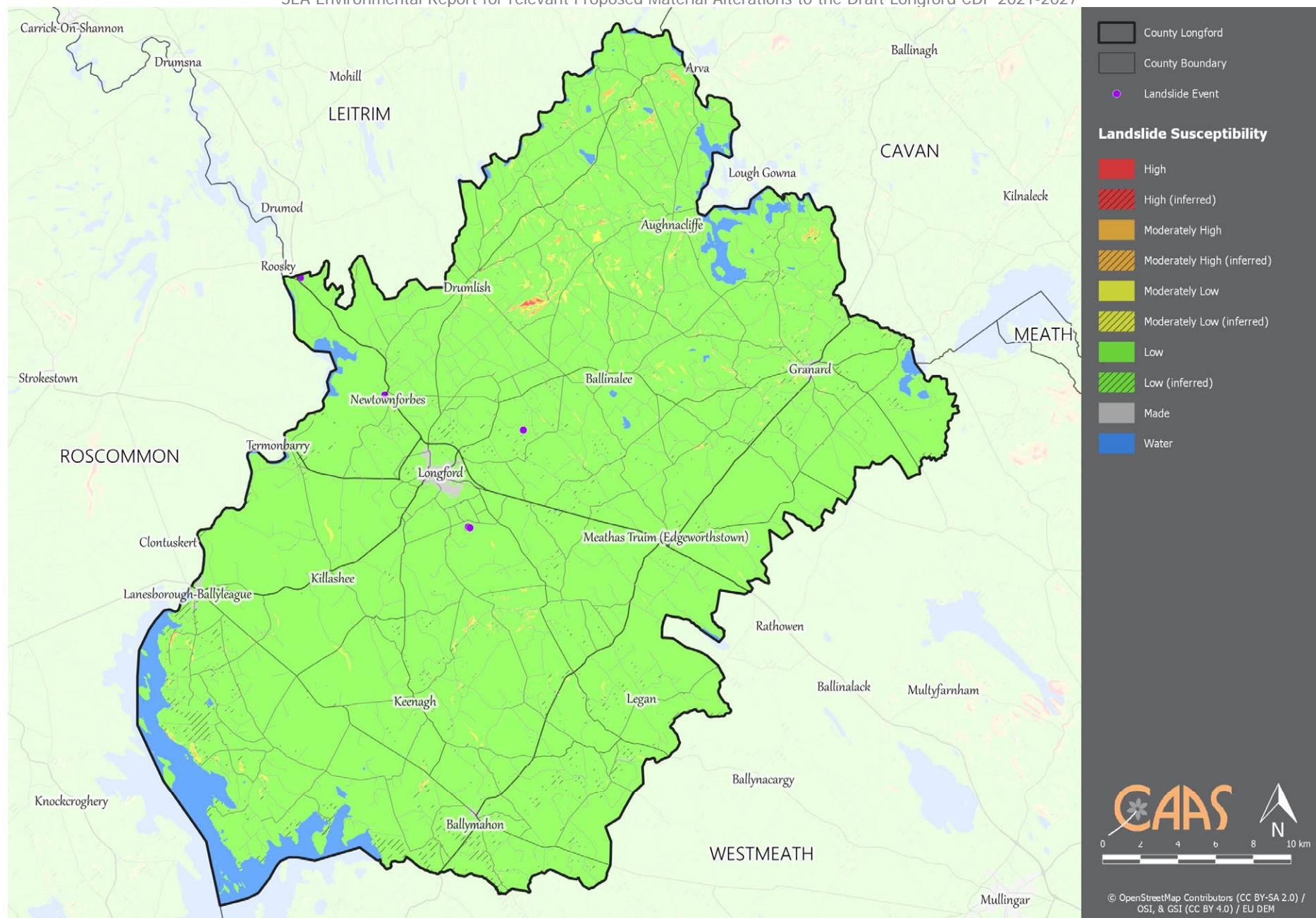




**Figure 4.8 Source Protection Areas and County Geological Sites**

CAAS for Longford County Council





**Figure 4.9 Landslide Susceptibility and Previous Landslide Events**

CAAS for Longford County Council

## 4.9 Water

### 4.9.1 The Water Framework Directive

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD requires that all Member States implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving good status. All public bodies are required to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and improve polluted water bodies to good status.

Article 4 of the WFD sets out various exemptions for deterioration in status caused as a result of certain physical modifications to water bodies. This is provided: all practicable mitigation measures are taken; there are reasons of overriding public interest or the benefits to human health, safety or sustainable development outweigh the benefits in achieving the WFD objective; there are no better alternatives; and the reasons for the physical modification are explained in the River Basin Management Plan.

The EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Documents No. 20 and 36 provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the WFD.

For the purpose of assessment, reporting and management, water is divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters that are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies.

### 4.9.2 Zone of Influence

The zone of influence of the Plan beyond the County boundary, with respect to impacts upon waters can be estimated to be all bodies of groundwater and all surface waters downstream areas of catchments which drain Plan area.

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<sup>62</sup> There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the Plan area with overall status currently not assigned to them and

### 4.9.3 Surface Water Drainage

A catchment is an area of land contributing to a waterbody, with all the water ultimately running off to a single outlet. The WFD requires water quality management to be based on natural river catchments i.e. by reference to the natural, environmental unit rather than by reference to administrative or legal boundaries, which often fragment river catchments.

Most of the County is located within the Upper Shannon catchment with part of the north of the County located within the Erne catchment.

### 4.9.4 Surface Water Status

The WFD defines 'overall surface water status' as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorer of its ecological status and its chemical status. Thus, in order to achieve 'good surface water status' both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least 'good'.

Ecological status is an expression of the structure and functioning of aquatic ecosystems associated with surface waters. Such waters are classified as of 'good ecological status' when they meet Directive requirements.

Chemical Status is a pass/fail assignment with a failure defined by a face-value exceedance of an Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) for one or more Priority Action Substances (PAS) listed in Annex X of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The EQS values for individual PAS substances are set at European level. Good surface water chemical status means that concentrations of pollutants in the water body do not exceed the environmental limit values specified in the Directive.

The WFD surface water status (2013-2018), for rivers, canals and lakes within and surrounding the County is shown on Figure 4.10.

In addition, there are a number of *unassigned*<sup>62</sup> river, canal and lake waterbodies across the County.

the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies.

The WFD status of most of the surface waters in the County is classified as *moderate*, *good* and *high*, however some sections<sup>63</sup> of the rivers including Black, Camlin, Legga Stream, Rhine and Shannon Upper and Lake Gowna North are identified as *poor* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

In addition to this, many water bodies are identified as being at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives due to the damage being caused by significant pressures.<sup>64</sup> Significant pressures, those pressures which need to be addressed in order to improve water quality, have been identified for waterbodies that are 'At Risk' of not meeting their water quality objectives under the WFD. Significant pressures for surface water bodies within or adjacent to County Longford are identified on Table 4.1. There are various types of pressures identified, such as:

- **Agricultural pressures** - can include issues related to farming including loss of excess nutrients and sediment loss to surface waters from diffuse sources such as spreading of fertilisers and manures. Excess phosphorous and sediment are typically issues for rivers and lakes, and too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.
- **Urban run-off pressures** - can include leaking sewers and run-off from paved and unpaved areas and misconnections where private foul connections are connected to storm sewers instead of the foul sewer network.
- **Urban wastewater pressures** - can include direct discharge of nutrients from urban wastewater treatment plants and discharge from combined storm overflows or storm water overflows. Discharges of elevated concentrations of phosphorus, ammonium and nitrogen impact on the ecology of surface waters.
- **Hydromorphological and anthropogenic pressures** are identified together in many instances. Hydromorphological pressures can include: modifications to the physical habitat conditions or the natural functioning of a waterbody which can impact on ecology, caused by dredging and straightening of rivers (chanellisation), land drainage or hard infrastructure such as dams, weirs, culverts or other obstructions. Anthropogenic pressures can include: water abstractions; invasive species; agriculture; use of fertilizers, manures and pesticides; animal husbandry activities; inefficient irrigation practices; deforestation of woods; aquaculture; pollution due to industrial effluents and domestic sewage; mining; and recreational activities.
- **Industrial pressures** - can include discharges and emissions from industrial and commercial facilities.
- **Extractive industry related pressures** - can include different activities that lead to the extraction of raw materials from the earth, such as oil, metals, mineral and aggregates. Impacts from extractive sites include sediment/siltation pollution and alteration to the physical environment.
- **Invasive species pressures** - can include those relating to non-native species introduced outside their natural range that threaten ecosystems, habitats and native species with environmental or socio-economic harm. Currently 37 species have been identified across the EU as a high priority for management, and nine of these occur in Ireland. The potential impacts of IAS include the alteration of eco-systems (by causing bank erosion, for example), inhibition of access to water bodies, hindrance of land development and, in some cases, potential human health impacts.
- **Atmospheric pressures** - can include atmospheric deposition of nutrients. Atmospheric deposition of nutrients is the process whereby nutrients from natural or anthropogenic sources move from the atmosphere to the earth's surface.
- **Forestry pressures** - can include poorly managed and inappropriately sited forest operations, negatively impact on water quality and aquatic habitats and species. The most common water quality problems arising from forestry relate to the release of sediment and nutrients and the impacts from acidification. Forestry may also give rise to changes in stream flow regimes caused by associated land drainage.

<sup>63</sup> As per EPA classification system ([gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps](http://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps))

<sup>64</sup> EPA (2019): Report on Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018



**Table 4.1 WFD Surface Waterbody Status and Pressures<sup>65</sup>**

Waterbody Name (EPA Identification Code) <sup>66</sup>	Water body Type	WFD Surface Waterbody Status (2013 -2018) <sup>67</sup>
Black (Westmeath)_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural, urban run-off and urban wastewater sources.</b>
Camlin_070	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from hydromorphological/anthropogenic, urban run-off and urban wastewater sources.</b>
Legga Stream_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and industrial sources.</b>
Rhine_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from urban wastewater sources.</b>
Shannon (Upper)_080	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Shannon (Upper)_100	River	Poor – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from extractive industry related, industrial, hydromorphological/anthropogenic and invasive species sources.</b>
Shannon (Upper)_110	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural, atmospheric and hydromorphological/anthropogenic sources.</b>
Gowna North	Lake	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Black (South Leitrim) _010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Black (Westmeath)_020	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and forestry sources.</b>
Camlin_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from hydromorphological/anthropogenic sources.</b>
Clooncoose Stream_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Comoge_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Fallan_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and forestry sources.</b>
Inny_050	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from extractive industry related sources.</b>
Inny_100	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from invasive species sources.</b>
Legga Stream_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and extractive industry related sources.</b>
Rath_020	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Rinn_030	River	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Shannon (Upper)_090	River	Moderate. No pressures identified. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological/anthropogenic sources.</b>
Forbes	Lake	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural, invasive species and extractive industry sources.</b>
Gowna South	Lake	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and invasive species sources.</b>
Kinale	Lake	Moderate. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Aghnacliffe Stream_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Black (South Leitrim) _020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Black (South Leitrim) _030	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Black (South Leitrim) _040	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Camlin_030	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Camlin_040	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Camlin_050	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Creelaghta_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Cullies_010	River	Good. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and domestic wastewater sources.</b>
Erne_060	River	Good. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Fallan_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Fardrumman Stream_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Inny_060	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Inny_070	River	Good. This waterbody is identified to be <b>under pressure from agricultural and extractive industry related sources.</b>
Inny_080	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Inny_090	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Lenamore Stream_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Ree	Lake	Good. No pressures identified.
Royal Canal Main Line (Upper Shannon F)	Canal	Good. No pressures identified.
Royal Canal Main Line (Upper Shannon C)	Canal	Good. No pressures identified.
Royal Canal Main Line (Upper Shannon E)	Canal	Good. No pressures identified.
Camlin_020	River	High. No pressures identified.

<sup>65</sup> Source: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> and <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water><sup>66</sup> The number at the end of each river water body name indicates where the waterbody is located along the main river channel. For example, the waterbody at the source is coded '\_010', the next waterbody downstream is coded '\_020' and the final waterbody before the river becomes transitional is '\_180'.<sup>67</sup> There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the Plan area with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies. These are not included on the Table 4.1.

#### 4.9.5 Ground Water

Groundwater is stored in the void spaces in underground layers of rock, or aquifers. These aquifers are permeable, allowing both the infiltration of water from the soils above them and the yielding of water to surface and coastal waters. Groundwater is the part of the subsurface water that is in the saturated zone - the zone below the water table, the uppermost level of saturation in an aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric, in which all pores and fissures are full of water.

For groundwater bodies, the approach to classification is different from that for surface water. For each body of groundwater, both the chemical status and the quantitative must be determined. Both have to be classed as either *good* or *poor*. The WFD sets out a series of criteria that must be met for a body to be classed as good chemical and quantitative status.

The WFD status (2013-2018) of groundwater underlying the entire County is identified as being of *good* status, meeting the objectives of the WFD (as shown on Figure 4.11).

#### 4.9.6 Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates groundwaters according to both their productivity and vulnerability to pollution.

Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter into groundwater. The vulnerability of aquifers underlying the County are mapped on Figure 4.12 and generally classified as being of:

- *High, moderate and low vulnerability*, in most of the County; and
- *Extreme vulnerability and extreme (rock at or near surface or karst)* in other local areas.

The GSI also rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource. This is referred to as aquifer productivity and is mapped on Figure 4.13. Productivity is generally classified as being:

- *Locally important aquifer bedrock, which is moderately productive only in local zones*, across most of the County;
- *Poor aquifer bedrock which is generally moderately unproductive except for local zones*, mainly in the north of the County;

- *Regionally important aquifer karstified (conduit)*, along a band stretching from the south-west to the centre of the County;
- *Regionally important aquifer karstified (diffuse)*, in the south-west of the County;
- *Locally important aquifer bedrock which is generally moderately productive*, in the north-east and north-west of the Plan area; and
- *Locally important aquifer karstified* in the centre of the Plan area.

#### 4.9.7 WFD Registers of Protected Areas

The WFD requires that Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) are compiled for a number of water bodies or part of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife.

The WFD requires that these RPAs contain: areas from which waters are taken for public or private water supply schemes; designated shellfish production areas; bathing waters; areas which are affected by high levels of substances most commonly found in fertilizers, animal and human wastes - these areas are considered nutrient sensitive; areas designated for the protection of habitats or species e.g. Salmonid areas; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Entries to the RPAs within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates include:

- All groundwater and surface waters sustaining areas designated as SACs and SPAs (these European sites are mapped on Figure 4.1);
- A number of rivers and a lake are designated as Nutrient Sensitive Areas (as shown on Figure 4.6);
- Groundwater across the area to which the Plan relates is designated as Groundwater in Nutrient Sensitive Areas;
- Groundwater across the area to which the Plan relates is included on the RPA for Groundwater Drinking Water (see Figure 4.6);
- A number of rivers and lakes are included on the RPA for Drinking Water Rivers (see Figure 4.6).

Source Protection Areas are described in Section 4.8.3 and mapped on Figure 4.8.

## **4.9.8 Flooding**

Certain areas across the County are at risk from groundwater, pluvial<sup>68</sup> and fluvial<sup>69</sup> flooding. There are various historic and predictive indicators of flood risk in the County, including Areas at greatest risk of fluvial flooding include areas within Longford Town (Camlin River) and along the County's western and south-western County border (River Shannon and Lough Ree).

Predictive flood risk mapping is available from the Office of Public Works (OPW) for the County's rivers.

Six locations in the County were identified by the OPW in 2012 as requiring detailed assessment of flood risk (Areas for Further Assessment): Abbeyshrule; Ballymahon; Cloondara; Edgeworthstown; Lanesbrough - Power Station; and Longford Town.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), as required by 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DEHLG and OPW, 2009), is being undertaken alongside the preparation of the SEA and the preparation of the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations. This assessment considers available and emerging information on flood risk indicators including the OPW's Flood Hazard and Risk Mapping.

## **4.9.9 Existing Problems**

Subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD, based on available water data, certain surface and groundwater bodies will need improvement in order to comply with the objectives of the WFD.

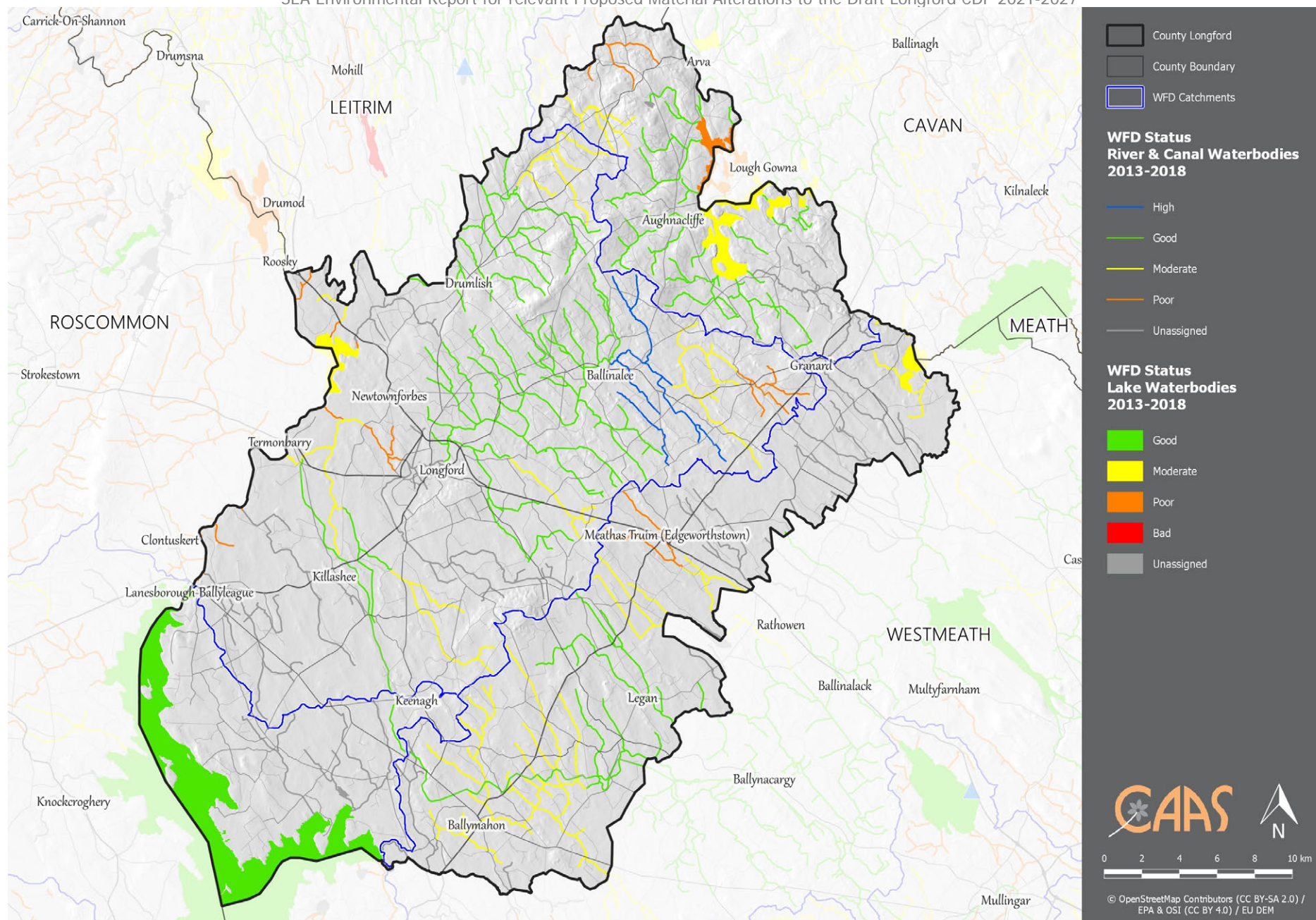
The Draft Plan includes provisions that will contribute towards improvements in the status of waters.

There is historic and predictive evidence of elevated levels of flood risk from fluvial sources at various locations across the County.

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<sup>68</sup> Resulting from high intensity rainfall events where run-off volume exceeds capacity of surface water network.

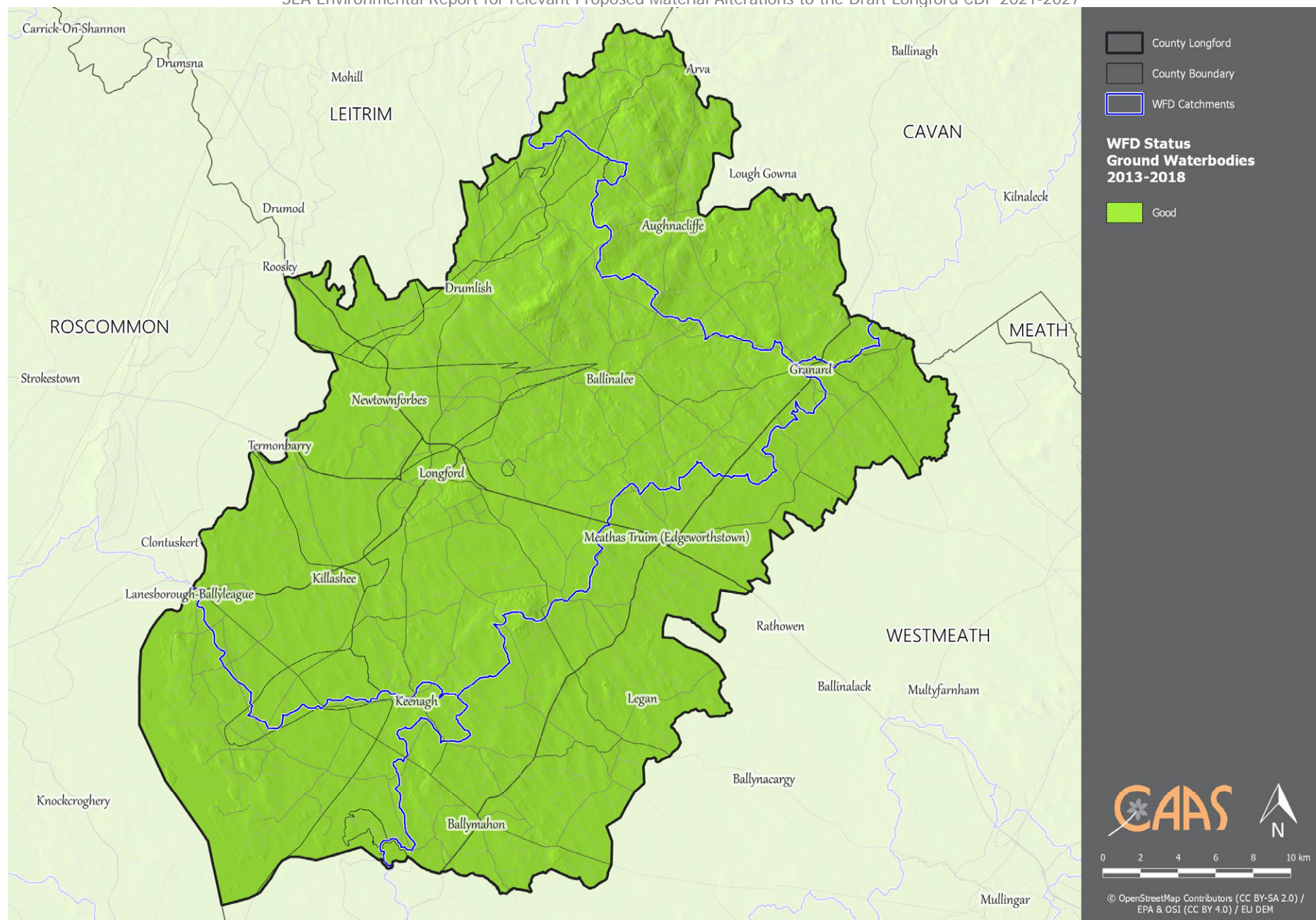
<sup>69</sup> Watercourse capacity is exceeded or the channel is blocked and excess water spills from the channel onto adjacent floodplains.



**Figure 4.10 WFD Surface Water Status (2013-2018)**

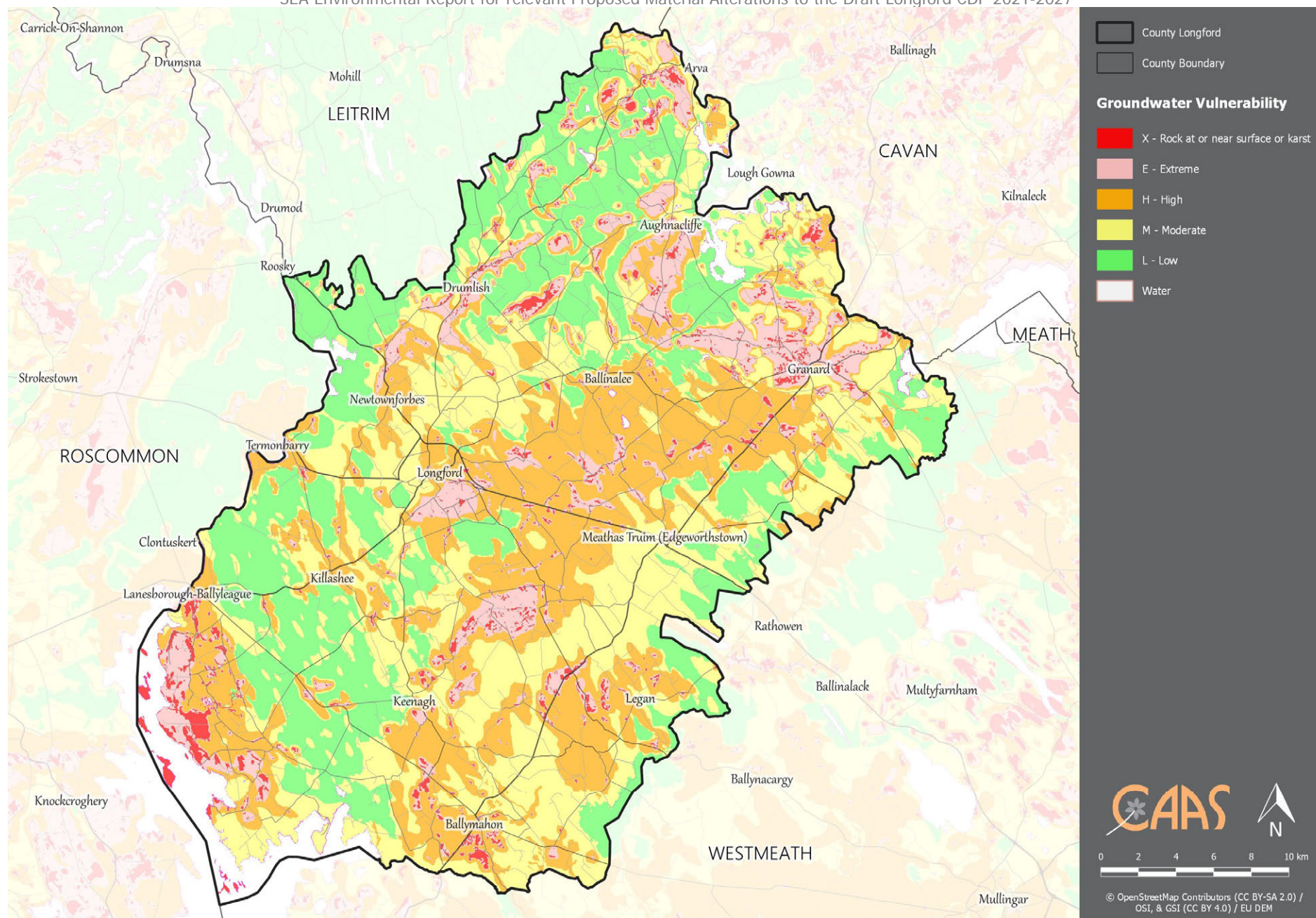
CAAS for Longford County Council





**Figure 4.11 WFD Groundwater Status (2013-2018)**

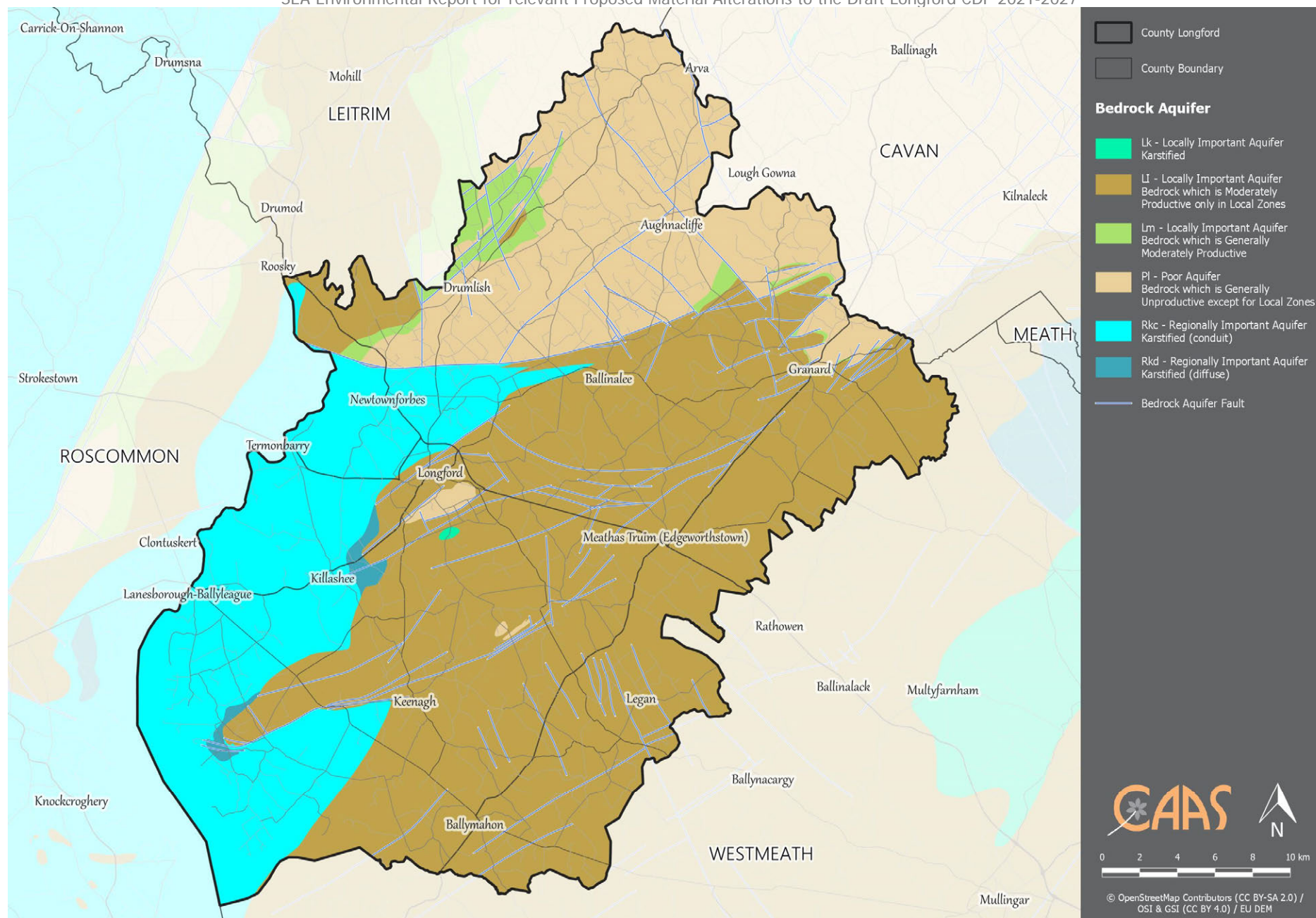




**Figure 4.12 Groundwater Vulnerability**

CAAS for Longford County Council





**Figure 4.13 Groundwater Productivity**

CAAS for Longford County Council

## 4.10 Air and Climatic Factors

### 4.10.1 Introduction

Total emissions of greenhouse gases by humans come from various sectors including transport, agriculture, energy industries, manufacturing combustion, industrial processes, residential developments, commercial services developments, waste management processes and fluorinated gases equipment (such as refrigeration and fire protection systems).

Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2017 (EPA, 2018) details provisional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions for the period 1990-2017. For 2017, total national greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to be 60.75 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq). This is 0.9% lower (0.53 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq) than emissions in 2016.

The EPA's 2019 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2018-2040* provides an assessment of Ireland's progress towards achieving its emission reduction targets set down under the EU Effort Sharing Decision (Decision No 406/2009/EC) for the years 2013-2020 and a longer-term assessment based on current projections. Ireland's 2020 target is to achieve a 20% reduction of non-Emission Trading Scheme (non-ETS) sector emissions (i.e. agriculture, transport, the built environment, waste and non-energy intensive industry) on 2005 levels with annual limits set for each year over the period 2013-2020.

The report on *Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2017* (EPA, 2019) identifies that:

- For 2017, the total national GHG emissions are estimated to be 60.74 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq), 0.9% lower than 2016.
- In the last 3 years, national total emissions have increased by 6.4%. In the same period, emissions in the ETS<sup>70</sup> sector have increased by 5.9%.

- Agriculture emissions increased by 2.9% in 2017 (driven by higher dairy cow numbers and increases in milk production).
- GHG emissions from the Transport sector decreased by 2.4% in 2017. This is the first year of decreased emissions after four successive years of increases in transport emissions.
- Agriculture and Transport accounted for 73.5% of total ESD emissions in 2017.
- Emissions in the Energy Industries sector show a decrease of 6.9% which is attributable to a 5.9% decrease in fossil fuel consumption and an increase of 21.1% and 1.6% in electricity generated from wind and hydro, respectively, in 2017. Renewables now account for 30.1% of electricity generated in 2017, an increase of 3.3% from 2016 figures. Ireland continued to be a net exporter of electricity in 2017. However, exported electricity saw a 4.7% reduction in 2017 to previous 2016 figures.
- Emissions from the Manufacturing Combustion<sup>71</sup> sector increased by 3.1% in 2017.
- The Industrial Processes sector emissions increased by 4.1%, mainly from increased cement production. Cement process emissions increased by 2.6% in 2017.
- GHG emissions from the Residential sector decreased by 5.0%. This can be attributed to a milder winter.
- Emissions from the Waste sector decreased by 2.5% in 2017.

The EPA 2019 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2018-2040* provides an assessment of Ireland's total projected greenhouse gas emissions out to 2040 which includes an assessment of progress towards achieving its emission reduction targets out to 2020 and 2030 set under the EU Effort Sharing Decision and Effort Sharing Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2018/842). Ireland's 2020 target is to achieve a 20% reduction of non-Emission Trading Scheme (non-ETS) sector emissions (i.e. agriculture, transport, the built environment, waste and non-energy intensive industry) on 2005 levels with annual limits set for each year over the period 2013-2020. Ireland's 2030 target under the Effort Sharing Regulation is a 30% reduction of emissions compared to 2005 levels by 2030. There will be binding annual limits over the 2021-2030 period to meet that target. Key Insights identified as part of the report's package of documents are that:

- There is a long-term projected decrease in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of inclusion of new climate mitigation policies and measures that formed part of the 2018-2027 National Development Plan, which was published in 2018.

<sup>70</sup> The EU emissions trading system (EU ETS) was launched in 2005 as the world's first international company-level 'cap-and-trade' system for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases cost-effectively. The cap makes sure that CO<sub>2</sub> becomes a product and, thus, CO<sub>2</sub> is valued at a price,

which is determined by the supply and demand at the (trading) market.

<sup>71</sup> Manufacturing Combustion; includes combustion of fuels in Industry and Construction, both in ETS and non-ETS



This is evident in the With Additional Measures scenario which assumes full implementation of the programmes, policies and measures included in the National Development Plan.

- Fossil fuels such as coal, peat and gas continue to be key contributors to emissions from the power generation sector. However, a significant reduction in emissions over the longer term is projected as a result of the expansion of renewables (e.g. wind), assumed to reach 41-54% by 2030, with a move away from coal and peat.
- A growth in emissions from the transport sector continues to be projected which is largely attributed to fuel consumption from diesel cars and diesel freight. A decrease in emissions over the longer term, most notably in the With Additional Measures scenario, is largely attributed to assumed accelerated deployment of 500,000 electric vehicles and the impact of greater biofuel uptake. Agriculture emissions are projected to continue to grow steadily over the period which is mainly a result of an increase in animal numbers particularly for the dairy herd.
- The implementation of additional energy efficiency measures included in the National Development Plan will see a significant reduction in emissions in the residential, commercial/public services and manufacturing sectors over the projected period.

#### 4.10.2 Climate Mitigation

The National Mitigation Plan (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2017), represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the level of decarbonisation required. It is a whole-of-Government Plan, reflecting in particular the central roles of the key Ministers responsible for the sectors covered by the Plan – Electricity Generation, the Built Environment, Transport and Agriculture, as well as drawing on the perspectives and responsibilities of a range of other Government Departments.

The National Adaptation Framework (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2018), sets out the national strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the country to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of positive impacts. The National Adaptation Framework outlines a whole of government and society approach to climate adaptation. Under the Framework, a number of Government Departments will be required to prepare sectoral adaptation plans in relation to a priority area that they are responsible for.

The National Climate Action Plan 2019 is an all of Government plan to tackle climate change and bring about a step change in Ireland's

climate ambition over the coming years. The plan sets out an ambitious course of action over the coming years to address the diverse and wide-ranging impacts climate disruption is having on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. The Climate Action Plan sets out clear 2030 targets for each sector with the ultimate objective of achieving a transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient, and environmentally sustainable society and economy by 2050.

The use of alternative fuels, including electricity, forms a significant part of government policy to reduce emissions, including from transport. Greater use of alternative fuels, including renewable energy, has the potential to further contribute towards energy security.

The 2019 emission projections do not consider the impact of new policies and measures that will be included in the forthcoming Government Climate Plan. It is anticipated that future emission projections will include the additional impact of the Government Climate Plan.

The Climate Change Advisory Council's Annual Review 2019 identifies that the most recent projections demonstrate that, under different assumptions, Ireland will not meet its emissions reduction targets, even with the additional policies and measures included in the National Development Plan. The projections also show that progress on reducing emissions is sensitive to the future path of fuel prices. A significant and sustained rate of emissions reduction of approximately -2.5% per year is required to meet our objectives for 2050. However, it must be noted that additional measures within the recent Climate Action Plan are not included in the analysis to date.

#### 4.10.3 Ambient Air Quality

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well-being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

The principles to this European approach are set out in the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) (which replaces the earlier Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 and the first, second and third *Daughter Directives*; the fourth *Daughter Directive* will be included in CAFE at a later stage).

In order to comply with the directives mentioned above, the EPA measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants. For the purposes of monitoring in Ireland, four zones are defined in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (SI No. 271 of 2002).

The EPA's (2019) *Air Quality in Ireland 2018* identifies that:

- Levels at monitoring sites in Ireland were below the EU legislative limit values in 2018;
- Ireland was above World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guideline value levels at a number of monitoring sites for fine particulate matter, ozone and nitrogen dioxide;
- Ireland was above the European Environment Agency reference level for PAH, a toxic chemical, at three monitoring sites.

Problem pollutants identified by the EPA include particulate matter from burning of solid fuel and nitrogen dioxide from transport emissions in urban areas. Indications that Ireland will exceed EU limit values for nitrogen dioxide in the near future.

With regards to solutions, the report identifies that:

- To tackle the problem of particulate matter, clean ways of heating homes and improve energy efficiency of homes can be progressed; and
- To reduce the impact of nitrogen dioxide, transport options in the Government's Climate Action Plan can be implemented and transport choices can be considered by individuals.

In order to apply with European Directives relating to air quality, the EPA manages the National Ambient Air Quality Network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants at locations across the country. The current<sup>72</sup> air quality within the Plan area (Rural East and Small Towns Air Quality Index Regions) is identified by the EPA as being *good*.

#### 4.10.4 Noise

Longford County Council has prepared a Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006. The purpose of the Noise Action Plan is to avoid, prevent and reduce, on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance due to the long-term exposure to environmental noise.

#### 4.10.5 Existing Problems

Legislative objectives governing air and climatic factors in County Longford were not identified as being conflicted with.

### 4.11 Material Assets

Other material assets, in addition to those detailed below, covered by the SEA include archaeological and architectural heritage (see Section 4.12) natural resources of economic value, such as water and air (see Sections 4.9 and 4.10).

#### 4.11.1 Public Assets and Infrastructure

Public assets and infrastructure that have the potential to be impacted upon by the Plan, if unmitigated, include; settlements; resources such as public open spaces, parks and recreational areas; public buildings and services; transport and utility infrastructure (electricity, gas, telecommunications, water supply, wastewater infrastructure etc.); forestry; and natural resources that are covered under other topics such as water and soil.

#### 4.11.2 Land

The Plan seeks to assist with the reuse and regeneration of brownfield sites thereby contributing towards sustainable mobility and reducing the need to develop greenfield lands and associated potential adverse environmental effects. Brownfield lands are generally located within urban/suburban areas.

<sup>72</sup> 18/08/2020 (<http://www.epa.ie/air/quality/>)

### 4.11.3 Agriculture

Much of the land throughout the County is used for agriculture, as indicated by the agricultural related land cover types shown on Figure 4.4 on page 23. Agriculture is a strong employer and a significant source of economic activity in the County. It contributes to exports and provides the raw materials for the food processing industry.

### 4.11.4 Forestry

Various extents and types of forestry exist across the County, as indicated on Figure 4.4. Much of the forested land is owned by Coillte. Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are also important as links in the county's green infrastructure network.

### 4.11.5 Peatlands

There are significant peatland areas throughout the County, as indicated on Figure 4.4. These provide a valuable natural and archaeological resource. Peatlands are also important controllers of water levels in river catchments, providing a source of water in dry conditions and soaking up excess water during wetter periods; they actively capture and hold carbon and are an important natural resource in combatting climate change. Cutaway bogs have the potential to facilitate landuses such as employment, renewable energy generation, waste management, industrial, and tourism and recreation.

### 4.11.6 Renewable Energy Potential

Under EU Directive 2001/77/EC Renewable Energy, renewable energy sources are defined as renewable non-fossil energy sources such as, but not limited to wind, solar, geothermal, wave, tidal, hydropower, biomass, landfill gas, sewage treatment plant gas, bio-gases and bio-char (i.e. the thermal treatment of natural organic materials in an oxygen-limited environment). There is potential for renewable energy development in the County and the Plan seeks to facilitate such development in a sustainable manner.

### 4.11.7 Minerals and Aggregates

Minerals such as iron and copper and aggregates such as sand and gravel can occur throughout the country. Minerals and aggregates are essential to manufacturing and construction.

Minerals localities within Longford are shown on Figure 4.14. The GSI have a suite of data sources available that would be useful in planning and assessing individual projects with regard to the environmental topic(s) of soil and/or material assets. These include:

- Aggregate Potential Mapping;
- Bedrock mapping;
- Quaternary and Physiographic mapping; and
- National Aquifer and Recharge mapping.

### 4.11.8 Transport

Transport infrastructure in the County has the potential to support reductions in energy demand from the transport sector, including through electrification of modes.

Due to its strategic location in the middle of the country, Longford and its main urban centres are particularly well served by a hierarchy of roads including sections of motorways, national roads, regional roads and local roads. Two national primary routes traverse the County from east to west, the N4 from Dublin to Sligo and N5 from Longford to Castlebar. Longford Town is strategically positioned where the two national roads divide. The national secondary route, N63 leaves Longford Town for Roscommon and the N55 from Cavan to Athlone takes a north-south route through the east of the County, passing through Granard, Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon. Nine regional routes connect these, serviced by a network of county roads.

Longford is seen as a Gateway to the Northern and Western Region, making it fundamental in providing connections with other urban centres in these regions. Both regional and local roads provide vital links between the towns and villages to retail, service and employment centres throughout the County and to adjoining counties.

Longford is centrally located along the Dublin-Sligo rail line which traverses the County from east to west, generally following the line of the

N4 and serves Longford and Edgeworthstown stations. Irish Rail and Bus Éireann operate on number of routes several times daily.

## 4.11.9 Water Services

### 4.11.9.1 Wastewater

The EPA's 2019 report *'Urban Wastewater Treatment in 2018'* identified that:

- Wastewater treatment at 21 large urban areas did not meet European standards;
- Raw sewage is released into the environment from 36 urban areas;
- Wastewater from 57 areas is the sole threat to waters at risk of pollution;
- Wastewater contributed to poor quality bathing waters at three beaches in 2018;
- Discharges from 13 areas must improve to protect freshwater pearl mussels;
- Disinfection systems must be installed at two villages to safeguard shellfish; and
- Eight wastewater collection systems have been found non-compliant with European Union requirements.

Based on the EPA's assessment of monitoring information provided by Irish Water and the enforcement activities carried out by the EPA, this report identifies urban areas with the most important environmental issues with respect to wastewater infrastructure that must be addressed.

From January 2014, Irish Water became responsible for all public water services, involving the supply of drinking water and the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater. Irish Water is also responsible for the treatment and disposal of the sludge that is generated from both its water and wastewater treatment plants. The Council is an agent of Irish Water for operations and remains the designated Water Authority for the assessment and approval of on-site wastewater treatment systems and is responsible for surface water drainage in the County.

The provision of well-maintained quality wastewater treatment infrastructure is essential to facilitate sustainable development of the County in line with the Settlement and Core Strategy while also protecting the environment and public health. Irish Water is now

responsible for the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater where public wastewater facilities exist in towns and villages. In unserved areas and outside the main towns and villages, the main method of sewage disposal is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary wastewater treatment systems.

Irish Water, working in partnership with Longford County Council, is making investments to undertake essential upgrade works to wastewater treatment plants in towns and villages across the County. The upgrading of infrastructure will contribute towards compliance with the Water Framework Directive, EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and Drinking Water Regulations and will help to protect human health and maintain the quality of surface and ground waters.

There are currently 20 wastewater treatment plants in Longford, the majority in the ownership and maintenance of Irish Water. However, Longford County Council operates and maintains five wastewater treatment plants on behalf of the Irish Water, with the foul sewer network collecting effluent from approximately 11,400 homes. Monitoring of the treated effluent from the plants is carried out as required in accordance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and conditions of the Discharge Licences and Certificates of Authorisation issued by the Environmental Protection Agency.

In unserved areas and outside the main settlements, the main method of sewage disposal is by individual septic tanks and proprietary wastewater treatment systems. The control of development in areas of high groundwater vulnerability is a priority for the Council.

Irish Water has provided the Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register (see Table 4.3) to assist the Council in the preparation of the new County Development Plan by indicating where there may be wastewater treatment capacity available to accommodate growth ("headroom") in terms of population equivalent<sup>73</sup> (PE) in each settlement serviced by a public wastewater treatment plant. Spare

<sup>73</sup> As identified in Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan, wastewater treatment plants are described in terms of their designed treatment capacity, which is generally expressed as population equivalent (PE). This is a measurement of total organic biodegradable load, including industrial, institutional, commercial and domestic organic

load, on a wastewater treatment plant, converted to the equivalent number of PEs. One person is considered to generate 60g of five-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) per day. 1 PE is defined as being equivalent to 60g of BOD per day.

treatment capacity is available now or is expected to be delivered by 2024 in most of these settlements, except for Abbeylara and Culfad-Woodlands Park. The highest levels of headroom (PE) is available at Longford (3,804 PE); Granard (1,411 PE); and Newtownforbes (811 PE). Spare capacity will be also available in Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon upon completion of projects post 2024.

The Council, in conjunction with Irish Water, has identified specific capacity constraints associated with the Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon wastewater treatment plants. While both of these settlements feature prominently in the settlement hierarchy for the County, consideration of further development in these settlements will be contingent on the upgrading of these treatment plants, or the submission of appropriate engineering solutions for individual developments which suitably address wastewater treatment and disposal to the satisfaction of the Council and Irish Water. Irish Water has committed to the upgrade of these treatment plants within the lifetime of the Plan.<sup>74</sup>

Currently, there are no Longford plants servicing urban areas that are listed as priority areas where improvements are required to resolve urgent environmental issues with respect to wastewater treatment (EPA, 2019).

Table 4.2 provides information on wastewater treatment plant performance sourced from the EPA's 2018 Annual Environmental Reports (2019) for Longford Town.

**Table 4.2 Wastewater Treatment Plant Performance**

<b>Plant name and Reference</b>	Longford WWTP D0060-01
<b>Treatment Provided</b>	Preliminary (Screening), Secondary (aeration), Nutrient Removal (time shut down anoxic, alum sludge phosphate removal)
<b>Overall Compliance (Pass/Fail)</b>	Pass (all parameters compliant)
<b>Cause of Exceedances and Significance of Results (Water Quality)</b>	The WWTP is compliant with the ELV's set in the Wastewater Discharge Licence.
<b>Organic Capacities (PE)</b>	As Constructed: 20000 Collected Load (peak week): 17623 Remaining: 2377

Irish Water is responsible for the treatment and disposal of the sludge that is generated from both its water and wastewater treatment plants. Irish Water has prepared a National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan 2016-2021 that outlines Irish Water's strategy to ensure a nationwide standardised approach for managing wastewater sludge over a 25-year period. A separate plan will be prepared in relation to sludge produced at drinking water plants.

#### 4.11.9.2 Water Supply

Irish Water is responsible for providing and maintaining adequate public water supply infrastructure throughout the County. Public drinking water in County Longford is supplied through six public water supply schemes (Longford Central; Granard; Gowna; Ballymahon; Lanesborough and Newtowncashel). These are predominately surface water abstraction supplies with the exception of Lanesborough and Newtowncashel which are groundwater sourced supplies. The 2016 census indicates that 11,419 private households (75.7%) in the County are served by public water mains. The remaining households are served by either Group Water Schemes or private wells, which do not fall within the remit of Irish Water. Private bored wells used as a source of water supply to single dwellings are the responsibility of the householder. Such wells are not regulated under the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014 and Irish Water has no regulatory function in this regard. The Council is responsible for providing guidance and advice in relation to the protection of water quality and in this regard the Council administers and manages well grants on behalf of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG).<sup>75</sup>

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports that are supported by Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies that are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above.

<sup>74</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

<sup>75</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

The Gowna Water Supply is listed on the most recent EPA RAL (Q2 of 2020) due to elevated levels of THMs above the standard in the Drinking Water Regulations. This Water Supply Scheme has a supply volume of 1,940 m<sup>3</sup>/day, serving a population of 4,359 people. The proposed plan of action to remedy this issue is to improve operations at the water treatment plant to include optimisation of coagulant dosing by March 2021.

The Granard Water Supply is listed on the most recent RAL due to elevated levels of THMs above the standard in the Drinking Water Regulations. This Water Supply Scheme has a supply volume of 1,397 m<sup>3</sup>/day, serving a population of 2,598. The proposed plan of action to remedy this issue is "Improve operations at the water treatment plant to include optimisation of coagulant dosing by March 2021".

The Longford Central Water Supply is listed on the most recent RAL due to elevated levels of pesticides above the standard in the Drinking Water Regulations. This Water Supply Scheme has a supply volume of 6,970 m<sup>3</sup>/day, serving a population of 16,729. The complete catchment-focussed engagement actions involving Irish Water and the relevant stakeholders (as set out in Irish Water's response to EPA Direction) were recommended to achieve compliance with the limits for pesticides. The EPA Direction required compliance by December 2019 and the monitoring is currently under way to verify effectiveness of this action programme.

Currently, Irish Water is developing the National Water Resource Plan outlining how to move to a sustainable, secure and reliable public drinking water supply over a 25-year period while safeguarding the environment. It will outline how Irish Water intends to maintain a balance between supply from water sources around the country and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term. This will facilitate future planning and ensure provision of sufficient, safe, clean drinking water to facilitate the social and economic growth of the County.

It is the policy of the Council to work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water infrastructure, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new wastewater services infrastructure to facilitate future growth.

#### 4.11.9.3 Surface Water Drainage

Sustainable urban Drainage systems (SuDS) can minimise the quantity and increase the quality of surface water runoff as well as mitigating adverse impacts of climate change. SuDS can also provide amenity and biodiversity benefits. The Council seeks to ensure the sustainable management of surface water discharges in urban areas through the use of SuDS.

### 4.11.10 Waste Management

The Eastern-Midlands Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 provides the framework for solid waste management in the region and sets out a range of policies and actions to meet specified mandatory and performance-based targets.

The Eastern and Midland Waste Region comprises 12 local authority areas of Dublin City, Fingal, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Kildare, Laois, Longford, Louth, Offaly, Meath, Wicklow, Westmeath and South Dublin.

The Eastern-Midlands Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 provides the framework for solid waste management in the region and sets out a range of policies and actions to meet specified mandatory and performance-based targets. It is underpinned by National and European waste legislation and the work carried out will ensure the continued management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner. The plan includes eight Strategic Objectives and three overarching targets:

- 1% reduction per annum in the quality of household waste generated per capita;
- Reduce to 0% the direct disposal of unprocessed municipal waste to landfill (from 2016 onwards) in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery practices; and
- Recycling rate of 50% of managed municipal waste by 2020.

The Eastern-Midlands Waste Management Plan states that the future role of local authorities in waste management will be focused on education, prevention, and resource efficiency activities as well as regulating householders, businesses and waste operators and enforcing waste legislation. Waste infrastructure provided by local authorities will mainly include bring banks and civic amenities.

#### **4.11.11 Existing Problems**

There are a number of challenges with respect to the provision of water services infrastructure that are described under Section 4.11 above.

The Water Services Section of Longford County Council will co-operate with Irish Water in providing and maintaining adequate public water supply and wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure throughout the county for the period of the plan and beyond. In conjunction with Irish Water, the Water Services Section of Longford County Council will endeavour to ensure the continued investment in and delivery of improvements to water infrastructure over the Plan period through the implementation of the Capital Investment Plan. 2020-2024.

The provisions of the new County Development Plan will contribute towards protection of the environment with regard to impacts arising from material assets.



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**Table 4.3 Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity, Loads and Headroom (Irish Water 29/04/2020)**

Region	County	Settlement	Census pop. (2016)	Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)	Reg #	Serves other areas?	WWTP Capacity (PE)		Load (PE) 2019	Headroom (PE)		Current project completion year
							Today	Upon works completion		WWDL ELV Capability	UWW Standards Capability (not WWDL ELVs)	
EM	Longford	Longford	10,008	Longford WWTP	D0060	No	20,000	=	16,196	3,804		
EM	Longford	Edgeworthstown	2,072	Edgeworthstown WWTP	D0098	No	2,700	Not yet defined	2,499	0	201	Post 2024
EM	Longford	Ballymahon	1,877	Ballymahon WWTP	D0096	No	3,300	Not yet defined	2,657	0	643	Post 2024
EM	Longford	Drumlish	931	Drumlish WWTP	D0489	No	1,200	=	1,018	182		
EM	Longford	Granard	816	Granard WWTP	D0187	No	3,200	=	1,789	1,411		
EM	Longford	Newtownforbes	778	Newtownforbes WWTP	D0317	No	1,800	=	989	811		
<b>CoA Headroom (PE)</b>												
EM	Longford	Abbeylara	Unavailable	Abbeycourt (Abbeylara) WWTP	A0539	No	-	=	13			
EM	Longford	Abbeyshrule	Unavailable	Abbeyshrule WWTP	A0101	No	300	=	86	214		
EM	Longford	Ardagh	266	Ardagh (LD) WWTP		No	500	=	20	480		
EM	Longford	Aughnaclyffe	177	Aughnaclyffe WWTP	A0566	No	300	=	40	260		
EM	Longford	Ballinalee	347	Ballinalee WWTP	A0563	No	600	=	100	500		
EM	Longford	Ballinamuck	Unavailable	Ballinamuck WWTP	A0543	No	500	=	65	435		
EM	Longford	Clondra	Unavailable	Clondra WWTP	A0535	No	200	=	158	42		
EM	Longford	Colehill	Unavailable	Colehill WWTP	A0541	No	80	=	63	17		
EM	Longford	Culyfad - Woodlands Park	Unavailable	Culyfad - Woodlands Park WWTP	A0565	No	-	=	60			
EM	Longford	Erybegs - Crannlur	Unavailable	Erybegs - Crannlur WWTP	A0564	No	125	=	50	75		
EM	Longford	Kenagh	Unavailable	Kenagh WWTP	A0528	No	1,000	=	702	298		
EM	Longford	Killashee	215	Killashee WWTP	A0540	No	200	=	57	143		
EM	Longford	Legan	215	Legan WWTP	A0534	No	1,000	=	195	805		

Notes: 76,77,78,79,80,81,82

<sup>76</sup> Wastewater Discharge Licences (WWDL) and Certificates of Authorisation (CoA)<sup>77</sup> WWTP Capacity (PE) Today = Overall design capacity of the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in population equivalents (PE) today (the date at the top of this table).<sup>78</sup> WWTP Capacity (PE) Upon works completion = Overall design capacity of the WWTP in population equivalents (PE) upon completion of a relevant project delivering additional capacity. Note that 'WWDL' or 'UWW' following the capacity value indicates that the upgraded WWTP will have capability to achieve the full Wastewater Discharge Licence (WWDL) emission limit values (ELVs) in the former case, or at least the Urban Wastewater (UWW) Treatment Directive parametric values in the latter case.<sup>79</sup> Load (PE) 2019 = Wastewater load arising from the settlement(s) being served entering the WWTP in 2019.<sup>80</sup> Headroom (PE) = Headroom available at the WWTP in 2019 in terms of population equivalents based on available capacity now or by completion of a project by 2022 (where relevant). Green = spare capacity available. Amber = potential spare capacity. WWTP currently not compliant with Wastewater Discharge Licence emission limit values but is capable of achieving at least UWW standards. Potential availability of capacity in this case would be dependent on any additional load not resulting in a significant breach of the combined approach as set out in Regulation 43 of the Wastewater Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007. Red = no spare capacity available<sup>81</sup> Current project completion year = This is the current forecasted completion year as of date of this table and is subject to change. 'Post 2024' indicates that the project is proposed to be completed within the next investment period (2025-2029), subject to the planning and approval of the next capital investment plan. Note, there is no guarantee that this capacity will be delivered if the current Investment Plan is amended due to emerging needs or changes due to exchequer funding.<sup>82</sup> General notes (i) The headroom figure stated is based on available information on the date of issue of this table and is subject to change. (ii) The indication of spare treatment capacity has been determined based on a standardised national review of the available information. (iii) A Pre-Connection Enquiry should be submitted to Irish Water to determine the feasibility of connecting any particular site to the Irish Water network, feasibility should not be inferred from this register

## 4.12 Cultural Heritage

### 4.12.1 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological sites and monuments vary greatly in form and date; examples include earthworks of different types and periods, (e.g. early historic ringforts and prehistoric burial mounds), megalithic tombs from the Prehistoric period, medieval buildings, urban archaeological deposits and underwater features.

Archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004), Natural Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning Acts.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory, put on a statutory basis by amendment to the National Monuments Act 1994, of sites and areas of archaeological significance, numbered and mapped. It is available from the National Monuments Service and at [archaeology.ie](http://archaeology.ie).

The term 'monument' includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. All monuments in existence before 1700 A.D. are automatically considered to be historic monuments within the meaning of the Acts. Monuments of architectural and historical interest also come within the scope of the Acts. Monuments include: any artificial or partly artificial building, structure or erection or group of such buildings, structures or erections; any cave, stone or other natural product, whether or not forming part of the ground, that has been artificially carved, sculptured or worked upon or which (where it does not form part of the place where it is) appears to have been purposely put or arranged in position; any, or any part of any, prehistoric or ancient tomb, grave or burial deposit, or, ritual, industrial or habitation site; and any place comprising the remains or traces

of any such building, structure or erection, any such cave, stone or natural product or any such tomb, grave, burial deposit or ritual, industrial or habitation site, situated on land or in the territorial waters of the State', but excludes 'any building or part of any building, that is habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes' (National Monuments Acts 1930-2004).

A recorded monument is a monument included in the list and marked on the map, which comprises the RMP set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Notification within which requirements for notifications of proposed works apply.

Figure 4.15 shows the spatial distribution of recorded monuments and Zones of Notification in the County. Clusters of monuments in County Longford are located within the County's settlements, including 57 Monuments of Archaeological, Historical and Cultural Interest. These monuments include many examples of: standing stones; druids circles; altars; ringforts; churches abbeys; and castles.

There are six Monuments in State Care (five in State Ownership and one in State Guardianship)<sup>83</sup> in County Longford, including:

- Aghaward Ringfort;
- Corlea Timber Trackway;
- Inchcleraun Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Site;
- Larkfield Ringfort;
- Granard Motte and Bailey; and
- Sonnagh Ringfort.

Further to this there are ten National Monuments Protected under Preservation Order in County Longford, including:

- Dolmen and associated standing stones in Aughnacliffe;
- Three Ringforts in Feraghfad;
- Ringfort in Bawn, Killoe;
- Ringfort in Dring;
- Deserted town site in Granardkill;
- Stone circle in Cloughchurnel;
- Monastic enclosure in Aghafad; and
- Monastic cashel in Inchcleraun.

County Longford has a significant archaeological heritage with many archaeological sites as documented by the

<sup>83</sup> This list of National Monuments in State care includes those which are in the ownership and guardianship of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

National Monuments Service. These sites include industrial heritage (such as mills, bridges the canal and railways) and remains of ecclesiastical heritage (such as churches and abbey ruins, graveyards, pilgrim paths and holy wells).

Within the County there are two specific archaeological sites of specific importance: Corlea Bog Trackway, an Iron Age bog road, which was built in the year 148 BC across the surrounding bogland. The oak road is one of the largest of its kind to have been uncovered in Europe. Another one, located in Granard Granard is a Norman Motte, Ireland's highest Norman motte dated 1199.

Other notable monuments in the County include: the portal tomb at Aughnacliffe; an Iron Age timber roadway (toghers) at the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre; and the linear earthworks that make up the Black Pigs Dyke in north Longford. Several key events in Irish history also took place in the County, including the Battle of Ballinamuck, the last great battle of the 1798 Rebellion.

Lough Ree and associated islands host a variety of cultural heritage features, one of the most notable being Inchcleraun Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Site, believed to be the site where Queen Maeve died and it is now a Monument in State Care.

The Underwater Archaeology Unit was established within the National Monuments Service to manage and protect Ireland's underwater cultural heritage, including the quantification of the underwater resource and assessing development impacts in order to manage and protect this aspect of Ireland's heritage. The Shipwreck Inventory is principally a desktop survey with information gathered from a broad range of cartographic, archaeological and historical sources, both documentary and pictorial. Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1987 and 1994. Significant wrecks less than 100 years old can be designated by Underwater Heritage Order on account of their historical, archaeological or

artistic importance. Such Orders can also be used to designate areas of seabed or land covered by water to more clearly define and protect wreck sites and archaeological objects. Under the legislation all diving on known protected wreck sites or with the intention of searching for underwater cultural heritage is subject to licensing requirements.

Rivers, canals and lakes within the County may contain many features and finds associated with riverine heritage such as shipwrecks, piers, quay walls, fords, stepping stones and associated archaeological objects and features.

## 4.12.2 Architectural Heritage

The term architectural heritage is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments Act 1999 as meaning all: structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings; groups of structures and buildings; and, sites which are of technical, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.

Records of Protected Structures are legislated for under Section 12 and Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. Protected structures are defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended as structures, or parts of structures that are of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view.

In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the following are encompassed:

- The interior of the structure;
- The land lying within the curtilage<sup>84</sup> of the structure;
- Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- All fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of

<sup>84</sup> Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property boundary, it can originally have included lands, features or

even buildings now in separate ownership, e.g. the lodge of a former country house, or the garden features located in land subsequently sold off. Such lands are described as being attendant grounds, and the protection extends to them just as if they were still within the curtilage of the Protected Structure.

architectural heritage are indicated within the County's settlements as shown on Figure 4.16. There are currently 536 entries to the Record of Protected Structures within the County<sup>85</sup>, including houses, farmyards, walled gardens, demesne, castles, gates railings and cornmills. Notable buildings in the County include: Longford Courthouse; Castle Forbes, Featherstone Memorial; and Edgeworthstown Railway Station. Lanesborough is a fine example of vernacular architecture and is of considerable architectural merit. Further to these St. Mel's Cathedral, an architectural award-winning structure, is located within the Longford Town.

In addition to Protected Structures, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in a development plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA that might alter the character of the structure or the ACA. There are two ACAs designated within County Longford, one in the settlement of Ardagh and one in Longford Town (Battery Road), as shown on Figure 4.16.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a State initiative under the administration of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the local authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures. The NIAH includes historic gardens and designed landscapes. The NIAH 2003 Survey of Historic Gardens and

Designed Landscapes identified 96 Important Historic Gardens in the County. Figure 4.16 shows entries to NIAH in County Longford.

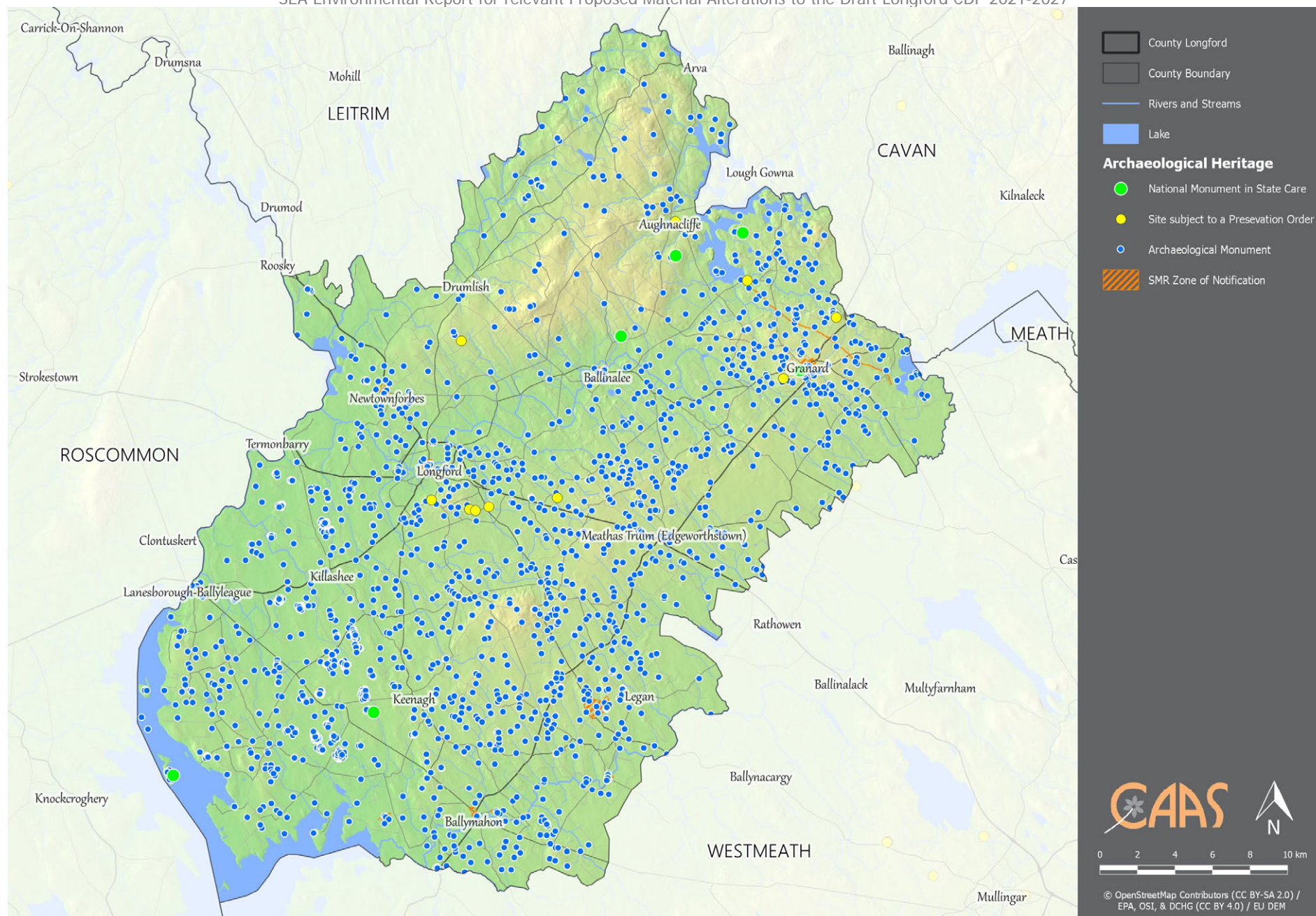
### 4.12.3 Existing Problems

The context of archaeological and architectural heritage has changed over time within County Longford, however no existing conflicts with legislative objectives governing archaeological and architectural heritage have been identified.

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<sup>85</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

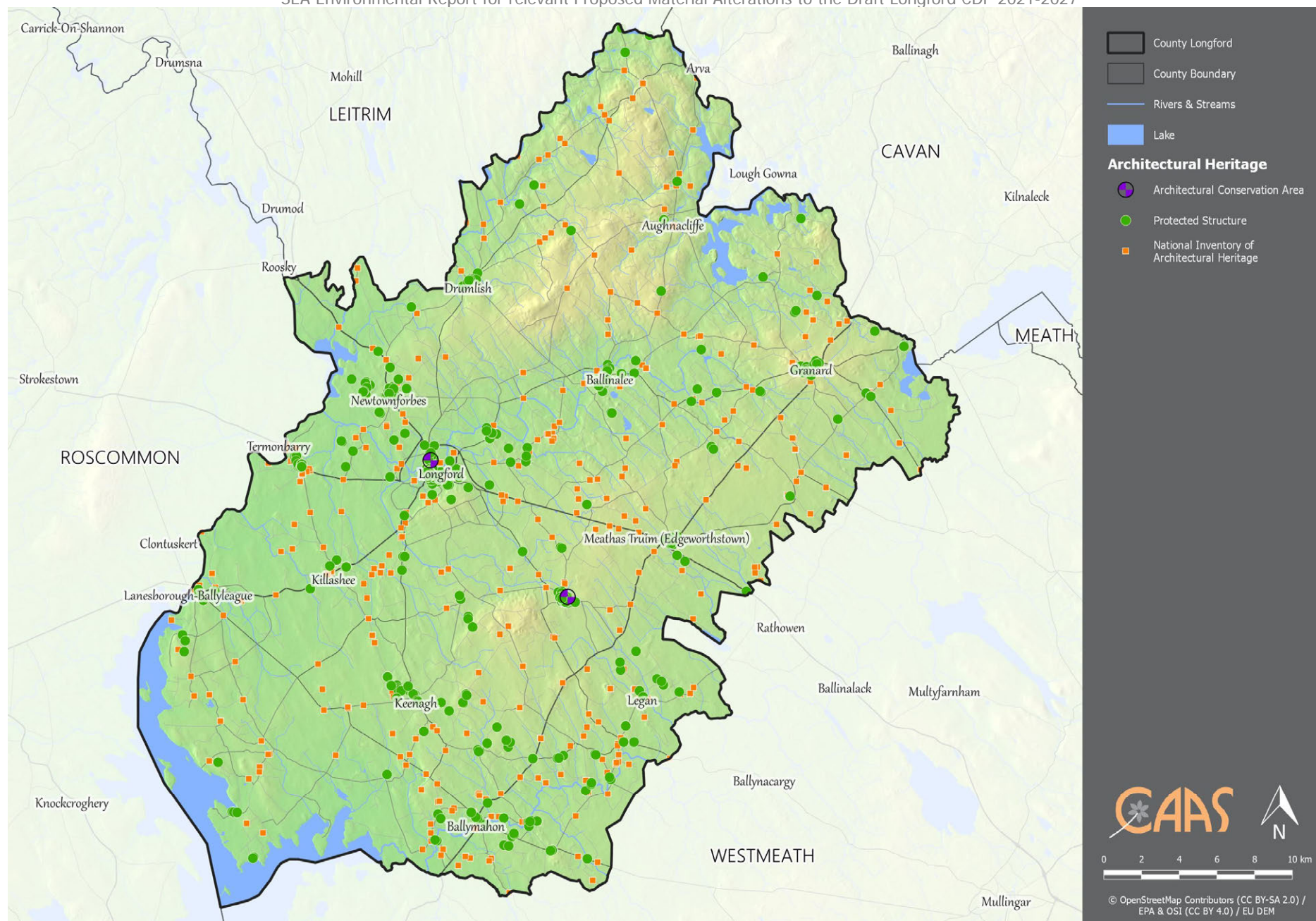




**Figure 4.15 Archaeological Heritage**

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**Figure 4.16 Architectural Heritage**

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## 4.13 Landscape

### 4.13.1 Introduction

Article 1 (a) of the European Landscape Convention provides a definition of landscape as follows; "Landscape means an area, as perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural/or human factors". The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of its protection are recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty.

Longford has a diverse landscape, including low-lying lands situated in the basin of the River Shannon and the upper catchment area of the River Erne, lakelands, boglands, pasturelands and wetlands in various locations across the County.

Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park in County Longford is a project proposed to combine existing natural amenity areas. These important natural heritage amenity areas include Lough Ree, the Rivers Shannon, Inny and Camlin, the Royal Canal, Newcastle Wood and other forests and the future rehabilitated Bord na Móna bogs. All of these amenity areas are in close proximity to each other and they have the potential to create an interlinked and unique natural heritage amenity area for the County.<sup>86</sup>

### 4.13.2 Landscape Character Units and Landscape Sensitivity

The European Landscape Convention was ratified in Ireland in 2002, this required EU Member States to adopt national measures to promote landscape, planning, protection and management.

The purpose of landscape character assessment is to provide the foundation for policy formulation and decision making for landscape management. The County Longford

Landscape Character Assessment has identified the following seven Landscape Character Units, each with different level of landscape sensitivity:

- **Unit 1: Northern Drumlin Lakeland** (landscape sensitivity from low to medium with some high sensitivity in the vicinity of the lakes and designated scenic routes);
- **Unit 2: Northern Upland** (landscape sensitivity from medium to high);
- **Unit 3: Shannon Basin/Lough Ree** (landscape sensitivity from medium along the south-eastern border of the unit to high along the shores of the lake, islands, the riverbanks, and in the vicinity of the Aquifer);
- **Unit 4: Central Corridor** (landscape sensitivity generally low, with potential areas of medium to high in the vicinity of protected woodlands, riverbanks and in the vicinity of the aquifer);
- **Unit 5: Inny Basin** (landscape sensitivity generally low, with potential areas of medium to high in the vicinity of protected woodlands and riverbanks);
- **Unit 6: Peatlands** (visual landscape sensitivity generally low, with high in the vicinity of the Royal Canal; environmental sensitivity from medium to high); and
- **Unit 7: Open Agricultural** (visual landscape sensitivity generally from low to medium, with high sensitivity in the vicinity of the Royal Canal, the River Inny, in upland areas with designated scenic views and in proximity to the heritage village of Ardagh).

County Longford's Landscape Character Types are shown on Figure 4.17.

The high sensitivity areas are the most sensitive to development and therefore developments which are likely to create a significant environmental and particularly visual impact will best be absorbed in areas where the landscape is most robust, i.e. has the capacity to absorb development without significantly changing its character.

### 4.13.3 Broad Zones

The 'Broad Zone' areas in County Longford (as shown on Figure 4.18) are a further spatial planning policy consideration for rural housing. 'Broad Zone' areas are designated areas of high amenity value and recreational potential associated with the major rivers and lakes in the county, the Royal Canal and areas of outstanding landscape quality in the northern fringes of the County. The Council aims to protect against residential developments that

<sup>86</sup> Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

are urban-generated or speculative in 'Broad Zone' areas.

#### **4.13.4 Important Stands of Trees**

Important Stands of Trees (shown on Figure 4.18) are protected from inappropriate development and undamaged tree felling to ensure their sustainability. There are currently 11 Important Stands of Trees in County Longford, including:

- Avenue at Smithfield, Legan;
- Woods at Carriglass Demense, Castleforbes Demense and Cashel;
- Portanure Pine Woods;
- Derrycassan Woods;
- Culnagore Wood;
- Rathcline Wood;
- Trees along Regional Road R393 at Knockahaw;
- Woodland at Erne Head, Woodville and Golaroe;
- Lime Trees at Mosstown, Keenagh;
- Trees at Rathsallagh; and
- Woodland at Farragh, Killoe.

#### **4.13.5 Protected Views, Prospects and Scenic Routes**

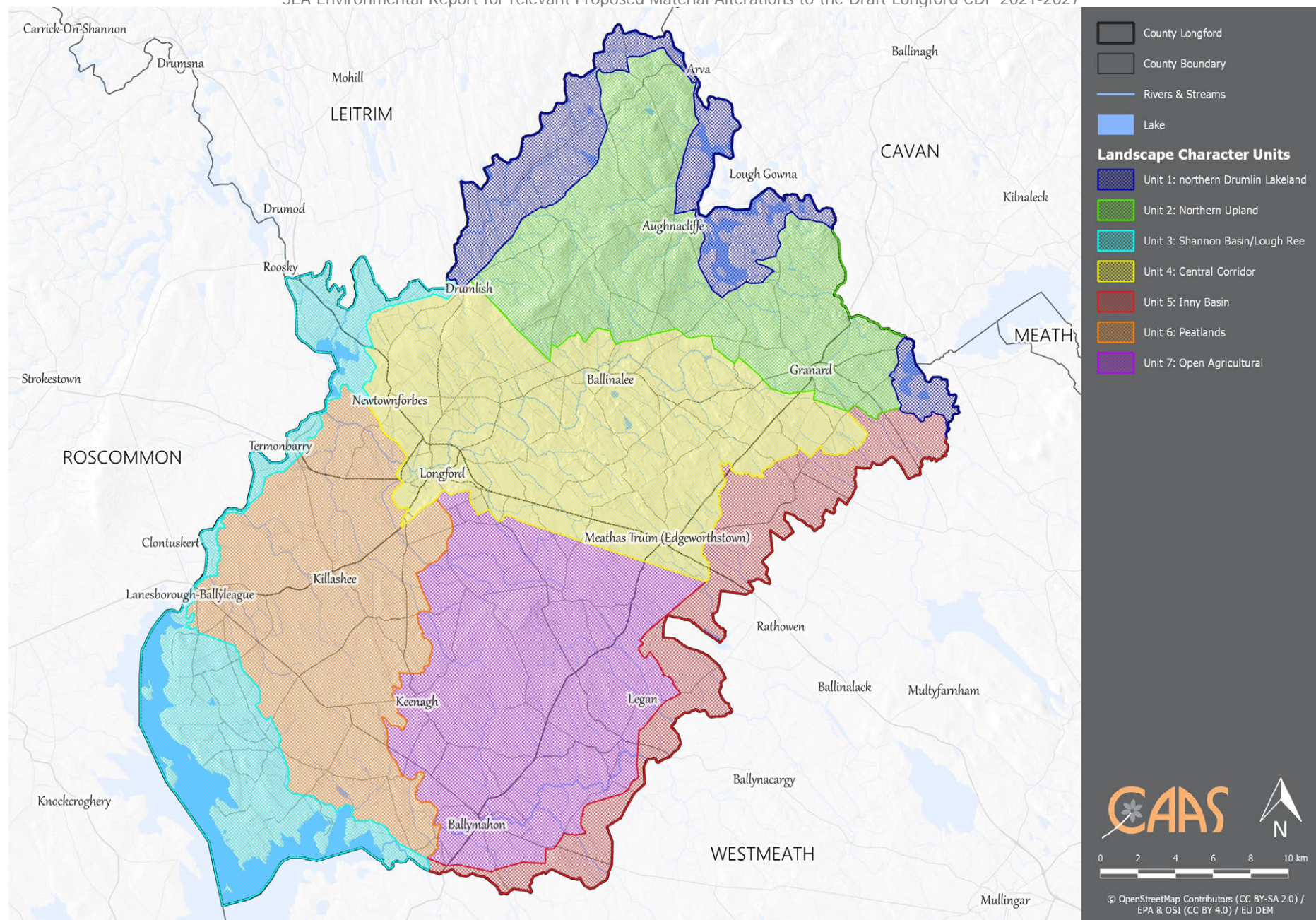
The landscape of County Longford has many vantage points which offer attractive views from hilltops and upland areas, along river valleys and the boglands. There are two distinct types of Views, Prospects and associated Scenic Routes identified in the County: 'Full' (uninterrupted) and 'Intermittent' (broken or sporadic), as shown Figure 4.18. Views are divided into full and intermittent in order to differentiate areas where scenic views may be partial or absent along a particular route.

There are currently 22 Full Protected Views, Prospects and associated Scenic Routes and 18 Intermittent Scenic Views, Prospects and associated Scenic Routes identified in County Longford.

#### **4.13.6 Existing Environmental Problems**

New developments have resulted in changes to the visual appearance of lands within the County however legislative objectives governing landscape and visual appearance were not identified as being conflicted with.

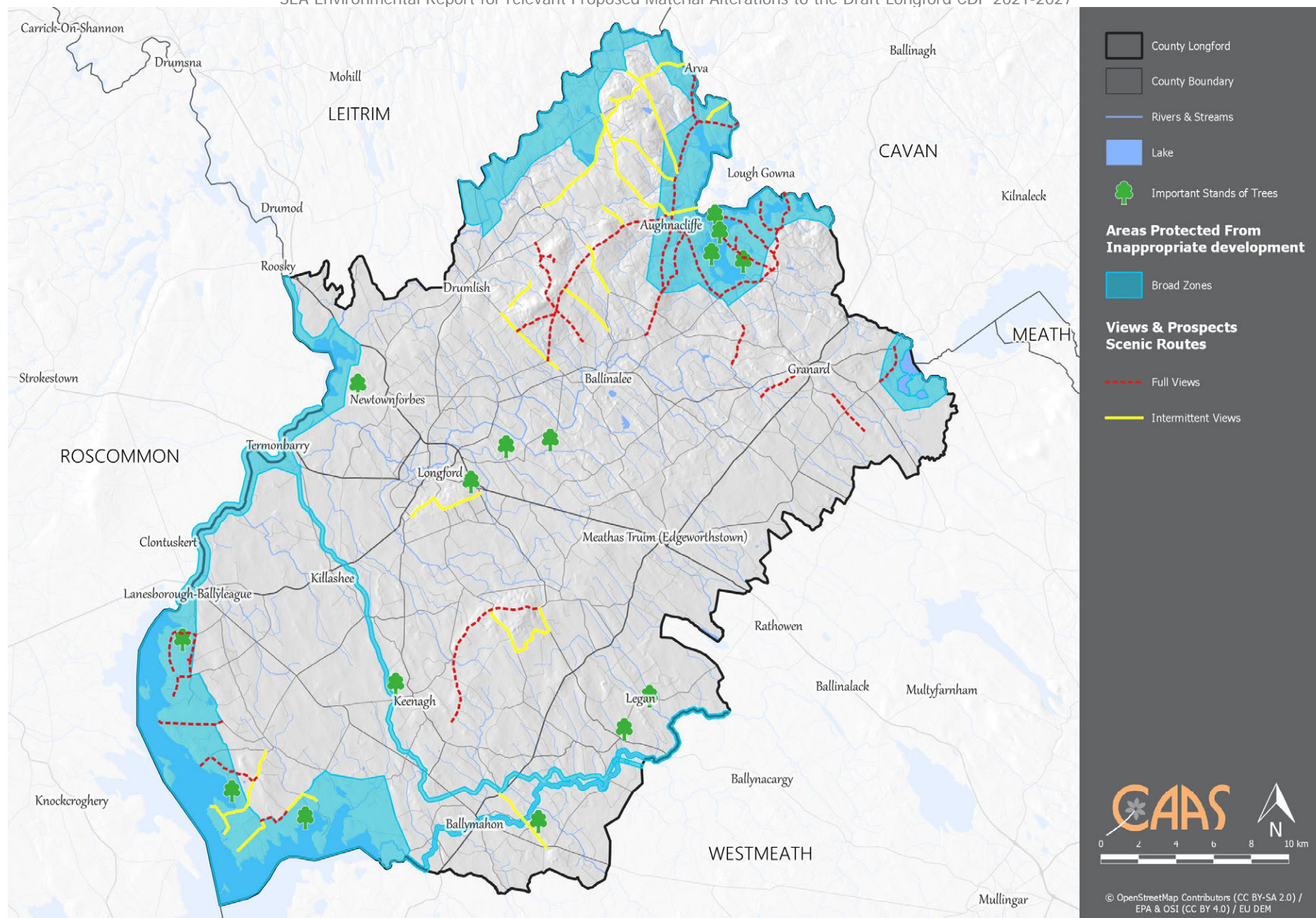




**Figure 4.17 Landscape Character Units**

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**Figure 4.18 Longford County Council Landscape Designations**

CAAS for Longford County Council



## 4.14 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivity Mapping

In order to identify where most sensitivities within the County occur, a number of the environmental sensitivities described above were weighted and mapped overlapping each other.

Figure 4.19 provides an Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities in the County. Environmental sensitivities are indicated by colours which range from higher to lower sensitivity. The map was prepared using Geographical Information System (GIS) software that allowed for a weighting system to be applied with differentiation in certain layers as follows:

- European Sites – SACs and SPAs (10 points);
- Other Ecological designations – NHAs and pNHAs (5 points);
- Sensitive Landcover Categories (10 points);
- WFD Status of Surface moderate and unassigned ecological status (5 points);
- WFD Status of Surface water poor ecological status (10 points);
- Groundwater vulnerability (aquifers which are extremely vulnerable - 10 points; and highly vulnerable - 5 points);
- Source Protection Areas (Inner Protection Area 10 points);
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Rivers and Lakes (10 points) and Rivers in Nutrient Sensitive Areas (5 points);
- WFD RPA Rivers and Lakes for Drinking Water (10 points);
- County Geological Sites (10 points);
- GSI Landslide Susceptibility (High or High Inferred – 10 points; Moderately High or Moderately High Inferred – 5 points);
- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Flood Zone A (10 points) and Flood Zone B (5 points);
- Cultural Heritage including Architectural Conservation Areas, entries to the Record of Protected Structures, entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, National Monuments in State Care and entire to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (10 points);
- Broad Zones (10 points); and
- Scenic routes (10 points).

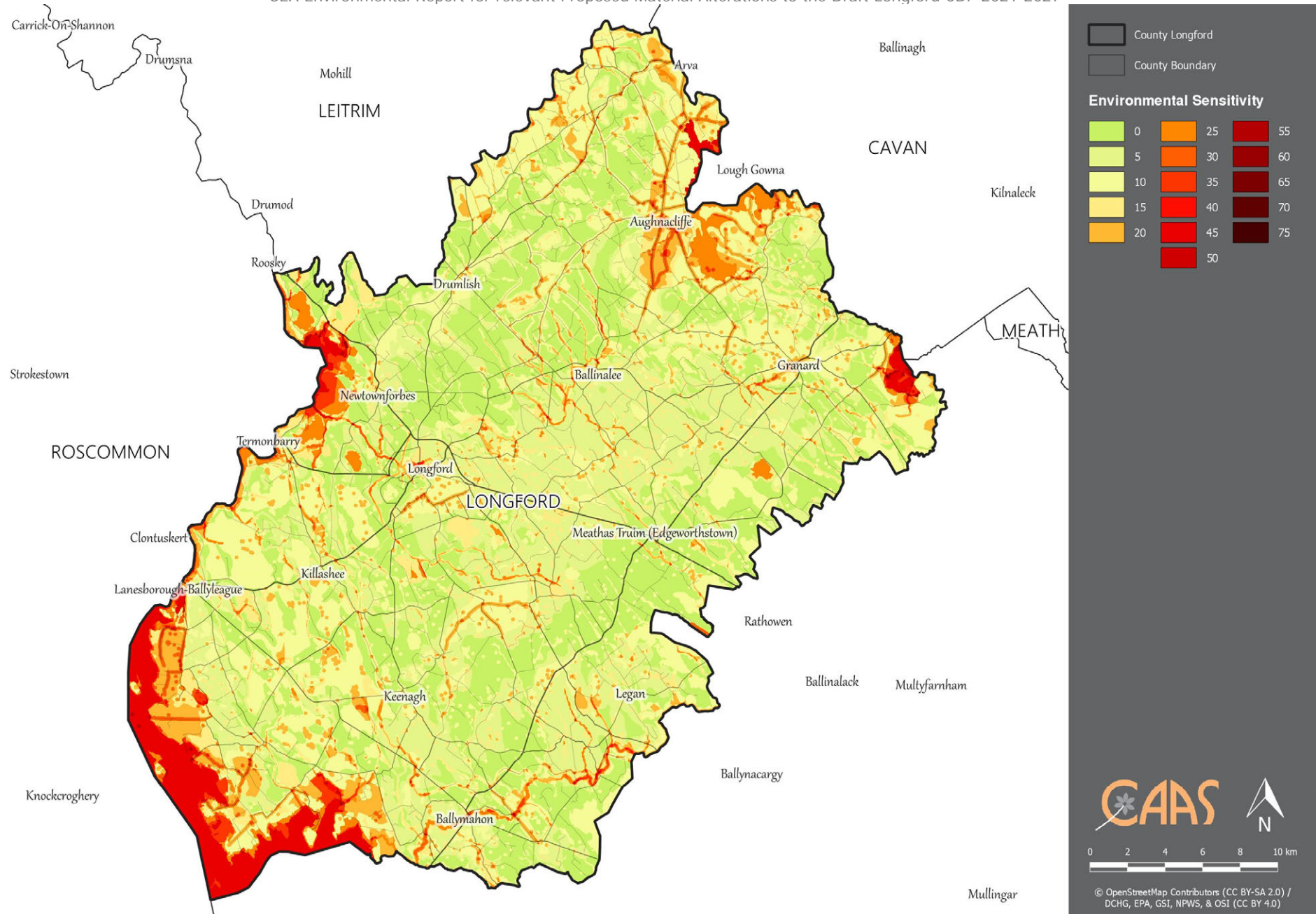
Where the mapping shows a concentration of environmental sensitivities there is an increased likelihood that development will conflict with these sensitivities and cause environmental deterioration. However, the occurrence of environmental sensitivities does not preclude development; rather it flags at a strategic level that the mitigation measures - which have been integrated into the Plan - will need to be

complied with in order to ensure that the implementation of the Plan contributes towards environmental protection.

The overlay mapping shows that environmental sensitivities are not evenly distributed throughout the County. Most of the County is identified as having low to moderate levels of sensitivity.

The most sensitive areas in the County include:

- The County's western and south western boundaries, reflecting the sensitive nature of the River Shannon and its Lough Forbes and Lough Ree, which are subject to various designations (including those relating to water, ecology and landscape), heavily protected and sources of flood risk;
- Other lakes and rivers throughout the County including Lough Kinale, Derragh Lough and Lough Gowna and the Rivers Camlin and Inny – as a result of water status, nutrient sensitivity, drinking water source, ecological designations and/or sources of flood risk;
- Peatland areas, due to their ecological, hydrological and amenity characteristics, such as Clooneen Bog, Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog and Brown Bog; and
- Areas throughout the County on account of areas of elevated groundwater vulnerability.



**Figure 4.19 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities in County Longford**

CAAS for Longford County Council

## Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies that generally govern environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level e.g. the environmental protection objectives of various European Directives that have been transposed into Irish law and which are required to be implemented.

The SEOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan, the alternatives and the Proposed Material Alterations are evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if – in the case of adverse effects – unmitigated.

The SEOs are linked to indicators which can facilitate monitoring the environmental effects of the Plan as well as identifying targets which the Plan can help work towards.

All SEOs, indicators and targets are provided on Table 5.1 overleaf.

Further detail on legislation, plans and programmes are provided under Section 2 (and associated Appendix I “Relationship with Legislation and Other Policies, Plans, and Programmes”) and Section 4.

Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Eastern and Midland RSES, the measures identified in that RSES SEA have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in most instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of land use plans will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring.

**Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs), Indicators and Targets**

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>BFF</b>	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species</li> <li>Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function</li> <li>Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species</li> <li>Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets</li> <li>To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condition of European sites</li> <li>Number of spatial plans that have included ecosystem services content, mapping and policy to protect ecosystem services when their relevant plans are either revised or drafted</li> <li>SEA and AA as relevant for new Council policies, plans, programmes etc.</li> <li>Status of water quality in the County's water bodies</li> <li>Compliance of planning permissions with Plan measures providing for the protection of Biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 12 “Natural Heritage and Environment”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require all local level land use plans to include ecosystem services and green/blue infrastructure provisions in their land use plans and as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species</li> <li>Implement and review, as relevant, Longford Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024</li> <li>For planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Plan measures providing for the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 12 “Natural Heritage and Environment”</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH</b>	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management</li> <li>Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services</li> <li>Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Plan measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 8 “Economic Development”</li> <li>Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors resulting from development permitted under the Plan</li> <li>Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> <li>Number of spatial plans that include specific green infrastructure mapping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 8 “Economic Development”</li> <li>No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan</li> <li>Increase in the proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures.</li> <li>Implementation of Green Infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (and Land)</b>	<b>S</b>	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource</li> <li>Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County</li> <li>Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of population growth occurring on infill and brownfield lands compared to greenfield</li> <li>Volume of contaminated material generated from brownfield and infill</li> <li>Number of AA determinations and environmental assessments undertaken to support applications for brownfield and infill development prior to planning permission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%.</li> <li>Achieve the 40% target for growth on infill as per NPF.</li> </ul>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
<b>Water</b>	<b>W</b>	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>• Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments</li> <li>• Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion</li> <li>• Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the WFD</li> <li>• Number of incompatible developments permitted within flood risk areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status'</li> <li>• Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and subsequent iterations as relevant)</li> <li>• Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>MA</b>	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County</li> <li>• Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels</li> <li>• Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development</li> <li>• Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes</li> <li>• Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmed delivery of Irish Water infrastructure for all key growth towns in line with Irish Water Investment Plan and prioritisation programme to ensure sustainable growth can be accommodated</li> <li>• Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan</li> <li>• Proportion of population within who report regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To map brownfield and infill land parcels across the County.</li> <li>• All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan</li> <li>• Where septic tanks are proposed, for planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that the outfall from the septic tank will not – in- combination with other septic tanks– contribute towards any surface or ground water body not meeting the objective of good status under the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>• Increased budget spends on water and waste water infrastructure</li> <li>• By 2020 all citizens will have access to speeds of 30Mbps, and that 50% of citizens will be subscribing to speeds of 100Mbps</li> </ul>

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
<b>Air</b>	<b>A</b>	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture.</li> <li>Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency.</li> <li>Promote continuing improvement in air quality.</li> <li>Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution</li> <li>Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive</li> <li>Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels of 74%</li> <li>NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM10 and PM2.5 as part of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease in proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels.</li> <li>Improvement in Air Quality trends, particularly in relation to transport related emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic Factors</b>	<b>C</b>	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To minimise emissions of greenhouse gases.</li> <li>Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).</li> <li>Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets.</li> <li>Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change</li> <li>Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Plan measures relating to climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 3 "Climate Change"</li> <li>Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels</li> <li>Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 3 "Climate Change"</li> <li>Increase in the proportion of people resident in the County reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> <li>Decrease in the proportion of journeys made by residents of the County using private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels</li> <li>Contribute towards transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050</li> <li>Contribute towards the target of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC), for all Member States to reach a 10% share of renewable energy in transport by 2020</li> <li>Contribute towards the target of aggregate reduction in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions of at least 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050 across the electricity generation, built environment and transport sectors</li> <li>To promote reduced energy consumption and support the uptake of renewable options and a move away from solid fuels for residential heating</li> </ul>

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH</b>	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> <li>• Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context of these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> <li>• Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L</b>	Protect and enhance the landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>

## Section 6 Description of Alternatives

### 6.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment.

Whether or not alternatives for the County Development Plan are available has been identified by Longford County Council under Tiers 1 to 5 detailed below. These alternatives are assessed in Section 7.

**The description of alternatives identified in the early stages of Draft Plan preparation and included in the October 2020 SEA Environmental Report are reproduced below. These alternatives are assessed in Section 7.**

### 6.2 Limitations in Available Alternatives

The Plan is required to be prepared by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which specifies various types of objectives that must be provided for by the Plan.

The alternatives available for the Plan are limited by the provisions of higher-level planning objectives, including those of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region. These documents set out various requirements for the content of the Plan including on topics such as settlement typology, land use zoning and the sustainable development of rural areas.

### 6.3 Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy

The Settlement Hierarchy Levels for the Plan are identified on Table 6.2.

**Table 6.1 Settlement Hierarchy Levels in Longford**

Settlement Level	Settlement Category	Description
1	<b>Key Towns</b>	Large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.
2	<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	Self-Sustaining Growth Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining
3	<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	Self-Sustaining Towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted 'catch up' investment to become more self-sustaining.
4	<b>Towns and Villages</b>	Towns and villages with local service and employment functions
5	<b>Rural</b>	Serviced Rural Villages, Rural Settlement Clusters and the wider rural region

In considering significant realistic alternatives for placing of individual settlements under alternative typologies, the planning authority has taken into account the objectives of the NPF and the Eastern and Midland RSES. As a result, there are no strategic reasonable alternatives available for the designating



of most settlements under the hierarchy. Nonetheless, there are strategic reasonable alternatives for some of the settlements available and these are detailed below.

### **Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy**

- (A)** Designate Granard as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town and Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown as Self-Sustaining Towns

This would represent a continuation of previous regional and county settlement hierarchies, as reflected in the previous Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) 2010-2022 and the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021, where Granard was designated as a second-tier settlement within the settlement hierarchy for the county and Northern Development Area of the RPGs. This hierarchy designation also recognises the infrastructural capacity for further development within Granard, particularly in relation to wastewater treatment where there is considerable capacity to accommodate additional growth. This designation also reflects the importance of Granard within the RSES Retail Hierarchy, where Granard is designated as a 'Key Service Centre'. Notwithstanding the significant population growth of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon over the last 20 years, both of these settlements require significant 'catch-up' investment to become more self-sustaining, not least of which in terms of wastewater treatment infrastructure, with the wastewater treatment plants of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon both operating close to or exceeding current design capacities.

- (B)** Designate Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns and Granard as a Self-Sustaining Town.

This approach reflects the significant population growth of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon over the last 20 years and, by comparison, the relatively stagnant population growth in Granard over the same period. In addition, Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon are more reflective of the settlement typologies presented for Self-Sustaining Growth Towns, as presented in Table 4.3 of the RSES, notwithstanding the high jobs to resident workers ratio (2.353) associated with Granard and current capacity deficiencies associated with wastewater treatment in Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon, where it is noted that Irish Water has committed to upgrading the capacities of these plants over the lifetime of the plan.

## **6.4 Tier 2: Alternatives for Population Allocations**

Detailed demographic analysis was undertaken by appointed consultants (Future Analytics Consulting Ltd.) in the preparation of the Plan, including population forecasting at county-level based on variables such as fertility, mortality and migration, with the latter variable considered to be the most influential in forecasted population. Four population scenarios were identified comprising of:

- High – Population of the County grows to 50,150 persons by 2027;
- Medium – Population of the County grows to 49,252 persons by 2027;
- Low 1 – Population of County grows to 47,441 persons by 2027; and
- Low 2 – Population of County grows to 46,133 persons by 2027.

From a review of the demographic analysis for the County, the 'Low 1' scenario presented itself as the preferred population growth scenario. This projected population (47,441 persons) represented an increase on the projected 2027 population figure of 45,800 persons in County Longford, as derived from the NPF Implementation Roadmap document.

During the preparation of Plan the Council held discussion with the Office of Planning Regulator (OPR) in relation to these figures and the preferred population growth scenario. Notwithstanding, the OPR expressed concerns that the preferred population growth scenario produced figures in excess of those presented in the NPF Implementation Roadmap, citing National Policy Objective (NPO) 9 of the NPF as a key consideration, and cautioned against using the preferred population growth scenario figures.

On the basis of this advice, it was decided to use the upper-value population target for County Longford from the NPF Implementation Roadmap document to inform the future population growth of the County.

In terms of population allocation across the settlements, two scenarios were explored:

- Non-intervention settlement growth approach – each settlement would grow in proportion to their respective share of the overall County population over the plan period. This scenario would not be in compliance with the requirements of the RSES or the NPF; and
- Proportional settlement growth approach – the settlements of Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon, Lanesborough and Granard would grow in proportion to the natural, non-interventional growth of Longford Town over the plan period. In this scenario, the designated Self-Sustaining Growth Towns of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon would grow their respective populations by 25% of the growth of Longford Town over the plan period, with the designated Self-Sustaining Towns of Lanesborough and Granard growing by 15% of the growth of Longford Town over the same period. The remaining settlement tiers of 'Towns and Villages' and 'Rural' would grow in a non-interventionist manner. This scenario emerged as the preferred approach and would contribute towards compliance with the requirements of the RSES and NPF.

A key principle of the Settlement Strategy within the Plan from the outset was the need for a more balanced network of higher order towns in the Settlement Hierarchy to support the role and function of Longford Town as the principal economic driver and focus of investment for the county. In addition, the demographic analysis illustrated a clear requirement to address the disparity in growth rates amongst the four other main settlements in the county and, in particular, to arrest the obvious stagnation in growth experienced in Granard over the last number of years.

In adopting this interventionist approach in relation to the population allocations for the Self-Sustaining Growth Towns and Self-Sustaining Towns, this approach provides for more balanced growth across the County, whilst recognising the geographic spread of each settlement across the county and the role each settlement can play in supporting the Key Town of Longford Town, whilst also reinforcing and strengthening the wider network of towns and villages within the county. This approach also provides assurance that no lower order settlement will outgrow a higher order settlement.

Taking the above into account, no reasonable alternatives available for consideration were identified (taking into account the need to comply with the objectives of the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES) under Tier 2.

## 6.5 Tier 3: Alternatives for Rural Longford

### Tier 3 (i): Alternatives for Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence

- (A) Designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence that require various criteria to be demonstrated in advance of planning permission being granted for a single dwelling for permanent occupation.
- (B) Do not designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and assess each planning application on its merits.

### Tier 3 (ii): Alternatives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters

- (A) Provide focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters to act as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside.
- (B) Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters are included but there is no focus or no targeted provisions for these locations to act as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside.

## 6.6 Tier 4: Alternatives for Densities

The Council have confirmed that no reasonable alternatives are available for proportionate densities across the settlement hierarchy, taking into account the objectives of the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES.

## 6.7 Tier 5: Alternatives for Land Use Zoning

The findings of the examination of available strategic reasonable land use zoning alternatives for settlements is provided at Table 6.2. Maps for each of these alternatives are provided in Appendix II "Indicative Mapping of Land Use Zoning Alternatives".

**Table 6.2 Available Strategic Reasonable Alternatives**

Settlement Typology	Settlements	Available Alternatives	Not available – taking into account high-level planning objectives
<b>Key Towns</b>	Longford Town	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	Edgeworthstown	A. Less compact (all New Residential and Industrial) or B. More compact (New Residential, Residential Reserve, Industrial and Industrial Reserve)	-
	Ballymahon	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	Granard	A. Less compact (all New Residential and Industrial) or B. More compact (New Residential, Residential Reserve, Industrial and Industrial Reserve)	-
	Lanesborough	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
<b>Towns and Villages</b>	Aughnaccliffe	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
	Ballinalee	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
	Drumlish	A. Less compact (all New Residential and Industrial) or B. More compact (New Residential, Residential Reserve, Industrial and Industrial Reserve)	-
	Keenagh	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
	Legan	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
	Newtownforbes	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
<b>Serviced Rural Villages</b>	Abbeyshrule	-	✓
	Ardagh	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
	Ballinamuck	A. Less compact (all New Residential) or B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)	-
	Clondra	-	✓

## Section 7 Evaluation of Alternatives

### 7.1 Introduction

This section provides a comparative evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects<sup>87</sup> of implementing available alternatives that are described in Section 6. This determination sought to understand whether each alternative was likely to improve conflict with or have a neutral interaction with the receiving environment.

**The assessment of alternatives that informed the selection of the Draft Plan and was included in the October 2020 SEA Environmental Report is reproduced below. Where Proposed Material Alterations warrant comment with respect to the assessment, comment is provided in blue text [like this](#).**

### 7.2 Methodology

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Section 5 and Table 7.1) are used in the assessment of alternatives.

The degree to which effects can be determined is limited as implementation of the Plan will involve assessment, consideration and decision-making associated with lower tier plans and individual projects. Nonetheless a comparative evaluation of the various alternatives can be provided.

**Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives<sup>88</sup>**

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>BFF</b>	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species</li> <li>Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function</li> <li>Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species</li> <li>Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets</li> <li>To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH</b>	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management</li> <li>Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services</li> <li>Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (and Land)</b>	<b>S</b>	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource</li> <li>Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County</li> <li>Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<b>W</b>	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments</li> <li>Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion</li> <li>Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals</li> </ul>

<sup>87</sup> These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

<sup>88</sup> See also Section 5



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>MA</b>	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County</li> <li>• Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels</li> <li>• Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development</li> <li>• Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes</li> <li>• Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids</li> </ul>
<b>Air</b>	<b>A</b>	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture.</li> <li>• Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency.</li> <li>• Promote continuing improvement in air quality.</li> <li>• Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution</li> <li>• Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive</li> <li>• Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic Factors</b>	<b>C</b>	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses.</li> <li>• Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).</li> <li>• Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets.</li> <li>• Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change</li> <li>• Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH</b>	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L</b>	Protect and enhance the landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention</li> </ul>

## 7.3 Detailed Assessment of Alternatives

### 7.3.1 Effects Common to all Alternatives

Each of the alternatives envisage – in compliance with the robust policy framework in place at national, regional and local level – sustainable development and compact growth in County Longford. As such, various potential environmental effects are common to each of the alternatives. The environmental effects detailed on would be present, some to varying degrees, under the different alternatives.

**Table 7.2 Effects Common to All Alternatives**

Environmental Component	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated
<b>Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.</li> </ul>	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;</li> <li>Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and</li> <li>Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management.</li> <li>Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.</li> <li>Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Soil</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.</li> <li>Potential for riverbank erosion.</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.</li> <li>Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.</li> </ul>

Environmental Component	• Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	• Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>• Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>• Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>• Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>• Increases in waste levels.</li> <li>• Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter.</li> </ul>
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.</li> </ul>

### **7.3.2 Assessment of Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy**

**(A) Designate Granard as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town and Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown as Self-Sustaining Towns**

Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown require significant 'catch-up' investment to become more self-sustaining and the likelihood of this happening under Alternative A, which places the towns in a lower tier, would be reduced. Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown have been successful at attracting new development and have experienced significant growth that needs to be accompanied by new service and infrastructure provision as soon as practicable. Growth in Granard has been low despite it been given prioritised by policy in the past.

Alternative A would have the potential to result in higher levels of private car-based commuting, potentially contributing towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility and reduce greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the least, as Granard is not as well-served with public transport links as Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown are.

A greater level of growth in Granard under this alternative could be accommodated by the existing available capacity in the waste water treatment plant (identified as having 1,411 population equivalent in headroom – see Table 4.3). There is currently limited capacity in Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown (identified as having no headroom) to accommodate new growth. However, Irish Water has committed to upgrading the capacities of these plants over the lifetime of the Plan, projecting a completion year post 2024. As a result, Alternative A would be likely to meet objectives relating to waste water treatment (and associated potential interactions with ecology and water quality) the most in the shorter term, potentially conflicting with these objectives the least.

**(B) Designate Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns and Granard as a Self-Sustaining Town**

Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown require significant 'catch-up' investment to become more self-sustaining and the likelihood of this happening under Alternative A, which places the towns in an upper tier, would be increased. Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown have been successful at attracting new development and have experienced significant growth that needs to be accompanied by new service and infrastructure provision as soon as practicable. Growth in Granard has been low despite it been given prioritised by policy in the past.

Alternative B would have the potential to result in lower levels of private car-based commuting, contributing towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility and reduce greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the most, as Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown are better serviced with public transport links than Granard is.

There is currently limited capacity in Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown (identified as having no headroom – see Table 4.3) to accommodate new growth. However, Irish Water has committed to upgrading the capacities of these plants over the lifetime of the Plan, projecting a completion year post 2024. Growth in Granard under this alternative could be accommodated by the existing available capacity in the waste water treatment plant (identified as having 1,411 population equivalent in headroom). As a result, Alternative B would be likely to meet objectives relating to waste water treatment (and associated potential interactions with ecology and water quality) the least in the shorter term, potentially conflicting with these objectives the most. Demand for shorter term growth could be facilitated in the settlements of Granard and Lanesborough.



Tier 1 alternatives are assessed against Strategic Environmental Objectives on Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3 Assessment<sup>89</sup> of Tier 1 Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Alternative	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated		
	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree
(A) Designate Granard as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town and Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown as Self-Sustaining Towns	due to waste water constraints (in the short term, until upgrades) <b>BFF W MA</b>	<b>S CH L</b>	necessary 'catch-up investment' less likely <b>PHH</b>  due to transport related emissions <b>A C MA</b>	due to waste water constraints (in the short term, until upgrades) <b>BFF W MA</b>	<b>S CH L</b>	necessary 'catch-up investment' less likely <b>PHH</b>  due to transport related emissions <b>A C MA</b>
(B) Designate Ballymahon and Edgeworthstown as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns and Granard as a Self-Sustaining Town	necessary 'catch-up investment' more likely <b>PHH</b>  due to transport related emissions <b>A C MA</b>	<b>S CH L</b>	due to waste water constraints (in the short term, until upgrades) <b>BFF W MA</b>	necessary 'catch-up investment' more likely <b>PHH</b>  due to transport related emissions <b>A C MA</b>	<b>S CH L</b>	due to waste water constraints (in the short term, until upgrades) <b>BFF W MA</b>

**Alternative B was selected as part of the Draft Plan. Alternative A is proposed under the Proposed Material Alterations.**

**The assessment provided above, together with the mitigation that has been considered in the assessment of the Draft Plan (see Sections 8.5), demonstrates that the significant environmental effects of either alternative can be mitigated to the extent that only residual effects remain (see Section 8.3).**

<sup>89</sup> The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives are arrayed against each other to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

1. Interactions that would be likely to improve the status of a particular SEO would be likely to result in a significant positive effect on the protection/management of the environmental component/issues to which the SEO relates.
2. Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a potential significant negative effect however these effects would be likely to be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

### 7.3.3 Assessment of Tier 3: Alternatives for Rural Longford

#### Tier 3 (i): Alternatives for Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence

- (A) Designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence that require various criteria to be demonstrated in advance of planning permission being granted for a single dwelling for permanent occupation.

Restricting development in rural areas that are under strong urban influence would positively impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The restrictions would help to both reduce levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and encourage brownfield development within existing centres.

Rural development would be focus into appropriate rural areas and urban development would be directed towards established settlements. This alternative would help to prevent low density urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

- (B) Do not designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and assess each planning application on its merits.

Not restricting development in rural areas that are under strong urban influence would adversely impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The absence of restrictions would result in increased levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and less demand for brownfield development within existing centres.

Urban generated development would occur within rural areas outside of established settlements. This alternative would result in low density urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

Tier 3(i) alternatives are assessed against Strategic Environmental Objectives on Table 7.4.

**Table 7.4 Assessment of Tier 3(i) Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Alternative (selected alternative in <b>bold</b> )	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs		<u>Potential Conflict</u> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated	
	to a <u>Greater</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Greater</u> degree
<b>(A) Designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence that require various criteria to be demonstrated in advance of planning permission being granted for a single dwelling for permanent occupation</b>	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	
(B) Do not designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and assess each planning application on its merits.		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L

**Tier 3 (ii): Alternatives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters**

- (A) Provide focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters to act as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside.

Providing focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters would help to provide a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters would be more likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and more likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape. Development would be required to be subject to siting, design, protection of residential amenities and normal development management criteria, subject to the satisfactory provision of infrastructure and services and in keeping with the character of the settlement.

- (B) Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters are included but there is no focus or no targeted provisions for these locations to act as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside.

Not providing a focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters would be less likely to provide a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within the open countryside would be less likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and less likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape.

**Table 7.5 Assessment of Tier 3(ii) Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Alternative  (selected alternative in <b>bold</b> )	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs		<u>Potential Conflict</u> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated	
	to a <u>Greater</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Greater</u> degree
<b>(A) Provide focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters to act as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside</b>	<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>		<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>	
(B) Serviced Rural Villages and Rural Settlement Clusters are included but there is no focus or no targeted provisions for these locations to act as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside		<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>		<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>

### 7.3.4 Assessment of Tier 5: Alternatives for Land Use Zoning

Tier 5 alternatives are assessed on Table 7.6.

**Alternative B “More compact” was selected for each settlement as part of the Draft Plan. An even more compact form of zoning is proposed for various settlements under the Proposed Material Alterations. These changes are considered in detail under Section 8 of this report. The final SEA documents prepared to accompany the adopted Plan will take account the final zoning adopted as part of the Plan.**

**Table 7.6 Assessment of Tier 5 Alternatives**

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs			<u>Potential Conflict</u> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a <u>Greater</u> degree	to a <u>Moderate</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Moderate</u> degree	to a <u>Greater</u> degree	
Longford Town	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			BFF PHH S MA A C CH L			BFF PHH S MA A C CH L	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	BFF PHH S MA A C CH L			BFF PHH S MA A C CH L			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Edgeworthstown	A. Less compact (all New Residential and Industrial)			BFF PHH S MA A C CH L			BFF PHH S MA A C CH L	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential, Residential Reserve, Industrial and Industrial Reserve)</b>	BFF PHH S MA A C CH L			BFF PHH S MA A C CH L			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.



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Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
Ballymahon	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Granard	A. Less compact (all New Residential and Industrial)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential, Residential Reserve, Industrial and Industrial Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Lanesborough	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for.

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Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
								for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Aughnaciliffe	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Ballinalee	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Drumlish	A. Less compact (all New Residential and Industrial)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.

## SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential, Residential Reserve, Industrial and Industrial Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Keenagh	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Legan	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Newtownforbes	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for

## SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
								unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Ardagh	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.
Ballinamuck	A. Less compact (all New Residential)			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	<b>B. More compact (New Residential and Residential Reserve)</b>	<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			<b>BFF PHH S MA A C CH L</b>			By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components. Prioritisation of New Residential lands over Residential Reserve took into account: whether water services infrastructure was already provided for or, if not, whether it could be more easily provided for; access to transport infrastructure; and proximity to the existing development envelope and town centre.



## Section 8 Evaluation of Plan Provisions

### 8.1 Introduction

This section provides an assessment of environmental effects using the information on the current state of the environment (provided in Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Table 8.1) from implementation of the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations.

The degree of significance of effects occurring cannot be fully determined at this level of decision making due to the lack of exact detail available with regard to the type or scale of development that will be permitted under the Plan. However, a strategic assessment can be undertaken.

**Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives<sup>90</sup>**

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>BFF</b>	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species</li> <li>Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function</li> <li>Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species</li> <li>Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets</li> <li>To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH</b>	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management</li> <li>Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services</li> <li>Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (and Land)</b>	<b>S</b>	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource</li> <li>Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County</li> <li>Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<b>W</b>	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments</li> <li>Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion</li> <li>Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>MA</b>	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County</li> <li>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels</li> <li>Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies</li> <li>Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development</li> <li>Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes</li> <li>Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids</li> </ul>

<sup>90</sup> See also Section 5

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture.</li> <li>Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency.</li> <li>Promote continuing improvement in air quality.</li> <li>Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution</li> <li>Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive</li> <li>Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.</li> </ul>
Climatic Factors	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses.</li> <li>Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).</li> <li>Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets.</li> <li>Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change</li> <li>Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport</li> </ul>
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage</li> </ul>
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention</li> </ul>

## 8.2 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects are one of the types of effects which have been considered by the assessment of the alternatives. Cumulative effects can be described as the addition of many small impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

There are two types of potential cumulative effects that have been considered, namely:

- Potential *intra-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise from the interactions between different types of potential environmental effects resulting from a plan, programme, etc. Where there are elevated levels of environmental sensitivities (such as those identified under Section 4), future development could result in environmental conflicts and lead to a deterioration in environmental integrity. The interrelationships between environmental components that help determine these potential effects are identified on
- e.g. interrelationships between: human health and water quality; human health and air quality; human health and flood risk; and ecology and water quality.
- Potential *inter-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans, programmes, developments, etc.

Effects that may arise as a result of implementing the Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, have been mitigated to the extent that the only residual adverse effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Plan are those which are identified under Table 8.3.

Other policies, plans and programmes that have been considered by the assessment of effects include those which are detailed under Section 2.7 (and associated Appendix I "Relationship with Legislation, Plans and Programmes"), Section 4 and Section 5. Plans and programmes from various sectors will interact with the Plan, including those relating to land use planning. These plans and programmes are subject to their own environmental assessment requirements as relevant. Examples include:

- Land use policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the National Planning Framework, the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, adjoining County Development Plans and Local Area Plans);

- Longford Local Economic and Community Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plans of adjoining counties;
- Energy policy, plans and programmes (e.g. Grid25 and associated Implementation Programme, Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010, Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020, Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan, Draft National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 and the Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework);
- Climate related policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the National Climate Policy Position and Climate Action 2014, Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and White Paper Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015, Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Adaptation Framework 2018, National Mitigation Plan 2017, and the Longford Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 and Climate Action Charter 2019);
- Water services, waste management, transport and energy infrastructure plans (e.g. Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan and associated Capital Investment Plan, Eastern-Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan and Transportation Policies and Strategies); and
- Environmental protection and management plans (e.g. River Basin Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Plans).

Potential cumulative/in combination effects include:

- Contributions towards reductions in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, reductions in consumption from non-renewables and associated achievement of legally binding targets (in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors, including energy, transport and land use planning) as a result of facilitating:
  - sustainable compact growth;
  - sustainable mobility/a shift from motorised transport modes to more sustainable and non-motorised transport modes; and
  - renewable energy development.
- Contributions towards travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air (in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors, including transport and land use planning) as a result of facilitating development which must be accompanied by road capacity;
- Facilitation of new development that is accompanied by appropriate levels of water services thereby contributing towards environmental protection;
- Need for and use of water and waste water treatment capacity arising from new developments and associated potential adverse effects;
- Potential cumulative effects upon surface and ground water status as a result of housing, employment, agricultural and forestry – loadings and abstractions;
- Potential cumulative effects (habitat damage, enhancing ecological connectivity, contributing towards sustainable mobility) arising from linear developments, such as those relating to Green Infrastructure, including beyond the County border;
- Potential cumulative effects on flood risk by, for example, development of greenfield lands or obstruction of flood paths; and
- In combination with plans and programmes from all sectors potential adverse effects on all environmental components arising from all development in greenfield and brownfield areas (e.g. infrastructural, residential, economic, agricultural etc.). The type of these effects is consistent with those described on Table 8.3. These plans and programmes are required to comply with environmental legislation and undergo SEA and AA as relevant comply with environmental legislation while projects are subject to EIA and AA, as relevant.

These effects would have the potential, if unmitigated, if they occurred, to result in changes in the environment within and beyond County Longford.

A variety of the issues covered by the Plan provisions are regional issues which are considered: at Regional Assembly level, in the Eastern and Midland RSES and by planning authorities across the Region. The solutions to these issues are often regional solutions which are subject their own consenting procedures. Works arising outside of the Plan as a result of providing for new development within the County including those arising as a result of the cumulative provision of development in the wider Eastern and Midland region would potentially conflict with a number of environmental components, across the wider Eastern and Midland region and beyond, including: ecology, soil function, the status of water bodies and the landscape. Some of these conflicts would be mitigated by measures

which will be integrated into the Plan while some will be mitigated by measures arising out of separate consent procedures.

### **8.3 Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Stage 2 AA are being undertaken alongside the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The emerging conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.<sup>91</sup>

The Proposed Material Alterations are accompanied by an AA Natura Impact Report, which has informed this SEA Environmental Report.

SFRA is being undertaken to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations. The SFRA process has informed this report.

The SFRA has considered the Proposed Material Alterations and finds that all Proposed Material Alterations, apart from one, comply with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). Proposed Material Alteration Reference AP.1E.18 does not comply with the Guidelines as it proposes incompatible New Residential Zoning in an area of elevated flood risk that would fail the Justification Test under the Guidelines.

### **8.4 Interrelationship between Environmental Components**

The SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to include information on the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

Likely significant effects on environmental components which are identified include those which are interrelated; implementation of the Plan and associated Proposed Material Alterations will not affect the interrelationships between these components. The presence of significant interrelationships between environmental components is identified on

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<sup>91</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

(a) no alternative solution available,  
(b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and  
(c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

**Table 8.2 Presence of Interrelationships between Environmental Components**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>	<b>Population and human health</b>	<b>Soil</b>	<b>Water</b>	<b>Air and Climatic factors</b>	<b>Material assets</b>	<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<b>Landscape</b>
<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Population and Human Health</b>			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<b>Soil</b>				Yes	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Water</b>					No	Yes	No	No
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>						Yes	No	No
<b>Material Assets</b>							Yes	Yes
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>								Yes
<b>Landscape</b>								



## **8.5 Overall Evaluation of Draft Plan Provisions to which the Proposed Material Alterations Relate (from SEA Environmental Report October 2020)**

Longford County Council have integrated various recommendations arising from the SEA, AA and SFRA processes into the Draft Plan (see Section 9). Table 8.3 provides a detailed overall evaluation of the environmental effects arising from the Plan. The effects encompass all in-combination/cumulative effects arising from implementation of the Plan. The potentially significant adverse environmental effects (if unmitigated) arising from implementation of the Plan are detailed as are residual effects, taking into account mitigation through both provisions integrated into the Plan – see Section 9.

Taking into account, *inter alia*, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects as a result of implementing the Draft Plan will not occur.

Environmental impacts which occur will be determined by the nature and extent of multiple or individual projects and site-specific environmental factors. Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO) codes are taken from Table 8.1.

**Table 8.3 Overall Evaluation – Effects arising from the Draft Plan**

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework			SEO Codes
	Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li><li>• Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats.</li><li>• Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.</li><li>• Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.</li></ul>	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;</li><li>• Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and</li><li>• Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.</li><li>• Losses or damage to ecology (these would be in compliance with relevant legislation).</li></ul>	BFF

Environmental Component	<b>Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework</b> Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management.</li> <li>Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, including air and water.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.</li> <li>Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors – please refer to residual adverse effects under "Soil", "Water" and "Air and Climatic Factors" below.</li> </ul>	<b>PHH</b>
<b>Soil</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination the highest standards of remediation, and where appropriate to consultations with the EPA and other relevant bodies, will be required to resolve any instances of environmental pollution created by contaminated land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.</li> <li>Potential for riverbank erosion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations.</li> <li>Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.</li> <li>Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by measures that have been integrated into the Plan.</li> </ul>	<b>W</b>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.</li> <li>Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments.</li> <li>Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth.</li> <li>Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart buildings, cities and grids.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Increases in waste levels.</li> <li>Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain, including due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however, such risks will be mitigated by measures, including those requiring the timely provision of critical infrastructure, and compliance with the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies.</li> <li>Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</li> </ul>	<b>MA</b>

Environmental Component	<b>Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework</b> Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>• In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sustainable compact growth;</li> <li>○ Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport;</li> <li>○ Drainage, flood risk management and resilience;</li> <li>○ Sectors including agriculture, residential heating and infrastructure;</li> <li>○ Sustainable infrastructure design solutions including energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An extent of travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air. This has been mitigated by provisions which have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable compact growth and sustainable mobility.</li> <li>• Interactions between noise emissions and sensitive receptors. Various provisions have been integrated into the Plan to ensure that noise levels at sensitive receptors will be minimised.</li> </ul>	<b>AC</b>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements.</li> <li>• Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within existing settlements by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential effects on known architectural and archaeological heritage and unknown archaeology however, these will occur in compliance with legislation.</li> </ul>	<b>CH</b>
<b>Landscape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscapes will change overtime as a result of natural changes in vegetation cover combined with new developments that will occur in compliance with the Plan's landscape protection measures.</li> </ul>	<b>L</b>



## 8.6 Detailed Evaluation<sup>92</sup>

For an explanation of SEO codes e.g. **BFF**, **PHH**, **S**, **W**, etc. refer to Table 8.1 on page 85.

The following applies to the evaluation below:

The Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, is situated in a hierarchy of documents setting out public policy setting out public policy for, among other things, land use planning, infrastructure, sustainable development, tourism, environmental protection and environmental management, such as the National Planning Framework, the National Development Plan, the National Mitigation Plan, the National Adaptation Framework, the Climate Action Plan and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (for additional detail please refer to Section 2.7 *“Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes”* in this report).

These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and already provide for various measures that have been compiled into the Plan. The Plan aligns with these documents and will be incorporated into the review and preparation of these documents.

Lower tier plans and projects must be consistent and comply with the provisions of the Plan and of these other policies, plans etc. and will be subject to their own project level EIA and AA requirements as relevant. An assessment of cumulative effects is provided at Section 8.2 of this report.

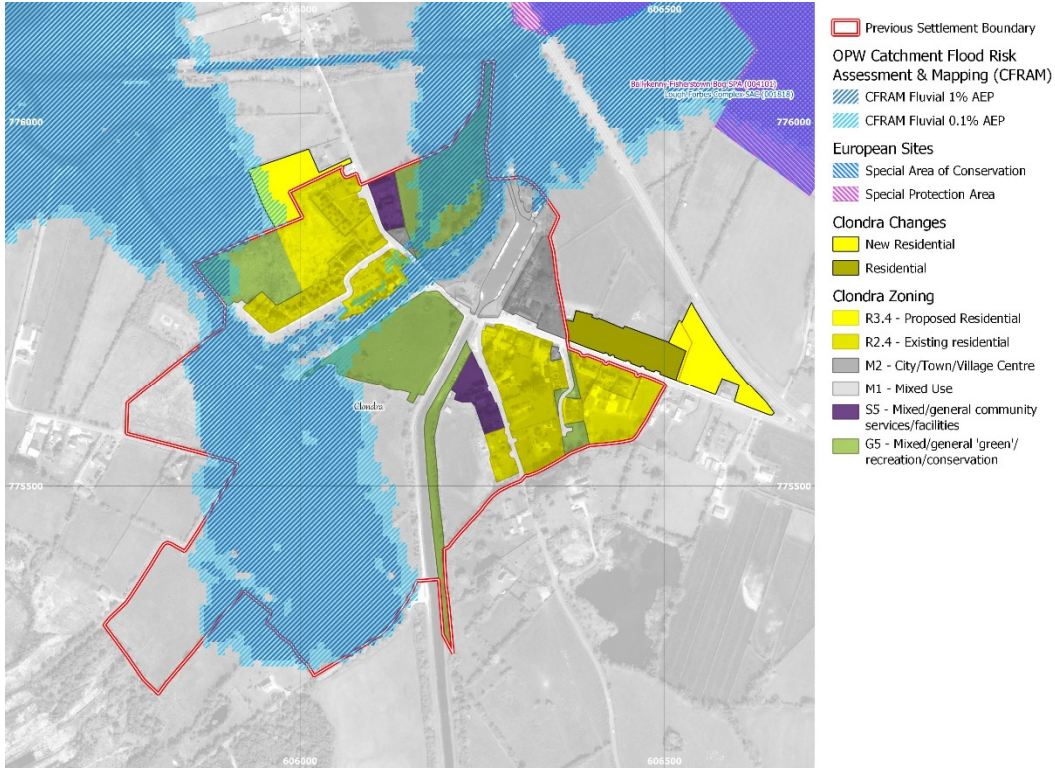
Alteration Ref.	Commentary	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – unlikely to be fully mitigated	<b>Mitigated Conflicts</b>	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs above those already identified for the original Draft Plan
CH 10.2 CH 10.3 CH 10.21 CH 12.1 CH 12.2 CH 12.3 CH 12.4 CH 12.5 CH 12.7 CH 12.9 CH 12.11 CH 12.13 CH 12.14 CH 12.16 CH 13.2 CH 13.4	It was determined prudent to undertake SEA on these Proposed Material Alterations as Stage 2 AA was required.  Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, the AA process identified that there is no potential for effects to arise on the integrity of any European site as a result of all Proposed Material Alterations.  Furthermore, the AA screening process takes into account the need to undertake Stage 2 AA when mitigation is being proposed. As these Proposed Material Alterations identified could be considered to be mitigation in relation to Plan elements that could potentially affect the integrity of European sites, further to the mitigation already integrated into the Draft Plan, Stage 2 AA was required.	<b>BFF</b>		<b>BFF</b>	<b>PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>

<sup>92</sup> The Proposed Material Alterations are evaluated using compatibility criteria in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the Proposed Material Alterations are arrayed against each other in order to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

- Interactions that would be likely to improve the status of a particular SEO would be likely to result in a significant positive effect on the protection/management of the environmental component/issues to which the SEO relates.
- Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a potential significant negative effect however these effects would be likely to be mitigated by measures which have already been integrated into the Plan.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Alteration Ref.	Commentary	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs – unlikely to be fully mitigated	Mitigated Conflicts	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs above those already identified for the original Draft Plan
Appendix 1 PMAs	<p>There is an established planning need for these alterations relating to Appendix I Land Use Zoning, which have come about as a result of submissions made on the original Draft Plan that was placed out on public display. The alterations have been identified as being consistent with objectives for proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>Overall, there is a significant reduction in the area to be zoned, with land use zoning becoming more compact overall. These alterations would be likely to reduce the residual adverse effects identified under all environmental components – refer to Table 8.3 – as a result of changes in land take provided. Where areas of expanded/amended zoning are proposed, adverse effects would be mitigated by the provisions already integrated into the Draft Plan – see Section 9 of this report.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration AP.1E.18 would not be in compliance with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DEHLG/OPW, 2009) and would provide for new vulnerable development on lands, some of which are at elevated risk from flooding – see map below. This Alteration therefore has the potential to significantly adversely impact upon objectives for sustainable flood risk management and protection of human health and material assets.</p> 	<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>	<b>PHH W MA</b> (Proposed Material Alteration AP.1E.18)	<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L</b>	
Appendix 6 PMAs: AP.6.2, AP.6.4, AP.6.5	Proposed Material Alterations AP.6.2, AP.6.4, AP.6.5 propose the removal of architectural heritage from the Record of Protected Structures in the absence of evidence demonstrating that this heritage does not warrant the protection afforded by inclusion on the Record. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed, taking a precautionary approach, that removal of these structures would be likely to result in significant adverse effects on the County's architectural heritage.		<b>CH</b>		<b>BFF PHH S W MA A C L</b>

## **Section 9 Mitigation Measures**

### **9.1 Introduction**

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the Plan. These measures also apply to Proposed Material Alterations

Various environmental sensitivities and issues have been communicated to the Council through the SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) processes. By integrating certain recommendations from the assessments into the Plan, the Council have ensured that both the beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan have been and will be maximised and that potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset.

Mitigation was achieved through the:

- Strategic work undertaken by the Council to ensure contribution towards environmental protection and sustainable development;
- Considering alternatives for the Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate;
- Integration of environmental considerations into zoning provisions of the Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate; and
- Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate.

### **9.2 Strategic work undertaken by the Council to ensure contribution towards environmental protection and sustainable development**

Far in advance of both the submission of the pre-Draft Plan to the Elected Members for approval and the placing of the Draft Plan on public display, Longford County Council undertook various works in order to inform the preparation of the Plan.

The findings of this strategic work have been integrated into the Plan and will contribute towards both environmental protection and management and sustainable development within the County.

Strategic work undertaken by the Council includes background work in relation to Plan Strategies and other provisions for a variety of sectors, including:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
- Core Strategy;
- Settlement Strategy;
- Housing Strategy;
- Retail Strategy;
- Sustainable mobility provisions;
- Infrastructure and Green Infrastructure provisions;

- Provisions for Sustainable Mobility.
- Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas;
- Landscape Designations;
- Economic Development; and
- Climate Action.

### **9.3 Consideration of Alternatives**

Although strategic alternatives in relation to the content of the Plan were significantly limited for the Plan (see Section 6), as part of the Plan preparation/SEA process, the Council considered a number of alternatives for the Draft Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate.

These alternatives were assessed by the SEA process (see Section 7) and the findings of this assessment informed the selection of preferred alternatives, facilitating an informed choice with respect to the type of Plan that was prepared and placed on public display.

### **9.4 Integration of environmental considerations into Zoning of the Plan**

Environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan's zoning through an interdisciplinary approach.

Zoning has been applied in a way that primarily seeks to achieve sustainable and compact growth, taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midland RSES.

The detailed Plan preparation process undertaken by the Planning Department combined with specialist input from the SFRA process sought to facilitate zoning that avoids inappropriate development being permitted in areas of high flood risk. Various provisions have been inserted into the Plan that provide for flood risk management at project level.

Also taken into account were environmental sensitivities relating to ecology, cultural heritage, landscape and water, as well as the overlay mapping of environmental sensitivities.

### **9.5 Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan**

Various provisions have been integrated into the text of the Plan through the Plan-preparation and SEA, SFRA and AA processes. Both the Planning and the assessment teams contributed towards the mitigation which was developed over multiple iterations and was informed by, inter alia, various communications through the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. These measures also apply to Proposed Material Alterations.

Table 9.1 links key mitigation measure(s) to the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. The measures generally benefit multiple environmental components i.e. a measure providing for the protection of biodiversity, flora and fauna could beneficially impact upon the minimisation of flood risk and the protection of human health, for example.

**Table 9.1 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Plan**

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in:  (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
All	Various	<b>CPO 4.63 United Nations Sustainability Goals</b> Contribute, as practicable, towards achievement of the 17 no. Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which came into force in 2016.
All	Various	<b>CPO 4.64 Regulatory framework for environmental protection and management</b> Cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management, including compliance with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.
All	Various	<b>CPO 4.65 Information to be considered at lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment</b> Lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment should consider the sensitivities identified in the SEA Environmental Report that accompanies the Plan, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas;</li> <li>• Features of the landscape that provide linkages/connectivity to designated sites (e.g. watercourses, areas of semi-natural habitat such as linear woodlands etc.);</li> <li>• Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas;</li> <li>• Areas likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive;</li> <li>• Entries to the Record of Monuments;</li> <li>• Entries to the Record of Protected Structures;</li> <li>• Architectural Conservation Areas; and</li> <li>• Landscape/amenity designations.</li> </ul>
All	Various	<b>CPO 5.15 Undertake the following Corridor and Route Selection Process for relevant new infrastructure:</b> Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental constraints (including those identified in Section 4 of the SEA Environmental Report) and opportunities (such as existing linear infrastructure) will assist in the identification of possible route corridor options;</li> <li>• Potentially feasible corridors within which infrastructure could be accommodated will be identified and these corridors assessed. The selection of the preferred route corridor will avoid constraints and meet opportunities to the optimum extent, as advised by the relevant specialists; and</li> <li>• In addition to the constraints identified above, site-specific field data may be required to identify the most appropriate corridors.</li> </ul> Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially feasible routes within the preferred corridor will be identified and assessed. The selection of preferred routes will avoid constraints and meet opportunities to the optimum extent, as advised by the relevant specialists, taking into account project level information and potential mitigation measures that are readily achievable;</li> <li>• In addition to the constraints identified above, site specific field data may be required to identify the most appropriate routes; and</li> <li>• In addition to environmental considerations, the identification of route corridors and the refinement of route lines is likely to be informed by other considerations.</li> </ul>
All	Various	<b>DMS16.70 Construction Environmental Management Plan</b> All development proposals of five or more residential units shall include a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) with planning application documentation. Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP) shall focus on waste minimisation and optimise waste prevention, re-use and recycling opportunities in the absence of a Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan (WMP).
<b>Biodiversity and flora and fauna</b>	Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;</li> <li>• Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including</li> </ul>	<b>Designated Sites - County Policy Objectives</b> CPO12.5 Protect and conserve the conservation value of candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this Plan. CPO12.6 Ensure that all development proposals relating to European Sites will comply with the DoECLG publication 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland- Guidance for Planning Authorities'. CPO12.7 Ensure an Appropriate Assessment is carried out in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary for the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a European Site(s), either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, in view of the site's conservation objectives. CPO12.8 Permit development on or adjacent to designated Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves or those proposed to be designated over the period of the Plan, only where an appropriate level of assessment can clearly demonstrate that it will have no significant adverse effect on the integrity of the site. CPO12.9 Consult and have regard to the views and guidance of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in respect of proposed development where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on a designated European or National site, or a site proposed for such designation. CPO12.10 Identify and provide appropriate buffer zones between Designated Sites and local biodiversity features and areas zoned for development. CPO12.11 Undertake appropriate surveys and collect data to provide an evidence-base to assist the Council in meeting its obligations under Article 6 of the Habitats Directives (92/43/EEC) subject to available resources. CPO12.12 Prepare Strategic Habitat Management Plans for European Sites in the County in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and relevant stakeholders. CPO12.13 Require an ecological appraisal, in addition to an Appropriate Assessment, for development not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Sites, or a proposed European Site and which are likely to have significant effects on that site either individually or cumulatively.



Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
	<p>patch size and edge effects; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</li> </ul>	<p>CPO12.14 Ensure that no plan, programme, or project giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects<sup>93</sup>.</p> <p><b>12.5.3 European Sites and Appropriate Assessment</b></p> <p>A plan or project will only be authorised after the Council has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and subsequent Appropriate Assessment where necessary that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European Site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) or</li> <li>The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000 or</li> <li>The plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of 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. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000. Following a finding that a proposed development will adversely affect the integrity of a European Site, planning permission may only be granted in exceptional cases, in the absence of any alternatives, for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) subject to the strict requirements of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.</li> </ol> <p><b>Non-Designated Sites – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.15 Ensure, where appropriate, the protection and conservation of areas, sites, species and ecological/networks of biodiversity value outside designated sites and to require an appropriate level of ecological assessment by suitably qualified professional(s) to accompany development proposals likely to impact on such areas or species.</p> <p>CPO12.16 Co-operate with statutory and other relevant agencies to identify and protect a representative sample of the County's wildlife habitats, of local or regional importance, not otherwise protected by legislation.</p> <p>CPO12.17 Protect Ramsar sites under The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (especially as Waterfowl Habitat).</p> <p>CPO12.18 Enhance and sustain landscapes and features within the County in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>safeguard, sustain and improve the quality and character of landscapes which are important and valued or,</li> <li>promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of local landscapes or,</li> <li>promote important settings for outdoor recreation and tourism development.</li> </ul> <p>CPO12.19 Protect and enhance important landscape features and their setting including rivers, streams, canals, lakes and associated wetlands such as reedbeds and swamps; ponds; springs; bogs; fens; trees; woodlands and scrub; hedgerows and other field boundary types such as stone walls and ditches. These are important because they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>form part of a network of habitats, corridors and 'stepping stones' essential for wildlife to flourish, thus providing a high-quality natural environment for all, and/or</li> <li>protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources and are essential as part of the integrated approach to the management of water resources, necessary to ensure the highest water quality into the future, as set out in the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy).</li> </ol> <p><b>Wetlands, Turloughs, Watercourses and Fens - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.25 Support the implementation of recommendations made in the Longford County Wetlands Fields Survey 2017 and 2019 and subsequent versions thereof.</p> <p>CPO12.26 Protect and conserve the ecological and biodiversity heritage of the wetland sites surveyed in 2019 listed and mapped in Appendix xx.</p> <p>CPO12.27 Resist development that would destroy, fragment or degrade any wetland in the County.</p> <p>CPO12.28 Ensure that development proposals or activities that may impact on sensitive water habitats, in particular turloughs and wetlands, shall not be permitted without the introduction of mitigation measures agreed with the planning authority to eliminate negative environmental impacts. Proposals to drain or otherwise interfere with the sources of turloughs will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO12.29 Implement the relevant parts of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2011 and the European Communities (Amendment to Planning and Development) Regulations 2011, which require planning permission to be applied for where the area impacted by works relating to the drainage or reclamation of a wetland exceeds 0.1 hectares or where such works may have a significant effect on the environment. Such applications for permission would need to be supported by an Appropriate Assessment where necessary.</p> <p><b>Inland Lakes, Waterways and Broadzones – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.30 Preserve, protect and enhance the Counties inland lakes and waterways for their amenity and recreational resource amenity, including the Royal Canal, the Rivers Shannon, Inny and Camlin and Lough Ree, Lough Gowna as well as the County's other rivers and lakes.</p> <p>CPO12.31 In order to build on amenity potential, the Council will support the development and upgrading of the Inland Waterways and their associated facilities in accordance with relevant management strategies, key stakeholders and bodies including Waterways Ireland. An inter-regional approach shall also be taken in association with Leitrim, Roscommon, Westmeath and Offaly to develop the North Shannon Tourism area.</p> <p>CPO12.32 Protect Lough Ree from unsustainable, large-scale and high volume abstraction of water resources for use in areas external to County Longford.</p> <p>CPO12.33 Ensure all abstractions of water from Lough Ree will be subject to assessment for compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>CPO12.34 Provide additional accesses to lake shores, river and canal banks, through the acquisition of land for public rights of way, parking and lay-by facilities, where appropriate.</p>

<sup>93</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in:  (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
		<p>In areas adjacent to inland waterways, lakes, canals and rivers where planning permission is sought, conditions may be attached requiring the retention or creation of public access to the waterway in order to facilitate the creation or expansion of walking/ cycling routes.</p> <p>CPO12.35 Require that land adjacent to lakeshores and river and canal banks in the County be protected and reserved for public access provision.</p> <p>CPO12.36 Protect the broadzones of the lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands from inappropriate development (see Appendix 10), i.e. development which adversely affects high amenity and landscape quality in relation to their setting, such as the environs of Newcastle House and Woods, particularly adjoining the River Inny Bridge.</p> <p>CPO12.37 Protect, enhance and preserve the built and natural heritage of the Royal Canal and its associated structures including the maintenance of the broadzone at 100m either side of the Canal. This shall include the natural setting of the canal and its views and prospects.</p> <p>CPO12.38 Restrict development in the broad zones of the major rivers and lakes of the County, as illustrated in Appendix 12, to extensions of existing dwellings, which shall be sensitively designed in terms of the individual site and materials.</p> <p>CPO12.39 Agriculture, native tree forestry, appropriate public amenity and recreational projects (Including the provision of slipways and angling infrastructure) and strategic Green Routes / Blueways / Trails will be open for consideration within the biodiversity protection zone, subject to appropriate safeguards and assessments.</p> <p>CPO12.40 Promote and encourage ongoing works to improve the navigability of the Royal Canal, and to investigate the provision of mooring points in appropriate locations along the Canal and on the islands within the major lakes of the County</p> <p>CPO12.41 Protect the historical, cultural and scenic importance of the Islands on the lakes and rivers within the County from inappropriate development, whether on the Islands themselves, or at locations that interferes with their integrity and setting.</p> <p><b>Peatlands - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.42 Protect the designated peatland areas and landscapes, including any ancient walkways through bogs and to conserve their ecological, archaeological, cultural, and educational heritage.</p> <p>CPO12.43 Ensure that peatland areas which are designated (or proposed for designation) as NHAs, SACs or SPAs are conserved for their ecological, climate regulation, archaeological, cultural and educational significance.</p> <p>CPO12.44 Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders on all suitable peatland sites to demonstrate best practice in sustainable peatland conservation, management and restoration techniques and to promote their heritage and educational value subject to Ecological Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening, as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO12.45 Work with relevant agencies such as the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, Bord na Mona, NPWS, Coillte and adjacent local authorities to prepare an after-use framework plan for the peatlands and related infrastructure, to provide for the future sustainable and environmentally sensitive use of large industrial peatlands sites when peat harvesting finishes.</p> <p><b>Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.46 Work with partners and stakeholders to progress the development of the Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park and Biosphere.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity and Nature Conservation – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.47 Support the implementation of any relevant recommendations contained in the National Biodiversity Plan, the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and the National Peatlands Strategy the National Biodiversity Plan and the Longford Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024.</p> <p>CPO12.48 Ensure, where appropriate, the protection and conservation of areas, sites, species and ecological/networks of biodiversity value outside designated sites.</p> <p>CPO12.49 Improve the biodiversity and ecological value of the County through the promotion of the planting of native and heritage / traditional varieties and grass-cutting schemes amended to encourage local wildflower growth.</p> <p>CPO12.50 Require an appropriate level of ecological assessment by suitably qualified professional(s) to accompany development proposals likely to impact on such areas or species.</p> <p>CPO12.51 Assess proposed large-scale developments, particularly on greenfield sites and in environmentally sensitive areas, in terms of their impact on the biodiversity of the area.</p> <p>CPO12.52 Screen all projects and plans arising from this plan for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. All such projects and plans will also be required to comply with statutory Environmental Impact Assessment requirements where relevant.</p> <p>CPO12.53 Require mitigating measures in certain cases where it is evident that biodiversity is likely to be affected. These measures may, in association with other specified requirements, include establishment of wildlife areas/corridors/parks, tree planting, wildflower meadows/marshes and other areas. With regard to residential development, in certain cases, these measures may be carried out in conjunction with the provision of open space and/or play areas.</p> <p>CPO12.54 Facilitate increased awareness of the County's biodiversity and natural heritage through the provision of information to landowners and the community generally, in cooperation with statutory and other partners.</p> <p>CPO12.55 Investigate and encourage the establishment of wildlife areas and corridors, particularly in the context of educational, recreational and amenity facilities.</p> <p>CPO12.56 Enhance the County's biodiversity and natural heritage, including its landscape, by promoting appropriate recreational and amenity schemes.</p> <p>CPO12.57 Ensure that the County's watercourses are retained for their biodiversity and flood protection values.</p> <p>CPO12.58 Conserve and enhance where possible, the wildlife habitats of the County's rivers and riparian zones, lakes, canals and streams which occur outside of designated areas to provide a network of habitats and biodiversity corridors throughout the county.</p> <p>CPO12.59 Maintain a biodiversity zone of not less than 10 metres from the top of the bank of all watercourses in the county, with the full extent of the protection zone to be determined on a case by case basis by the Council, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities.</p> <p>(Agriculture, native tree forestry, appropriate public amenity and recreational projects (Including the provision of slipways and angling infrastructure) and strategic Green Routes / Blueways / Trails will be open for consideration within the biodiversity protection zone, subject to appropriate safeguards and assessments).</p> <p>CPO12.60 Any development that is visible from any of our protected areas or waterways shall be substantially screened with multiple lines of native tree and hedge planting on all sides.</p> <p><b>Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.61 Encourage and promote in co-operation with Coillte and the Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources, the preparation and adoption of an Indicative Forestry Strategy for the County, as an important means of contributing to its objective of sustaining, protecting and enhancing the County's biodiversity, natural resources and landscape and developing tourism product.</p>

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		<p>CPO12.62 Preserve and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the County, by promoting the protection of trees, groups of trees and ancient woodlands, of significant amenity value, especially native and broadleaf species.</p> <p>CPO12.63 Undertake a survey of trees and woodlands within the County in order to identify individual trees and or, groups and stands of trees of value worthy of protection, including those in Demense landscapes.</p> <p>CPO12.64 Protect trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and seek to designate additional Tree Preservation Orders, where appropriate.</p> <p>CPO12.65 Protect the following important stands of trees identified in Appendix X from inappropriate development and unmanaged tree felling not part of an overall plan to ensure their sustainability;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Avenue at Smithfield, Legan</li> <li>2. Woods at Carriglass, Castleforbes and Cashel. The perimeter deciduous woodland of Newcastle Woods but not the interior areas of commercial forestry.</li> <li>3. Portanure Pine Woods</li> <li>4. Derrycassan Woods</li> <li>5. Culnagore Wood</li> <li>6. Rathcline Wood</li> <li>7. Trees along Regional Road R393 at Knockahaw</li> <li>8. Woodlands at Erne Head, Woodville and Golaroe</li> <li>9. Lime trees at Mosstown, Keenagh</li> <li>10. Trees at Rathsallagh</li> <li>11. Wood at Farragh, Killoe</li> </ol> <p>The Council reserve the right, through the appropriate process, to add to this list of protected trees over the period of the Development Plan.</p> <p>CPO12.66 Discourage the felling of mature trees and hedgerow, particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows to facilitate development and seek Tree Management Plans to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and incorporated into the design of new developments.</p> <p>CPO12.67 Protect all substantial areas of deciduous forest within the County, other than areas of commercial forestry. Proposals for development in these areas should seek to interact with the landscape character of the forested areas and its limits, recognising the importance of working with the forest to achieve sustainable development proposals, and enhancing and building on aspects of the forested areas that increase biodiversity and the natural habitat.</p> <p>CPO12.68 Encourage the development of proposals for new woodlands and community woodlands in urban/urban fringe areas utilising funding available through schemes such as the NeighbourWood and Native Woodland Schemes.</p> <p>CPO12.69 Protect and preserve existing hedgerows in new developments, particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows, and where their removal is necessary during the course of road works, or other works, seek their replacement with new hedgerows of native species indigenous to the area.</p> <p>CPO12.70 Investigate the potential of completing a review of the Hedgerow Survey 2006.</p> <p><b>Invasive Species - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.71 Promote best practice in the control of invasive species in the carrying out of its functions in association with relevant authorities.</p> <p>CPO12.72 Develop and implement a programme of public awareness on the spread of invasive species and noxious weeds.</p> <p>CPO12.73 Require landowners and developers to adhere to best practice guidance in relation to the control of invasive species.</p> <p>CPO12.74 Ensure that proposals for development do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species.</p> <p>If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are or were previously present, the applicant will be required to submit a control and management program for the particular invasive species as part of the planning process and to comply with the provisions of the European Communities Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011)</p> <p><b>Tourism Related Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO10.12 "Monitor and manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant detrimental impacts, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Visitor/Habitat Management Plans will be required for proposed projects as relevant and appropriate."</p> <p>CPO10.13 "Consider applications for tourism development in line with the planning criteria as set down in this plan (See Chapter 15: Development Management Standards), and which will also be subject to high standards of design and materials particularly given their sensitive locations."</p> <p>CPO10.14 "Support and promote the use of the 'Ecotourism Principles of Tourism Development' in all proposed tourism activities in the County."</p> <p>CPO10.15 "Ensure the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals."</p>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.</li> <li>• Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.</li> </ul>	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors.</p> <p><b>Major Accidents Directive – County Policy Objective</b></p> <p>CPO 5.161 Have regard to the following in assessing applications for new developments (including extensions);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Major Accidents Directive (Seveso II – 96/082/EEC and Seveso III 2012/18/EU);</li> <li>- The potential effects on public health and safety;</li> <li>- The need to ensure adequate distances between such developments and residential areas, areas of public use and any areas of sensitivity.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 5.162 Any proposals for developments within the vicinity of major accident hazard sites shall have cognisance of the required minimum separation distances as required by the Major Accidents Directive. In this regard all future proposals of this nature shall be forwarded to the Health and Safety Authority.</p> <p><b>Radon</b></p> <p>CPO12.77 Ensure the implementation of the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations (including any updated/superseding regulations that may be published within the lifetime of this Plan).</p>

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Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.</li> <li>Potential for riverbank erosion.</li> </ul>	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Water.</p> <p><b>Prevention of Pollution - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.75 Pursue the preparation, establishment and implementation of/compliance with the following (and any future updates):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region.</li> <li>National Hazardous Waste Plan.</li> <li>EU and National legislation on the prevention of Air and Noise Pollution.</li> </ul> <p>CPO12.76 Encourage and promote environmental awareness and environmentally friendly practices in all aspects of life, particularly in industry, agriculture and all other commercial and leisure activities.</p> <p>CPO12.77 Reduce the impacts of existing pollutant activities through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiation of a reduction in the pollutant activity to a non-polluting level or a revision of operating times to reduce the impact of the activity on adjacent land uses.</li> <li>Relocation to a more appropriate location where adjacent land uses are more compatible.</li> <li>Imposition of conditions restricting emissions/activity</li> <li>Use of enforcement action against unauthorised developments/uses.</li> </ul> <p>CPO12.78 Ensure the implementation of the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations (including any updated/superseding regulations that may be published within the lifetime of this Plan).</p> <p>CPO12.79 Encourage energy efficient design solutions, such as optimising solar gain and geothermal or air source heating, in order to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and increase environmental quality.</p> <p>CPO12.80 Assess any application for planning permission for new development, extension to existing development, or intensification or change of use, in terms of its potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Where such development would have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, planning permission will not be forthcoming, prior to the proposal and introduction of mitigation measures agreed with the planning authority to eliminate negative environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.</p> <p><b>Landfills</b></p> <p>CPO 5.118 The Council shall continue to fulfil its duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 524 of 2008), including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills.</p> <p><b>Geological Sites – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.19 Contribute towards the appropriate protection and maintenance of the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest listed in Table 12.5.</p> <p>CPO12.20 Support the implementation of recommendations made in the County Geological Audit (2015) and facilitate a review of the Geological Audit.</p> <p>CPO12.21 Consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland when undertaking, approving or authorising developments which are likely to impact on County Geological Sites or involve significant ground excavations.</p> <p>CPO12.22 Contribute towards the appropriate protection of Geological Natural Heritage Areas that become designated during the lifetime of the Plan from inappropriate development.</p> <p>CPO12.23 Encourage and promote, where appropriate, public access to geological and geomorphological sites and avoid inappropriate development through consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland, subject to environmental and habitats assessment.</p> <p><b>Peatlands - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.42 Protect the designated peatland areas and landscapes, including any ancient walkways through bogs and to conserve their ecological, archaeological, cultural, and educational heritage.</p> <p>CPO12.43 Ensure that peatland areas which are designated (or proposed for designation) as NHAs, SACs or SPAs are conserved for their ecological, climate regulation, archaeological, cultural and educational significance.</p> <p>CPO12.44 Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders on all suitable peatland sites to demonstrate best practice in sustainable peatland conservation, management and restoration techniques and to promote their heritage and educational value subject to Ecological Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening, as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO12.45 Work with relevant agencies such as the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, Bord na Mona, NPWS, Coillte and adjacent local authorities to prepare an after-use framework plan for the peatlands and related infrastructure, to provide for the future sustainable and environmentally sensitive use of large industrial peatlands sites when peat harvesting finishes.</p> <p><b>Soil Protection – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.104 Recognise and protect fertile agricultural soils in the County as an important non-renewable natural resource and protect soils identified as agriculturally important in the Landscape Assessment through the prevention of inappropriate use in the development management process.</p> <p>CPO12.105 Identify areas of poorer soil in the County and respect their limitations, particularly in terms of their assimilative properties to prevent pollution</p> <p>CPO12.106 Prevent pollution in areas of poor soils through the implementation of relevant EPA and Department of Agriculture guidance and regulations in the percolation and/or spreading of domestic and agricultural effluent to land.</p> <p>CPO12.107 Investigate the potential uses of cutaway bogs in the County for re-naturing and amenity and particularly consider the development of sustainable and renewable energy projects.</p> <p>CPO12.108 Ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p> <p>CPO12.109 Require that the EPA's publication Code of Practice: Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites (2007) shall be taken into account as relevant by proposals for development within or adjacent to old landfill sites.</p> <p>CPO12.110 Ensure all undeveloped, contaminated sites shall be remediated to internationally accepted standards prior to redevelopment. All applications shall be accompanied by a report from a qualified, expert consultant remediation incorporating international best practice and expertise on innovative ecological restoration techniques including specialist planting and green initiatives that create aesthetically improved sites, healthy environments and contribute to the provision of new green open spaces as integral parts of newly created areas.</p>

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		<p>CPO12.111 Require that the treatment/management of any contaminated material shall comply as appropriate with the Waste Management Act 1996 (waste licence, waste facility permit), as amended, and under the EPA Act 1992 (Industrial Emissions licensing, in particular the First Schedule, Class 11 Waste), as amended. These measures will ensure that contaminated material will be managed in a manner that removes any risk to human health and ensures that the end use will be compatible with any risk.</p> <p>CPO12.112 Require that prior to the grant of approval on contaminated sites, developers will carry out a full contaminated land risk assessment to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the proposed land uses will be compatible with the protection of health and safety (including the durability of structures and services) - during both construction and occupation; and</li> <li>• How any contaminated soil or water encountered will be appropriately dealt with.</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.</li> <li>• Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.</li> </ul>	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets.</p> <p><b>Water Quality and Groundwater Protection Policies - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO 12.81 Protect and develop, in a sustainable manner, the existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the County and manage development in a manner consistent with the protection of these resources in conformity with the EU Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010, and any subsequent plan and the Groundwater Protection Scheme.</p> <p>CPO12.82 Implement the relevant recommendations contained within the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of the plan</p> <p>Development proposals shall not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands.</p> <p>CPO 12.83 Collaborate with Irish Water and other relevant stakeholders with the aim of protecting existing and potential water resources and achieving 'good status' in all water bodies in accordance with the requirements and guidance of relevant EU Directives and Regulations, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same).</p> <p>CPO 12.84 Ensure licensing of discharges of effluent to groundwater, having particular regard to the requirements of the EC Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010).</p> <p>CPO 12.85 Discourage the over-concentration of individual septic tanks and treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.</p> <p>CPO 12.86 Ensure implementation of the EC (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 610 of 2010, which give effect to several EU Directives including in relation to protection of waters against pollution from agricultural sources ('the Nitrates Directive'), dangerous substances in water, and protection of groundwater.</p> <p>CPO 12.87 Encourage the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the National River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO12.88 Protect ground and surface water resources from pollution by ensuring the appropriate control of development in areas of high groundwater vulnerability, the recognition of ground water resources and abstraction points and any identified major catchment areas of surface water bodies capable of use as a potable water resource and ensuring that such sources, their zones of contribution, and areas of aquifer vulnerability are protected.</p> <p>Development of a potentially pollutant nature in these areas and any future areas identified shall be prohibited.</p> <p>CPO12.89 Seek to control and manage any potential point and/or diffuse sources of pollution with a view towards improving and maintaining 'good' water quality. Such activities include, but are not restricted to, wastewater and industrial discharges, landfills, quarries, mines, contaminated land, agricultural activities, wastewater from unsewered properties, forestry activities and the use and discharge of dangerous substances.</p> <p>CPO12.90 Consider development proposals that involve the physical modification of water bodies, including abstraction of water, having regard to the potential effect on habitats and plant and animal species, with particular consideration given to European Sites and specific actions proposed where negative impacts are anticipated.</p> <p>CPO12.91 Incorporate water protection measures into initial site selection and design and produce a Water Protection Plan for all planning applications.</p> <p>Water Protection Plans should aim to prevent contamination of storm water, minimise soiled and waste waters, install proper containment for material storage, install appropriate treatment and disposal arrangement for soiled and waste waters and take account of legal requirements for discharges to ground and surface waters.</p> <p>CPO12.92 Support, where possible, the development and implementation of a Groundwater Protection Scheme in tandem with the Geological Survey Ireland (GSI).</p> <p><b>Surface Water Management - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO 5.89 Support in conjunction with Irish Water the improvement of storm water infrastructure to improve sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in urban environments.</p> <p>CPO 5.90 Ensure new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure which meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, associated River Basin Management Plans and CFRAM Management Plans.</p> <p>CPO 5.91 Require surface water storage measures to be provided in new developments where it is considered that the surface water run-off levels exceed permissible discharge rates. Storm water run-off design should be carried out in accordance with Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) standards such as The SuDS Manual (CIRIA, 2015), "Dublin Corporation Stormwater Management Policy Technical Guidelines" and "Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works" incorporating "Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study, Volume 2, New Developments" or any future updates.</p> <p>CPO 5.92 Ensure that in public and private developments in urban areas, both within developments and within the public realm, seek to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of sustainable drainage techniques for new development or for extensions to existing developments, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.</p> <p>CPO 5.93 Maintain and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in the county and promote and facilitate the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems including integrated constructed wetlands and to promote and support the retrofitting of SuDS in established urban areas.</p> <p>CPO 5.94 Prohibit the discharge of surface water run-off and rainwater into foul sewer systems.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk Management - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO 5.95 Support the implementation of recommendations in the CFRAM Programme to ensure that flood risk management policies and infrastructure are progressively implemented.</p> <p>CPO 5.96 Support the implementation of recommendations in the Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP's), including planned investment measures for managing and reducing flood risk.</p> <p>CPO 5.97 Support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010) and the DEHLG/OPW publication The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Departmental Circular PL2/2014 (or any updated/superseding versions). This will include the following:</p>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the Guidelines, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated in the accompanying Strategic Flood Risk Assessment report, including fluvial, pluvial and groundwater flooding, and any other flood risk areas that may be identified during the period of the plan or in relation to a planning application.</li> <li>• Development proposals in areas where there is an identified or potential risk of flooding or that could give rise to a risk of flooding elsewhere will be required to carry out a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, and Justification Test where appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009, (or any superseding document) and Circular PL2/2014 (as updated/superseded). Any flood risk assessment should include an assessment of the potential impacts of climate change, such as an increase in the extent or probability of flooding, and any associated measures necessary to address these impacts.</li> <li>• Development that would be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding or that would cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations shall not normally be permitted.</li> <li>• Where certain measures proposed to mitigate or manage the risk of flooding associated with new developments are likely to result in significant effects to the environment or European sites downstream, such measures will undergo environmental assessment and Appropriate Assessment, as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>The Council shall work with other bodies and organisations, as appropriate, to help protect critical infrastructure, including water and wastewater, within the County, from risk of flooding. Future amendments to the plan shall consider, as appropriate any new and/or emerging data, including, when available, any relevant information contained in the CFRAM's Flood Risk Management Plans and as recommended in the SFRA for the Plan.</p> <p>CPO 5.98 Protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any superseding document) and the guidance contained in DMS 16.204. Where a development/land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, then the development proposal will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test and site-specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 and Circular PL2/2014 (as updated/superseded). In Flood Zone C, (Please also refer to Development Management Standard, Development Management Standard, DMS 16.204, where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1%, Flood Zone C), the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed.</p> <p>CPO 5.99 Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all planning applications in areas at risk of flooding (fluvial, pluvial or groundwater), even for developments appropriate to the particular Flood Zone. The detail of these site-specific FRAs will depend on the level of risk and scale of development. A detailed site-specific FRA should quantify the risks, the effects of selected mitigation and the management of any residual risks. The assessments shall consider and provide information on the implications of climate change with regard to flood risk in relevant locations. The 2009 OPW Draft Guidance on Assessment of Potential Future Scenarios for Flood Risk Management (or any superseding document) and available information from the CFRAM Studies shall be consulted with to this effect.</p> <p>CPO 5.100 Require all applications in areas prone to flooding to be subject to the Justification Test set out in the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. Compensatory flood storage provision or the provision of flood defences will not override the need for completion of the justification test.</p> <p>CPO 5.101 Consult with the OPW in relation to proposed developments in the vicinity of drainage channels and rivers for which the OPW are responsible, and to retain a strip on either side of such channels where required, to facilitate maintenance access thereto.</p> <p>CPO 5.102 Actively work with the CFRAM Programmes and catchment-based Flood Planning Groups, including where catchments go beyond the Council's administrative boundary, in the development and implementation of catchment-based strategies for the management of flood risk - including those relating to storage and conveyance.</p> <p>CPO 5.103 Protect the integrity of any formal (OPW or Longford County Council) flood risk management infrastructure, thereby ensuring that any new development does not negatively impact any existing defence infrastructure or compromise any proposed new infrastructure.</p> <p>CPO 5.104 Ensure that the reasonable requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland are adhered to in the construction of flood alleviation measures in the county.</p> <p>CPO 5.105 Protect water bodies and watercourses within the County from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine and wetland areas as appropriate. In addition, promote the sustainable management and uses of water bodies and avoid culverting or realignment of these features.</p> <p>CPO 5.106 Recognise the important role of peatland and other wetland areas in flooding patterns. Development in these areas shall therefore be subject to a Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p> <p>CPO 5.107 Ensure each flood risk management activity is examined to determine actions required to embed and provide for effective climate change adaptation as set out in the OPW Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan Flood Risk Management applicable at the time.</p> <p>CPO 5.108 Facilitate the appropriate management and sustainable use of flood risk areas designated as 'Constrained Land Use' on Settlement Plan zoning maps .</p> <p>CPO 5.109 Ensure that applications to existing developments in flood vulnerable zones shall provide details of structural and non-structural risk management measures to include, but not be limited to specifications of the following - floor levels, internal layout, flood resilient construction, flood resistant construction, emergency response planning, access and egress during flood events.</p> <p>(Please Refer to CPO 5.108 and Development Management Standard DMS 16.205.</p>
Air Climatic and Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including</li> </ul>	<p><b>Air Quality - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.93 Promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/5/0/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 201) (or any updated/superseding documents).</p> <p>CPO12.94 Support the collation of air quality and greenhouse gas monitoring data in support of a regional air quality and greenhouse gas emission inventory.</p> <p>CPO12.95 Seek to ensure in tandem with the EPA, that all developments are operated in a manner that does not contribute to deterioration in air quality.</p> <p>CPO12.96 Promote alternative and sustainable transport methods in order to maintain good air quality and support the introduction of charging points for electric vehicles (EVs) throughout the county and will seek to replace its fleet with EVs where feasible.</p> <p>CPO12.97 Promote the retention of trees, in-particular broad leaf-species, hedgerows and other vegetation where possible, and encourage afforestation and tree planting as a means of air purification and filtering.</p> <p><b>Noise and Light Pollution County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO12.98 Support the implementation of the Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and associated Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 and any subsequent revision of these regulations.</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
	<p>those from cars, and air quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors.</li> <li>• Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.</li> </ul>	<p>CPO12.99 Support the Implementation of the Longford Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 (and any revision made thereto)</p> <p>CPO12.100 Require all developments to be designed and operated in a manner that will minimise and contain noise levels, including the use of noise / vibration attenuation measures as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO12.101 Require the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment for all developments likely to introduce noise generating uses in proximity to noise sensitive uses.</p> <p>CPO12.102 Control lighting in urban and rural areas and in particular in sensitive locations, in order to minimise impacts on residential amenity, habitats and species of importance.</p> <p>CPO12.103 Require the use of energy efficient public lighting in all new development proposals.</p> <p><b>Climatic Factors</b></p> <p>CPO 3.1 Support the implementation and achievement of European, national, regional and local objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the following documents, taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage) and having regard to the Climate mitigation and adaptation measures which have been outlined through the policy objectives in this Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Action Plan (2019 and any subsequent versions);</li> <li>• National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions);</li> <li>• Any Regional Decarbonisation Plan prepared on foot of commitments included in the EMRA RSES;</li> <li>• Relevant provisions of any Sectoral Adaptation Plans prepared to comply the requirements of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, including those seeking to contribute towards the National Transition Objective, to pursue, and achieve, the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by the end of the year 2050; and</li> <li>• Longford County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 3.2 Support and facilitate European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation having regard to the measures detailed in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 (these have been informed by available guidance on Climate Action and Mitigation, including that from the EPA).</p> <p>CPO 3.3 Support the implementation and adoption of the Longford County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and promote the County as a key driver of the transition to a low carbon economy within the Region.</p> <p>CPO 3.4 Contribute towards climate mitigation and adaptation, taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage).</p> <p>CPO 3.5 Promote the benefits to quality of life, public health and biodiversity arising from implementation of policies promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p>CPO 3.6 Provide for a reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions by providing for consolidated future development which supports sustainable travel patterns in line with the County Core Strategy.</p> <p>CPO 3.7 Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes that support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, especially in the energy and agriculture sectors</p> <p>CPO 3.8 Support the delivery of sustainable development projects under the European Green Deal and the Just Transition Fund.</p> <p>CPO 3.9 Support collaboration between local authorities, the Bord na Móna Transition Team and relevant stakeholders and the development of partnership approaches to integrated peatland management for a just transition that incorporates any relevant policies and strategies such as the Bord na Móna Biodiversity Plan 2016-2021 and the national Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Plans. This shall include support for the rehabilitation and/or re-wetting of suitable peatland habitats.</p> <p>CPO 3.10 Work in collaboration with the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland and relevant stakeholders to deliver a number of sustainable energy communities throughout the County.</p> <p>CPO 3.11 Consider the use of heat mapping to support developments which deliver energy efficiency and the recovery of energy that would otherwise be wasted.</p> <p>CPO 3.12 Carry out a feasibility assessment for district heating and any subsequent Local Area Plans or other statutory planning documents shall identify local waste heat sources, where appropriate.</p> <p>CPO 3.13 Seek to ensure primacy for transport options that provide for unit reductions in carbon emissions. This can most effectively be done by promoting public transport, walking and cycling, and by actively seeking to reduce car use in circumstances where alternative options are available.</p> <p>CPO 3.14 Maintain existing green infrastructure and encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of open space amenities;</li> <li>• Sustainable management of water;</li> <li>• Protection and management of biodiversity;</li> <li>• Protection of cultural heritage; and</li> <li>• Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 3.15 Work with the National Trails Office, Coillte, the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling.</p> <p>CPO 3.16 Complete a detailed local survey and audit of greenhouse gas emissions for the County in order to effectively target and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a targeted approach at the County level and support the development of a Regional Inventory of GHG Emissions.</p> <p>CPO 3.17 Seek the integration of positive climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in all planning applications.</p> <p>CPO 3.18 Provide training on climate mitigation measures.</p> <p>Also refer to: the overall approach to compact development and sustainability provided by the Plan; and Chapter 4 Housing Climate Context and Associated Actions, Chapter 5 Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Communications - Climate Actions, Chapter 6 Climate Action and 'Just Transition' Fund Opportunities – County Policy Objectives, Chapter 7: Placemaking Climate Context and Associated Actions, Chapter 8 Economic Development Climate Change Actions, Chapter 9 Rural Economy Climate Change Actions, Chapter 10 Tourism Climate Change Actions, Chapter 11 Built and Cultural Heritage Climate Actions, Chapter 12 Natural Heritage and the Environment - Climate Change Actions, Chapter 13 Green Infrastructure Climate Change Actions and Chapter 14 Landscape Character Climate Change Actions</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in:  (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Increases in waste levels.</li> <li>Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter.</li> </ul>	<p>Also see measures under CEMP requirement, other environmental components including Population and Human Health, Cultural Heritage, Soil, Water, Air and various Land Use and Phasing provisions from the Plan.</p> <p><b>Water Supply and Distribution - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO 5.72 Work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water infrastructure, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure to facilitate future growth.</p> <p>CPO 5.73 Protect both ground and surface water resources and to work with Irish Water to develop and implement Water Safety Plans to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment.</p> <p>CPO 5.74 Have regard to the EPA 2019 publication 'Drinking Water Report for Public Water Supplies 2018' (and any subsequent update) in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the County in conjunction with Irish Water.</p> <p>CPO 5.75 Support recommendations made by the EPA arising from any failure to meet drinking water standards and any enlistment on the EPA's Remedial Action List in conjunction with Irish Water.</p> <p>CPO 5.76 Support the preparation of Drinking Water Protection Plans and Source Protection Plans to protect sources of public water supply, in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>CPO 5.77 Ensure that adequate water services is available to service development prior to the granting of planning permission and to require developers to consult Irish Water regarding available capacity, prior to applying for planning permission.</p> <p>CPO 5.78 Promote the sustainable use of water and water conservation in existing and new development within the County by encouraging demand management measures among all water users and requiring new developments to incorporate water conservation measures.</p> <p>CPO 5.79 Provide guidance and advice regarding the protection of water supply to private wells with the overall responsibility remaining with the householder.</p> <p><b>Wastewater - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO 5.80 Liaise and work in conjunction with Irish Water during the lifetime of the Plan in the provision, upgrading or extension of wastewater collection and treatment systems in the County to serve existing and planned future populations and enterprise in accordance with the requirements of the Core Strategy.</p> <p>CPO 5.81 Ensure that development will only be permitted in instances where there is sufficient capacity for appropriate collection, treatment and disposal (in compliance with the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan) of wastewater.</p> <p>CPO 5.82 Collaborate with Irish Water in contributing towards compliance with the relevant provisions of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations 2001 and 2004 and the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 as amended.</p> <p>CPO 5.83 Support strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure investment and provide for the separation of foul and surface water networks to accommodate future growth in the County.</p> <p>CPO 5.84 Have regard to the capacity of the Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon wastewater treatment plants, with any further growth in these settlements contingent on the upgrading of these treatment plants, or the submission of appropriate temporary engineering solutions for individual developments which suitably address wastewater treatment and disposal to the satisfaction of the Council and Irish Water and in accordance with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and relevant River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO 5.85 Resist the discharge of additional surface water to combined sewers and promote Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) and solutions to maximise the capacity of towns with combined drainage systems.</p> <p>CPO 5.86 Protect against development proposals, involving individual treatment systems, which would increase effluent loading within existing housing clusters located within areas of high groundwater vulnerability.</p> <p>CPO 5.87 Ensure that private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with EPA's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE. ≤10) (EPA 2009), as may be amended.</li> <li>- EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels (1999) and EPA Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater (EPA 2011), as may be amended.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 5.88 Support appropriate options for the extraction of energy and other resources from sewerage sludge in the County.</p> <p><b>Waste Management - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO 5.110 Support the implementation of the Eastern and Midlands Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and any updates made thereto.</p> <p>CPO 5.111 Continue to facilitate and promote the provision of civic amenity sites, including 'bring centres' for the purposes of providing a collection point for the recycling of domestic waste, subject to siting, location, compatibility with adjacent land uses and other relevant development management criteria.</p> <p>CPO 5.112 Promote the principles of the circular economy in minimising waste going to landfill and maximise waste as a resource, with prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling and recovery prioritised in that order, over the disposal of waste.</p> <p>CPO 5.113 Promote and support the provision of separate collection of waste in accordance with the requirements of the Waste Management (Food Waste) Regulations 2009, the Waste Framework Directive Regulations 2011 and other relevant legislation.</p> <p>CPO 5.114 Promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness activities and community-based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.</p> <p>CPO 5.115 Promote and facilitate high quality sustainable waste recovery and disposal infrastructure/technology including composting (anaerobic digester) plants for managing organic solid waste, at appropriate locations, with the County subject to the protection of the amenities of the surrounding environment including European Sites, and in keeping with the EU waste hierarchy.</p> <p>CPO 5.116 Require, where necessary, Project Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plans as part of applications for development in accordance with "Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects" (DoEHLG, 2006). Such plans should be submitted for developments above the stated thresholds within these guidelines and as required by the Planning Authority.</p> <p>CPO 5.117 Control development within its powers through the planning process in order to prevent and/or limit the impact of potential air, water and soil pollution.</p> <p>CPO 5.118 The Council shall continue to fulfil its duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 524 of 2008), including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills.</p>

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<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Architectural Heritage Policies - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.1 Implement the County Heritage Plan 2019-2024 and seek to update the Heritage Plan over the lifetime of the County Development Plan.</p> <p>CPO11.2 Promote the maintenance and appropriate re-use of the existing building stock.</p> <p>CPO11.3 Ensure that all development should be appropriate to its setting in the landscape or townscape and responds to and reinforces local character and heritage.</p> <p>CPO11.4 Encourage the enhancement, management, protection and the promotion of access to and understanding of the architectural heritage of the County.</p> <p>CPO11.5 Recognise and protect the unique historical, mythological and cultural significance of Ardagh Mountain. Developments which materially impinge on the character of the mountain will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO11.6 Provide detailed guidance notes and continue to develop the Council's advisory/educational role with regard to heritage matters and to promote awareness, understanding and appreciation of the architectural heritage of the County.</p> <p>CPO11.7 Ensure that proposals for development to structures included as part of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (DoEHLG) and any updated version, maintain and enhance the character of these structures.</p> <p>CPO11.8 Ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential is sited and designed in a sensitive manner with a view to minimal detracton from the monument or its setting.</p> <p>CPO11.9 Require, as part of the development management process, archaeological impact assessments, geophysical survey, test excavations or monitoring as appropriate, for development in the vicinity of monuments or in areas of archaeological potential. Where there are upstanding remains, a visual impact assessment may be required.</p> <p>CPO11.10 Refer any proposed development which may impact on the integrity and/or setting of any monuments, sites, objects or areas of archaeological, cultural, architectural, historical or heritage importance under the protection of this Development Plan and/or the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the relevant section of the DoAHG for observations/comment prior to a grant of permission/approval being obtained.</p> <p>CPO11.11 Ensure applications for housing developments shall include provision for the naming of estates in recognition of the cultural heritage of the area in which they are situated.</p> <p><b>Record of Protected Structures (RPS) Policies - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.12 Review and update the Record of Protected Structures on an on-going basis and to make additions and deletions as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO11.13 For the purposes of the RPS, identify and retain good examples of historic street furniture, e.g. cast-iron post boxes, water pumps, light fixtures and signage, as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO11.14 Promote best conservation practice and encourage the use of appropriately qualified professional advisors, tradesmen and craftsmen, with recognised conservation expertise, for works to Protected Structures.</p> <p>CPO11.15 Ensure the protection of structures included in the Record of Protected Structures by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controlling development which would alter the character of Protected Structures and proposed Protected Structures.</li> <li>Monitoring the condition of Protected Structures and proposed protected structures to identify those endangered by neglect, vandalism or unauthorised development and taking appropriate action.</li> <li>Preventing the endangerment of Protected Structures in the Council's ownership.</li> </ul> <p>CPO11.16 Consider the acquisition of Protected Structures, where possible and where economic constraints permit, if this is necessary to protect the structure.</p> <p>CPO11.17 Encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and reuse of existing older buildings/ buildings of architectural merit, where appropriate, in preference to their demolition and redevelopment. In certain cases, land use zoning restrictions may be relaxed in order to secure the conservation of the Protected Structure.</p> <p>CPO11.18 Facilitate contemporary and innovative design providing that they are of a sufficient high quality and do not detract from the character of the historic fabric of the Protected Structure.</p> <p>CPO11.19 Require applications for development where a Protected Structure or its setting is likely to be materially affected, to submit a detailed assessment of the building.</p> <p>CPO11.20 Protect the setting of Protected Structures and refuse permission for development within the curtilage or adjacent to a Protected Structure which would adversely impact on the character and special interest of the structure, where appropriate.</p> <p>CPO11.21 Issue Declarations as to the type of works that would affect the character of a Protected Structure and therefore require planning permission.</p> <p>CPO11.22 Administer the DoAHG Historic Structures Fund including the assessment of applications, ensuring that the works enhance and do not adversely affect the character of a Protected Structure and have been carried out in accordance with the conditions of the fund.</p> <p>CPO11.23 Promote and support the funding sources available for Protected Structures and built heritage within the County.</p> <p>CPO11.24 Identify and seek further funding for the upkeep of Protected Structures within the County.</p> <p><b>Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) Policies - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.25 Prepare and review, where necessary, detailed character statements and planning guidance for the 2 no. ACA's in the County, within the lifetime of the Development Plan.</p> <p>CPO11.26 Protect the character of Architectural Conservation Areas in County Longford and ensure the preservation of the character of the Architectural Conservation Area.</p> <p>CPO11.27 Promote best conservation practice and encourage the use of appropriately qualified professional advisors, tradesmen and craftsmen, with recognised conservation expertise, for works to buildings of historic significance within Architectural Conservation Areas.</p> <p>CPO11.28 Identify and designate new Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's) as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Historic Gardens, Demesnes and Designed Landscapes Policies - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.29 Support the publication of a County Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, in order to promote the intrinsic character of those within the county.</p> <p>CPO11.30 Encourage the protection and enhancement of heritage gardens and demesne landscapes, and to support, in consultation with the owners, the provision of public access to these sites as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO11.31 Discourage development that would adversely affect the character, the principal components of, or the setting of historic parks, gardens and demesnes of heritage significance.</p> <p>CPO11.32 Require that proposals for development in designated landscapes and demesnes include an appraisal of the landscape, designed views and vistas, including a tree survey, where relevant, in order to inform site appropriate design proposals and ensure the on-going and future sustainability of the estate.</p> <p>CPO11.33 Continue the development, expansion and the protection of the (Albert Reynolds Peace Park (the Mall) in Longford town.</p>

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		<p><b>Vernacular Architecture Policies – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.34 Encourage the retention, sympathetic maintenance and sustainable re-use of historic buildings, including vernacular dwellings or farm buildings and the retention of historic streetscape character, fabric, detail and features.</p> <p>CPO11.35 Seek the retention of surviving historic plot sizes and street patterns in the villages and towns of County Longford and incorporate ancient boundaries or layouts, such as burgage plots and townland boundaries, into re-developments.</p> <p>CPO11.36 Actively promote the retention and restoration of thatched dwellings as a key component of the built heritage of the County.</p> <p>CPO11.37 Create and maintain and update the survey of surviving thatched structures in the County and to promote available grant schemes to assist owners with their retention and repair.</p> <p>CPO11.38 Ensure that conversions or extensions of traditional buildings or the provision of new adjoining buildings, are sensitively designed and do not detract from the character of the historic building.</p> <p>CPO11.39 Encourage the retention and appropriate re-use of vernacular buildings, where appropriate and encourage the retention of the original fabric such as windows, doors and other significant features of historic buildings.</p> <p><b>Industrial and Agricultural Heritage Policies - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.40 Create and maintain an inventory of Industrial and Agricultural Heritage assets within the County.</p> <p>CPO11.41 Support the retention and appropriate repair/maintenance of historic bridges and other significant industrial heritage features in the County.</p> <p>CPO11.42 Encourage appropriate change of use and reuse of industrial heritage structures provided such a change does not seriously impact on the intrinsic character of the structure and that all works are carried out in accordance with best conservation practice, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria.</p> <p>CPO11.43 Encourage the retention and appropriate re-use of vacant traditional farm buildings, where appropriate, and encourage the retention of the original fabric such as windows, doors and other significant features of interest.</p> <p>Financial support Incentives for Built Heritage and National Monument assets Policies - County Policy Objectives</p> <p>It is Policy Objective of the Council to</p> <p>CPO11.44 Ensure the protection and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage of County Longford by securing and promoting the provision of suitable funding initiatives where possible.</p> <p><b>Archaeological Heritage Policy – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO11.45 Protect known and unknown archaeological areas, sites, structures, monuments and objects in the County.</p> <p>CPO11.46 Protect the integrity of the settings of archaeological areas, sites, structures, monuments and objects in the County.</p> <p>CPO11.47 Protect the National Monuments as outlined in the table entitled 'Monuments protected under Preservation Orders' (see table 11.1 and map YY).</p> <p>CPO11.48 Protect the monuments of Archaeological, Historical and Cultural Interest as outlined in the table of the same name (see table 11.2 and map YY illustrated on the Map included as part of Appendix).</p> <p>CPO11.49 Encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the County's rich archaeological heritage.</p> <p>CPO11.50 Encourage and promote access to and understanding of the archaeological heritage of the County.</p> <p>CPO11.51 Seek to increase awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the archaeological heritage for all, through the provision of information to landowners and the community generally, in co-operation with statutory and other partners.</p> <p>CPO11.52 Investigate and promote the provision of improved access to important archaeological sites.</p> <p>CPO11.53 Presume in favour of the physical preservation in-situ of archaeological remains and their settings, where appropriate, feasible and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.</p> <p>CPO11.54 Consult with the National Monuments Service in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.</p> <p>CPO11.55 Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of underwater archaeological sites in riverine or lacustrine locations.</p> <p><b>Built and Cultural Heritage Climate Actions</b></p> <p>A11.1 Adopt the principles of conservation-led regeneration by applying the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Architectural Heritage Protection (2011).</p> <p>A11.2 Seek enrolment on all future Historic Towns Initiatives (HTI).</p> <p>A11.3 Notify owners of Protected Structures of the increased threat climate change presents, while reminding them of their continued and legal requirement to ensure the structure(s) do not become endangered through neglect, decay, damage or harm (Practical advice on basic methods of conservation should accompany the notice).</p> <p>A11.4 Require the proposed demolition of any structure or part thereof, as considered of merit by the Planning Authority, to be accompanied by a report from a registered / chartered professional within a related discipline justifying same, to the satisfaction of the planning authority.</p> <p>A11.5 Require the submission of a life-cycle cost report with all applications in excess of 500 sq. m, new build construction, unless deemed otherwise by the Planning Authority.</p> <p>A11.6 Require the submission of a cost benefit analysis by a chartered quantity surveyor justifying any demolition or refurbishment of 100 m3 of construction and demolition waste, or above, unless deemed otherwise by the Planning Authority.</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Landscape Character - County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO14.1 Support and implement objectives contained in any Regional Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>CPO14.2 Review in the context of a regional approach to landscape assessment, the County Landscape Character Assessment following publication of statutory guidelines for Planning Authorities on local Landscape Character Assessments, as outlined in the National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025.</p> <p>CPO14.3 Protect the landscapes and natural environments of the County by ensuring that any new developments do not detrimentally impact on the character, integrity, distinctiveness or scenic value of their area. Any development which could unduly impact upon such landscapes will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO14.4 Ensure the preservation of the uniqueness of a landscape character type by having regard to the character, value and sensitivity of a landscape in new development proposals.</p> <p>CPO14.5 Conserve and enhance the high nature conservation value of the Landscape Character Areas in order to create/protect ecologically resilient and varied landscapes.</p> <p>CPO14.6 Discourage proposals necessitating the removal of an extensive number of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments and consider the making of Tree Preservation Orders in respect of trees or groups of trees of particular landscape value.</p>



Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
		<p>CPO14.7 Require landscape and visual impact assessments prepared by suitably qualified professionals to be submitted with planning applications for development which may have significant impact on landscape character areas of medium or high sensitivity.</p> <p>CPO14.8 Preserve views and prospects as illustrated on the accompanying map as part of Appendix ??? and as listed in Tables ???.</p> <p><b>Protected Views and Prospects – County Policy Objectives</b></p> <p>CPO14.36 Preserve the views and prospects listed above in Table 12.5 and 12.6 and detailed in Appendix XX with accompanying maps and to protect these views from development which would interfere unduly with the character and visual amenity of the landscape.</p> <p><b>Landscape Character Climate Change Actions</b></p> <p>A12.1 Within the lifetime of the plan, undertake a survey and vector mapping exercise to identify exemplar wetlands, bogs, individual trees and/or stands of trees and/or woodlands throughout the county worthy of protection and preservation.</p> <p>A12.2 Encourage the potential community woodlands areas in urban/urban fringe areas and the development of community woodlands throughout rural Longford.</p> <p>A12.3 Discourage and ban the use of glyphosate weedkillers in public spaces in favour of hot water, foam stream, flame weeding and/or concentrated vinegar.</p> <p>A12.4 Prepare a Peatland Strategy that shall encourage the rewilding, restoration and protection of peat bogs after turf cutting and/or peat extraction has ceased.</p> <p>A12.5 Support the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme 2017 – 2022.</p> <p>A12.6 Promote the roll-out of renewables and stringent protection and enhancement of carbon pools such as forests, peatlands and permanent grasslands.</p> <p>A12.7 Discourage fracking and the industrial extraction of fossil fuels within Longford's functional area.</p> <p>A12.8 Engage the services of a full-time Ecologist on a shared basis amongst neighbouring Local Authorities.</p> <p>A12.9 Install and promote the installation of bird, bat, and owl boxes, and bee bricks and insect hotels or equivalent, at all relevant locations and developments, where possible.</p> <p>A12.10 Actively participate and seek to adopt recommendations originating out of the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and Midlands Climate Action Region</p>

## Section 10 Monitoring Measures

### 10.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This section details the measures which will be used in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan.

Monitoring can both demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of significant adverse environmental effects not predicted and mitigated by this assessment, which are directly attributable to the implementation of the Plan, would necessitate consideration of these effects in the context of the Plan and potential remediation action(s) and/or review of part(s) of the Plan.

### 10.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives identified in Section 5 and used in the evaluation. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions. Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), the measures identified in that RSES SEA have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in most instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of land use plans will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring programmes.

Table 10.1 overleaf shows the indicators and targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental

effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated.

Monitoring is an ongoing process and the programme allows for flexibility and the further refinement of indicators and targets. The Monitoring Programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues – including unforeseen effects – as they arise.

Many of the indicators below relate to more than one of the freshwater and terrestrial environments, for example: indicator B1 'Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive' relates to freshwater and terrestrial habitats and species.

### 10.3 Sources

The Draft Plan will form part of the wider land use planning framework comprising a hierarchy of policies, plans, programmes, etc. This wider framework, including the National Planning Framework and the Eastern and Midland RSES, is subject to its own SEA (and associated monitoring) requirements. At lower tiers of the hierarchy, Local Area Plans and individual projects will be subject to their own monitoring requirements as relevant.

In implementing the Monitoring Programme the Council will take into account this hierarchy of planning and environmental monitoring.

Sources for indicators may include existing monitoring databases (including those maintained by planning authorities and national/regional government departments and agencies) and the output of lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making (including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents and the output of any EIA monitoring programmes).

Internal monitoring of the environmental effects of grants of permission in the Council would provide monitoring of certain indicators on a *grant of permission*<sup>94</sup> basis. Where significant adverse effects as a result of the

<sup>94</sup> The likely significant effects of development proposals on environmental sensitivities are further determined during the development management process. Documenting any

identified effects as a result of a development to be permitted can help to fulfill monitoring requirements.

development to be permitted are identified, such effects could be identified, recorded and used to inform monitoring evaluation.

## **10.4 Reporting**

A stand-alone Monitoring Report on the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan will be prepared in advance of the beginning of the review of the Plan. This report will seek to address the indicators set out on Table 10.1. The Council is responsible for the ongoing review of indicators and targets, collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of remedial action.

**Table 10.1 Indicators, Targets, Sources and Remedial Action**

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>BFF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condition of European sites</li> <li>Number of spatial plans that have included ecosystem services content, mapping and policy to protect ecosystem services when their relevant plans are either revised or drafted</li> <li>SEA and AA as relevant for new Council policies, plans, programmes etc.</li> <li>Status of water quality in the County's water bodies</li> <li>Compliance of planning permissions with Plan measures providing for the protection of Biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 12 “Natural Heritage and Environment”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require all local level land use plans to include ecosystem services and green/blue infrastructure provisions in their land use plans and as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species</li> <li>Implement and review, as relevant, Longford Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024</li> <li>For planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Plan measures providing for the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 12 “Natural Heritage and Environment”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years).</li> <li>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years)</li> <li>Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans</li> <li>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).</li> <li>Consultations with the NPWS (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where condition of European sites is found to be deteriorating this will be investigated with the Regional Assembly and the DCHG (and the DHPLG for water) to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance.</li> <li>Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHPLG Water Section, the Regional Assembly, the EPA Catchment Unit and, as relevant, Irish Water to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance.</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Plan measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 8 “Economic Development”</li> <li>Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors resulting from development permitted under the Plan</li> <li>Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> <li>Number of spatial plans that include specific green infrastructure mapping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 8 “Economic Development”</li> <li>No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan</li> <li>Increase in the proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures.</li> <li>Implementation of Green Infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal review of progress on implementing Plan objectives</li> <li>Consultations with the Health Service Executive and EPA</li> <li>CSO data</li> <li>Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the waste water treatment plant or failure of the waste water treatment plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Council will contribute towards a response with the Regional Assembly, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity.</li> <li>Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, the DHPLG, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response.</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (and Land)</b>	<b>S</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of population growth occurring on infill and brownfield lands compared to greenfield</li> <li>Volume of contaminated material generated from brownfield and infill</li> <li>Number of AA determinations and environmental assessments undertaken to support applications for brownfield and infill development prior to planning permission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%.</li> <li>Achieve the 40% target for growth on infill as per NPF.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Geoportal</li> <li>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where the proportion of growth on infill and brownfield sites is not keeping pace with the targets set in the NPF and the RSES, the Council will liaise with the Regional Assembly to establish reasons and coordinate actions to address constraints to doing so.</li> </ul>

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
<b>Water</b>	<b>W</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the WFD</li> <li>• Number of incompatible developments permitted within flood risk areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status'</li> <li>• Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and subsequent iterations as relevant)</li> <li>• Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPA Monitoring Programme for WFD compliance</li> <li>• Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHPLG Water Section, the EPA Catchment Unit, the Regional Assembly and, as relevant, Irish Water to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance.</li> <li>• Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the Waste water treatment Plant or failure of the plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly will coordinate a response between the relevant local authority, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity.</li> <li>• The Council will engage, as relevant, with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly and the OPW with respect to planning applications for development in areas of elevated flood risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>MA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmed delivery of Irish Water infrastructure for all key growth towns in line with Irish Water Investment Plan and prioritisation programme to ensure sustainable growth can be accommodated</li> <li>• Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan</li> <li>• Proportion of population within who report regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To map brownfield and infill land parcels across the County.</li> <li>• All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan</li> <li>• Where septic tanks are proposed, for planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that the outfall from the septic tank will not – in combination with other septic tanks – contribute towards any surface or ground water body not meeting the objective of good status under the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>• Increased budget spends on water and waste water infrastructure</li> <li>• By 2020 all citizens will have access to speeds of 30Mbps, and that 50% of citizens will be subscribing to speeds of 100Mbps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)</li> <li>• CSO data</li> <li>• Consultations with Irish Water (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4)</li> <li>• Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in conjunction with Local Authorities</li> <li>• Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment</li> <li>• Department of Public Expenditure and Reform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the waste water treatment plant or failure of the waste water treatment plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Council will coordinate a response between the Regional Assembly, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity.</li> <li>• Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG and NTA to develop a tailored response.</li> </ul>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
<b>Air</b>	<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels of 74%</li> <li>NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM10 and PM2.5 as part of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease in proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels.</li> <li>Improvement in Air Quality trends, particularly in relation to transport related emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSO data</li> <li>Data from the National Travel Survey</li> <li>EPA Air Quality Monitoring</li> <li>Consultations with Department of Transport Tourism and Sport, Transport Trends and Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response. See also entry under Population and human health above</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic Factors</b>	<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Plan measures relating to climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 3 "Climate Change"</li> <li>Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels</li> <li>Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 3 "Climate Change"</li> <li>Increase in the proportion of people resident in the County reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures</li> <li>Decrease in the proportion of journeys made by residents of the County using private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels</li> <li>Contribute towards transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050</li> <li>Contribute towards the target of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC), for all Member States to reach a 10% share of renewable energy in transport by 2020</li> <li>Contribute towards the target of aggregate reduction in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions of at least 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050 across the electricity generation, built environment and transport sectors</li> <li>To promote reduced energy consumption and support the uptake of renewable options and a move away from solid fuels for residential heating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPA Annual National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory reporting</li> <li>Climate Action Regional Office</li> <li>Consultations with Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4)</li> <li>CSO data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where trends toward carbon reduction are not recorded, the Council will liaise with the Regional Assembly to establish reasons and develop solutions</li> <li>Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG and NTA to develop a tailored response</li> </ul>

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> <li>Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context of these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> <li>Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)</li> <li>Consultation with Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where monitoring reveals visitor pressure is causing negative effects on key tourist features, the Council will work with Regional Assembly, Fáilte Ireland and other stakeholders to address the pressures through additional mitigation</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where monitoring reveals developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, the Council will re-examine Plan provisions and the effectiveness of their implementation</li> </ul>

# Appendix I Relationship with Legislation and Other Policies, Plans and Programmes

This appendix is not intended to be a full and comprehensive review of EU Directives, the transposing regulations or the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The information is not exhaustive and it is recommended to consult the Directive, Regulation, Plan or Programme to become familiar with the full details of each.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan and Alterations
<b>European Level</b>			
<b>SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.</li> <li>Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out an environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive.</li> <li>Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.</li> <li>Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission.</li> <li>Consult other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects.</li> <li>Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme.</li> <li>Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive.</li> <li>Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.</li> <li>Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA.</li> <li>For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case by case examination. This should take into account Annex III.</li> <li>The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor.</li> <li>Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.</li> <li>Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.</li> <li>Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest.</li> <li>Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species.</li> <li>Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.</li> <li>Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present.</li> <li>Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats.</li> <li>Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation.</li> <li>The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1.</li> <li>Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas).</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan and Alterations
	ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes.</li> <li>Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance.</li> </ul>	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution.</li> </ul>	<p>Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and ground water from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Ireland's third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State's NAP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year</li> <li>set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk</li> <li>set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (2008/1/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of this Directive is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from the activities listed in Annex I. It lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from the abovementioned activities, including measures concerning waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole, without prejudice to Directive 85/337/EEC and other relevant Community provisions.</li> </ul>	<p>The IPPC Directive is based on several principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an integrated approach</li> <li>best available techniques,</li> <li>flexibility; and</li> <li>public participation</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and</li> <li>the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest</li> <li>Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products.</li> <li>Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Renewables Directive (2009/28/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU.</li> <li>It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets.</li> <li>All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets.</li> <li>The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables.</li> <li>EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans.</li> <li>Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Indirect Land Use Change Directive (2012/0288 (COD))</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article 3(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) requires Member States to ensure that the share of energy from renewable energy sources in all forms of transport in 2020 is at least 10 % of their final energy consumption.</li> <li>The blending of biofuels is one of the methods available for Member States to meet this target, and is expected to be the main contributor.</li> <li>Other methods available to meet the target are the reduction of energy consumption, which is imperative because a mandatory percentage target for energy from renewable sources is likely to become increasingly difficult to achieve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit the contribution that conventional biofuels (with a risk of ILUC emissions) make towards attainment of the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive;</li> <li>Improve the greenhouse gas performance of biofuel production processes (reducing associated emissions) by raising the greenhouse gas saving threshold for new installations subject to protecting installations already in operation on 1st July 2014;</li> <li>Encourage a greater market penetration of advanced (low-ILUC) biofuels by allowing such fuels to contribute more to the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive than conventional biofuels;</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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	sustainably if overall demand for energy for transport continues to rise, and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by obliging Member States and fuel suppliers to report the estimated indirect land-use change emissions of biofuels.</li> </ul>	
<b>Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020.</li> <li>Under the Directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy distributors or retail energy sales companies have to achieve 1.5% energy savings per year through the implementation of energy efficiency measures</li> <li>EU countries can opt to achieve the same level of savings through other means, such as improving the efficiency of heating systems, installing double glazed windows or insulating roofs</li> <li>The public sector in EU countries should purchase energy efficient buildings, products and services</li> <li>Every year, governments in EU countries must carry out energy efficient renovations on at least 3% (by floor area) of the buildings they own and occupy</li> <li>Energy consumers should be empowered to better manage consumption. This includes easy and free access to data on consumption through individual metering</li> <li>National incentives for SMEs to undergo energy audits</li> <li>Large companies will make audits of their energy consumption to help them identify ways to reduce it</li> <li>Monitoring efficiency levels in new energy generation capacities.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner.</li> </ul>	<p>The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals;</li> <li>The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism;</li> <li>The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure;</li> <li>Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law;</li> <li>Safety of offshore oil and gas operations.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aims to halt or reverse biodiversity loss and speed up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy.</li> <li>Halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines six targets and twenty actions to aid European Union in halting the loss to biodiversity and eco-system services.</li> <li>The six targets cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full implementation of EU nature legislation to protect biodiversity</li> <li>Maintaining, enhancing and protecting for ecosystems, and green infrastructure</li> <li>Ensuring sustainable agriculture, and forestry</li> <li>Sustainable management of fish stocks</li> <li>Reducing invasive alien species</li> <li>Addressing the global need to contribute towards averting global biodiversity loss</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Green Infrastructure Strategy</b>	Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas.</li> <li>Supporting EU-level GI projects.</li> <li>Improving access to finance for GI projects.</li> <li>Improving information and promoting innovation.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and



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			cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>UN Kyoto Protocol (2<sup>nd</sup> Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)</b>	<p>The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II).</li> <li>EU member states implement measures to improve on or complement the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP.</li> <li>Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020.</li> <li>Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels.</li> <li>Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%.</li> <li>Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.</li> </ul>	<p>Four pieces of complimentary legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps.</li> <li>Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU.</li> <li>Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020.</li> <li>Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries.</li> <li>Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario.</li> </ul>	<p>To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS).</li> <li>New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries.</li> <li>First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p><b>The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive)</b></p> <p><b>Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive).</li> <li>Sets new air quality objectives for PM<sub>2.5</sub> (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure related objectives.</li> <li>Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values.</li> <li>Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM<sub>10</sub>) or up to five years (NO<sub>2</sub>, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission.</li> <li>The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole.</li> <li>Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria.</li> <li>Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures.</li> <li>Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public.</li> <li>Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases.</li> <li>Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)</b>	The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from source.	<p>The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels;</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and</li> <li>Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise.</li> </ul> <p>The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.</p>	cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks</li> <li>Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment</li> <li>Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3.</li> <li>Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above.</li> <li>Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats.</li> <li>Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain “good status” of water bodies.</li> <li>Promote sustainable water usage.</li> <li>The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive</li> <li>Sampling Drinking Water Directive</li> <li>Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive</li> <li>Shellfish Directive</li> <li>Freshwater Fish Directive</li> <li>Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive</li> <li>Dangerous Substances Directive</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive.</li> <li>Achieve “good status” for all waters.</li> <li>Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts.</li> <li>Involve the public and streamline legislation.</li> <li>Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas.</li> <li>Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas.</li> <li>Recover costs for water services.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect, control and conserve groundwater.</li> <li>Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater.</li> <li>Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive.</li> <li>Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve and maintain the quality of water intended for human consumption.</li> <li>Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set values applicable to water intended for human consumption for the parameters set out in Annex I.</li> <li>Set values for additional parameters not included in Annex I, where the protection of human health within national territory or part of it so requires. The values set should, as a minimum, satisfy the requirements of Article 4(1) (a).</li> <li>Implement all measures necessary to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out, in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and in particular the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5.</li> <li>Ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken as soon as possible to restore its quality and shall give priority to their enforcement action.</li> <li>Undertake remedial action to restore the quality of the water where necessary to protect human health.</li> <li>Notify consumers when remedial action is being undertaken except where the competent authorities consider the non-compliance with the parametric value to be trivial.</li> </ul>	
<b>Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors.</li> <li>The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of waste water discharges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban waste water entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment.</li> <li>Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges.</li> <li>Establishes minimum requirements for urban waste water collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent.</li> <li>Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures.</li> <li>Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7.</li> <li>The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive.</li> <li>The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator.</li> <li>The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met.</li> <li>The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing knowledge and new needs.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.</li> </ul>	The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-

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	solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co-operation between states and regions.</li> </ul>	combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.</li> <li>A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</li> <li>Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage.</li> <li>Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal.</li> <li>Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society.</li> <li>Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Landscape Convention 2000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. It aims to respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes.</li> <li>Organise European co-operation on landscape issues.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)</b>	<p>It identifies three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital</li> <li>to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy</li> <li>to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p>Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better implementation of legislation.</li> <li>Better information by improving the knowledge base.</li> <li>More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy.</li> <li>Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies.</li> </ul> <p>Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To make the Union's cities more sustainable.</li> <li>To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)</b>	<p>The convention has three main aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats</li> <li>to promote cooperation between states</li> <li>to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species</li> </ul>	<p>The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control.</li> <li>Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucus.</li> <li>Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies.</li> <li>Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon.</li> <li>Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co-operation with other organisations.</li> <li>Created the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Bali Road Map (2007)</b>	<p>The overall goals of the project are twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and</li> </ul>	<p>The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mitigation</li> <li>adaptation</li> <li>technology</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>financing</li> </ul>	environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Cancun Agreements (2010)</b>	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigation</li> <li>Transparency of actions</li> <li>Technology</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Adaptation</li> <li>Forests</li> <li>Capacity building</li> </ul>	Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Doha Climate Gateway (2012)</b>	Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020);</li> <li>Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets;</li> <li>Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt;</li> <li>Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and</li> <li>Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU Common Agricultural Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and</li> <li>To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise considerably in the future;</li> <li>Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources;</li> <li>Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances.</li> </ul>	<p>The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration,</li> <li>Evaluation,</li> <li>Authorisation; and</li> <li>Restriction of chemicals.</li> </ul> <p>REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Stockholm Convention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention</li> <li>Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention</li> <li>Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention</li> <li>Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner</li> <li>To target additional POPs</li> <li>Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information,</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.



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		awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance	
<b>Ramsar Convention</b>	The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".	Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands;</li> <li>• Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure their effective management;</li> <li>• Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European 2020 Strategy for Growth</b>	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;</li> <li>• Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy;</li> <li>• Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.</li> </ul>	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed;</li> <li>2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&amp;D;</li> <li>3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right);</li> <li>4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree;</li> <li>5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.</li> </ol>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>The European Green Deal (EGD) 2019</b>	The deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people's quality of life, caring for nature and leaving no one behind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It sets out a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restore biodiversity and cut pollution.</li> <li>• It outlines investments required, financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition.</li> <li>• In order to meet the goal to become climate neutral by 2050 as part of the European Green Deal, the European Union (EU) Commission proposed on 4th March 2020 to bring about the first European Climate Law and legally bind the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Level</b>			
<b>Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework, (replacing the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020) and the National Development Plan (2018-2027)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between.</li> <li>• The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the new National Planning Framework. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase of over 1 million people.</li> </ul>	National Strategic Outcomes as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compact Growth</li> <li>2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility</li> <li>3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities</li> <li>4. Sustainable Mobility</li> <li>5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills</li> <li>6. High-Quality International Connectivity</li> <li>7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage</li> <li>8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society</li> <li>9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources</li> <li>10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services</li> </ol>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Planning, Land Use and Transport Outlook 2040 [in preparation]</b>	The PLUTO will take account of forecasted future economic and demographic scenarios, affordability considerations and relevant Government policies and will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quantify in broad terms the appropriate scale of financial investment in land transport over the long term;</li> <li>2. Consider how fiscal, environmental and technological developments might impact on this investment; and,</li> <li>3. Identify strategic priorities for future investment to ensure land transport infrastructure provision facilitates the objectives of Project Ireland 2040.</li> </ol>	In preparation	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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<b>Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2009 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas.</li> <li>There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission.</li> <li>Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large-scale projects.</li> <li>Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment – commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning.</li> <li>These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning.</li> <li>Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011, as amended)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites.</li> <li>The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Waste Management Act 1996, as amended</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities (Environmental Objectives (FPM) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 296 of 2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997).</li> <li>Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives.</li> <li>Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities (Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 9 of 2010), as amended (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the</li> </ul>	The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and

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	Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution.</li> <li>Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values.</li> <li>Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established.</li> </ul>	cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 31 of 2014)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These Regulations, which give effect to Ireland's 3<sup>rd</sup> Nitrates Action Programme, provide statutory support for good agricultural practice to protect waters against pollution from agricultural sources</li> </ul>	<p>The Regulations include measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited</li> <li>Limits on the land application of fertilisers</li> <li>Storage requirements for livestock manure; and</li> <li>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.</li> </ul>	<p>When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective,</li> <li>The policy of the Government on climate change,</li> <li>Climate justice,</li> <li>Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any international agreement referred to in section 2; and</li> <li>The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan (2018 – 2020)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</li> <li>The Plan provides a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets.</li> </ul>	<p>The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness: raise public awareness of the SDGs;</li> <li>Participation: provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals;</li> <li>Support: encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and</li> <li>Policy alignment: develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>€27 billion multi-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Capital Plan reflects the Government's commitment to supporting strong and sustainable economic growth and raising welfare and living standards for all.</li> <li>It includes allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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<b>European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 290 of 2013)</b>	These regulations have been drafted to implement the responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine in relation to sea fisheries in Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulation 3 provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura Plan in relation to planned fisheries;</li> <li>Regulation 4 provides for a screening of a Fisheries Natura Plan to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required;</li> <li>Regulation 5 provides for an appropriate assessment of a Fisheries Natura Plan and also provides for public and statutory consultation;</li> <li>Regulation 6 provides for the Minister to make a determination to adopt a Fisheries Natura Plan. The Minister may amend, withdraw or revoke a plan;</li> <li>Regulation 7 provides for publication of the adopted Fisheries Natura Plan;</li> <li>Regulation 8 provides for a Risk Assessment of unplanned fisheries and also provides for public and statutory consultation on the assessment;</li> <li>Regulation 9 provides for the issue of a Natura Declaration to prohibit, restrict including restricting by permit, control, etc. of sea fishing activities;</li> <li>Regulation 10 provides for Natura Permits to be issued where required by Natura Declarations; and</li> <li>Regulations 11 to 31 deal with functions of authorised officers and related matters, offences, etc.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government's strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland's 16% target under Directive 2009/28/EC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NREAP sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012-2020)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government's overarching strategic objective is to make renewable energy an increasingly significant component of Ireland's energy supply by 2020, so that at a minimum it will achieve its legally binding 2020 target in the most cost-efficient manner for consumers.</li> <li>Of critical importance is the role which the renewable energy sector plays in job creation and economic activity as part of the Government's action plan for jobs.</li> </ul>	<p>This document sets out five strategic goals, reflecting the key dimensions of the renewable energy challenge to 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing on and offshore wind,</li> <li>Building a sustainable bioenergy sector,</li> <li>Fostering R&amp;D in renewables such as wave &amp; tidal,</li> <li>Growing sustainable transport; and</li> <li>Building out robust and efficient networks.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Climate Mitigation Plan 2017</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the deep decarbonisation required in Ireland by mid-century in line with the Government's policy objectives.</li> </ul>	<p>The National Mitigation Plan focuses on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Action Policy Framework</li> <li>Decarbonising Electricity Generation</li> <li>Decarbonising the Built Environment</li> <li>Decarbonising Transport</li> <li>An Approach to Carbon Neutrality for Agriculture, Forest and Land Use Sectors</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050.</li> <li>Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.</li> </ul>	<p>National climate policy in Ireland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognises the threat of climate change for humanity;</li> <li>Anticipates and supports mobilisation of a comprehensive international response to climate change, and global transition to a low-carbon future;</li> <li>Recognises the challenges and opportunities of the broad transition agenda for society; and</li> <li>Aims, as a fundamental national objective, to achieve transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.



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<b>National Clean Air Strategy [in preparation]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a National Strategy will provide a policy framework by which Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation.</li> <li>The Strategy should also help tackle climate change.</li> <li>The Strategy will consider a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture.</li> <li>In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount and this will be a strong theme of the Strategy.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EirGrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2017-2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EirGrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland: <i>"Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way."</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grid25, EirGrid's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>All Island Grid Study 2008</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The All Island Grid Study is the first comprehensive assessment of the ability of the electrical power system and, as part of that, the transmission network ("the grid") on the island of Ireland to absorb large amounts of electricity produced from renewable energy sources.</li> <li>The objective of this five-part study is to assess the technical feasibility and the relative costs and benefits associated with various scenarios for increased shares of electricity sourced from renewable energy in the all island power system.</li> </ul>	<p>Key conclusions of the study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presented results indicate that the differences in cost between the highest cost and the lowest cost portfolios are low (7%), given the assumptions made and costs included in the Study.</li> <li>All but the high coal-based portfolio lead to significant reductions of CO2 emissions compared to portfolio 1</li> <li>All but the high coal-based portfolio lead to reductions on the dependency of the all island system on fuel and electricity imports.</li> <li>The limitations of the study may overstate the technical feasibility of the portfolios analysed and could impact the costs and benefits resulting. Further work is required to understand the extent of such impact.</li> <li>Timely development of the transmission networks, requiring means to address the planning challenge, is a precondition for implementation of the portfolios considered.</li> <li>Market mechanisms must facilitate the installation of complementary, i.e. flexible, dispatchable plant, so as to maintain adequate levels of system security.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users.</li> <li>It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure;</li> <li>Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity;</li> <li>Greenways that provide a substantially segregated off road experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and</li> <li>Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and</li> <li>Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Water Resources Plan [in preparation]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NWRP is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment.</li> <li>The objective of the NWRP is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment.</li> </ul>	<p>The key objectives of the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions</li> <li>Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry</li> <li>Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland's water resources</li> <li>Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water</li> <li>Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies</li> <li>Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater</li> </ul>	framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)</b>	Vision: <i>"Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological development of the sector is among the best in the EU."</i>	<p>General development and growth objectives of marine and freshwater aquaculture (2014 – 2020):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the social, business and administrative environment for aquaculture development</li> <li>Increase in the total production to 24,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability</li> <li>Improvement of the perception and increase in the national consumption of National products</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry.</li> <li>The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated.</li> </ul>	<p>This Strategy therefore addresses issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong;</li> <li>Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements;</li> <li>The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects;</li> <li>Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms;</li> <li>Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety;</li> <li>Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and</li> <li>Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overall aim of this Strategy is to ensure that economy and society in Ireland can develop to their full potential within a well-protected environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy addresses all areas of Government policy, and of economic and societal activity, which impact on the environment. It seeks to re-orientate policies as necessary to ensure that the strong growth Ireland enjoys and seeks to maintain will be environmentally sustainable.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and National Landscape Character Assessment (pending preparation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions.</li> <li>Landscape Strategy Vision: <i>"Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning."</i></li> </ul>	<p>The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development;</li> <li>Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape;</li> <li>Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape;</li> <li>Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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<b>National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (EPA) 2014-2020</b>	<p>This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published. Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally;</li> <li>To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste;</li> <li>To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export;</li> <li>To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management.</li> </ul>	<p>The revised Plan makes 27 recommendations under the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention</li> <li>Collection</li> <li>Self-sufficiency</li> <li>Regulation</li> <li>Legacy issues</li> <li>North-south cooperation</li> <li>Guidance and awareness</li> <li>Implementation</li> </ul>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<b>Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions.</li> </ul>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<b>HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The vision is: <i>“A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility.”</i></li> </ul>	<p>These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life</li> <li>Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities</li> <li>Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing</li> <li>Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland</li> </ul>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<b>Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012</b>	<p>A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come.</li> </ul>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<b>Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 (2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines a policy for how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved.</li> <li>Sets out five key goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce overall travel demand.</li> <li>To maximise the efficiency of the transport network.</li> <li>To reduce reliance on fossil fuels.</li> <li>To reduce transport emissions.</li> <li>To improve accessibility to transport.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Others lower level aims include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment</li> <li>ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking</li> <li>improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan and Alterations
<b>Investing in our Future: A Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (SFILT) – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SFILT sets out a set of priorities to guide the allocation of the State's investment to best develop and manage Ireland's land transport network over the coming decades.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets</li> </ul> <p>The three priorities stated in SFILT are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority 1: Achieve steady state maintenance (meaning that the maintenance and renewal of the existing transport system is at a sufficient level to maintain the system in an adequate condition);</li> <li>Priority 2: Address urban congestion; and</li> <li>Priority 3: Maximise the value of the road network.</li> </ul> <p>In delivering on the steady state maintenance objective set out in SFILT, the Plan includes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned replacement programme for the bus fleet operated under Public Service Obligation ("PSO") contracts;</li> <li>Tram refurbishment and asset renewal in the case of light rail; and</li> <li>To the extent within the Authority's remit, support for the operation of the existing rail network within the GDA.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (2007)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White paper setting out a framework for delivering a sustainable energy future in Ireland.</li> <li>Outlines strategic Goals for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security of Supply</li> <li>Sustainability of Energy</li> <li>Competitiveness of Energy Supply</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The underpinning Strategic Goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that electricity supply consistently meets demand</li> <li>Ensuring the physical security and reliability of gas supplies to Ireland</li> <li>Enhancing the diversity of fuels used for power generation</li> <li>Delivering electricity and gas to homes and businesses over efficient, reliable and secure networks</li> <li>Creating a stable attractive environment for hydrocarbon exploration and production</li> <li>Being prepared for energy supply disruptions</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018 and associated regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change.</li> <li>Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g. increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance-based actions.</li> <li>Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change.</li> <li>Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Governments White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future' (2015 – 2030)</b>	The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.	<p>2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95%</li> <li>Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.</li> </ul>	Including Ireland's 16% target of gross final consumption to come from renewables by 2020.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland (2009 – 2020)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plan reviews the original 90 actions outlined in the first Plan and updates/renews/removes them as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all

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			environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Wildlife Act of 1976</b> <b>Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems</li> <li>Give statutory protection to NHAs</li> <li>Enhances wildlife species and their habitats</li> <li>Includes more species for protection</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Actions for Biodiversity (2017-2021) Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out strategic objectives, targets and actions to conserve and restore Ireland's biodiversity and to prevent and reduce the loss of biodiversity in Ireland and globally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To mainstream biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors.</li> <li>To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity.</li> <li>To increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystems services.</li> <li>To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside.</li> <li>To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment.</li> <li>To expand and improve on the management of protected areas and legally protected species.</li> <li>To substantially strengthen the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Broadband Plan (2012)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland.</li> </ul>	<p>The Plan sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High-Speed Broadband.</li> <li>Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high-speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered.</li> <li>The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets.</li> <li>A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003)</b>  <b>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014)</b>  <b>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (SI 272 of 2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation.</li> <li>Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water.</li> <li>Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans.</li> <li>Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs.</li> <li>Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies.</li> <li>Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body.</li> <li>Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances.</li> <li>Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater.</li> <li>Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies.</li> <li>Outlines surface water quality standards.</li> <li>Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations of 2010 (SI 9 of 2010)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transpose the requirements of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC into Irish Legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for groundwater bodies of groundwater against pollution and deterioration in quality.</li> <li>Sets groundwater quality standards.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outlines threshold values for the classification and protection of groundwater.</li> </ul>	environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Water Pollution Acts 1977 to 1990</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division.</li> </ul>	<p>The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosecute for water pollution offences.</li> <li>• Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters.</li> <li>• Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution.</li> <li>• issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices;</li> <li>• Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects.</li> <li>• Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Water Services Act 2007</b>  <b>Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012</b>  <b>Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the water services infrastructure.</li> <li>• Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services.</li> <li>• Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and waste water supply.</li> <li>• Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and waste water services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland.</li> </ul>	<p>Key strategic objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector.</li> <li>• Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services in the gateways and hubs listed in the National Spatial Strategy, and in other locations where services need to be enhanced.</li> <li>• Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards</li> <li>• Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary waste water treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Waste water Treatment Directive.</li> <li>• Promoting water conservation through Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan, the Rural Water Programme and other measures.</li> <li>• Monitoring the on-going implementation of septic tanks inspection regime and the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems.</li> <li>• Ensuring a fair funding model to deliver water services.</li> <li>• Overseeing the establishment of an economic regulation function under the CER.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.</li> </ul>	<p>Six strategic objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet Customer Expectations.</li> <li>• Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply.</li> <li>• Provide Effective Management of Waste water.</li> <li>• Protect and Enhance the Environment.</li> <li>• Support Social and Economic Growth.</li> <li>• Invest in the Future.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning.</li> <li>• Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.



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<b>Food Harvest 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Harvest 2020 is a roadmap for the Irish food industry, as it seeks to innovate and expand in response to increased global demand for quality foods. It sets out a vision for the potential growth in agricultural output after the removal of milk quotas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeks for the improvement of all agricultural sectors at all levels in terms of sustainability, environmental consideration and marketing development.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan</b>	Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment	not applicable	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS)</b>  <b>Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS)</b>  <b>Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection.</li> <li>GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation.</li> <li>Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats.</li> <li>Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment.</li> <li>Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans.</li> <li>Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Rural Development Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas</li> </ul>	<p>At a more detailed level, the programme also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation;</li> <li>Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and</li> <li>Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Forestry Programme (2014-2020)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Represents Ireland's proposals for 100% State aid funding for a new Forestry Programme for the period 2014 – 2020.</li> </ul>	<p>Measures include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afforestation and Creation of Woodland</li> <li>NeighbourWood Scheme</li> <li>Forest Roads</li> <li>Reconstitution Scheme</li> <li>Woodland Improvement Scheme</li> <li>Native Woodland Conservation Scheme</li> <li>Knowledge Transfer and Information Actions</li> <li>Producer Groups</li> <li>Innovative Forest Technology</li> <li>Forest Genetic Reproductive Material</li> <li>Forest Management Plans</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>River Basin Management Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River Basin Management Plans set out the measures planned to maintain and improve the status of waters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to protect and enhance all water bodies in the RBD and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive.</li> <li>Identify and manages water bodies in the RBD.</li> <li>Establish a programme of measures for monitoring and improving water quality in the RBD.</li> <li>Involve the public through consultations.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

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			achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)</b>	This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.	<p>Objectives of the Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To give direction to Ireland's approach to peatland management.</li> <li>To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils.</li> <li>To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state-owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions.</li> <li>To ensure that Ireland's peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsibly.</li> <li>To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use.</li> <li>To inform the provision of appropriate incentives, financial supports and disincentives where required.</li> <li>To provide a framework for determining and ensuring the most appropriate future use of cutover and cutaway bogs.</li> </ul> <p>To ensure that specific actions necessary for the achievement of its objectives are clearly identified and delivered by those involved in or responsible for peatlands management or for decisions affecting their management.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive.</li> </ul>	CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020</b>	<p>The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner.</li> </ul>	<p>Three high level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs.</li> <li>To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy.</li> <li>To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE) 2016</b>	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030</b>	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	<p>Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AFV forecasts</li> <li>Electricity targets</li> <li>Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets</li> <li>Hydrogen targets</li> <li>Biofuels targets</li> <li>LPG targets</li> <li>Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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<b>Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)</b>	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten-year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>85% increase in exports to €19 billion.</li> <li>70% increase in value added to €13 billion.</li> <li>60% increase in primary production to €10 billion.</li> <li>The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high-end value-added product development.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland</li> <li>Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets a target where 10% of all journeys will be made by bike by 2020</li> <li>Proposes the planning, infrastructure, communication, education and stakeholder participations measures required to implement the initiative</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer-term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable.</li> <li>By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors.</li> </ul>	<p>This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce overall travel demand</li> <li>Maximise the efficiency of the transport network</li> <li>Reduce reliance on fossil fuels</li> <li>Reduce transport emissions</li> <li>Improve accessibility to transport</li> </ul> <p>These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021</b>	The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out actions that the Tourism Leadership Group has identified as priorities to be progressed until 2021 in order to maintain sustainable growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment. Each action involves specific tourism stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, all of whom we expect to proactively work towards the completion of actions within the specified timeframe.	<p>The Plan contains 27 actions focusing on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Context</li> <li>Marketing Ireland as a Visitor Destination</li> <li>Enhancing the Visitor Experience</li> <li>Research in the Irish Tourism Sector</li> <li>Supporting Local Communities in Tourism</li> <li>Wider Government Policy</li> <li>International Context</li> <li>Co-ordination Structures</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025</b>	The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.	<p>The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year</li> <li>net of inflation excluding carrier receipts;</li> <li>250,000 people employed in tourism; and</li> <li>10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE)</b>	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	<p>Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>Methodology: Development of the Policy and Development Framework is to be informed by the carrying out of an SEA, including widespread consultation with stakeholders and public, and with AA under the Habitats Directive.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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<b>National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030</b>	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AFV forecasts</li> <li>• Electricity targets</li> <li>• Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets</li> <li>• Hydrogen targets</li> <li>• Biofuels targets</li> <li>• LPG targets</li> </ul> Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>People Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025, (DTTAS, 2014)</b>	Growing Tourism to 2025 is a policy framework for the development of tourism within the Country.	The framework establishes the overall tourism goal of Government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment in the tourism sector will be 250,000 by 2025, compared with around 200,000 at present.</li> <li>• There will be 10 million visits to Ireland annually by 2025.</li> </ul> The Government's ambition is that overseas tourism revenue will reach €5 billion in real terms by 2025.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan 2016-2020</b>	The overarching aim of the Plan is to: <i>"Identify and protect the unique waterways heritage and promote its sustainable use for the enjoyment of this and future generations".</i>	Four objectives of the Plan include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective 1: Fostering partnerships to continue building waterway heritage knowledge through storing information, undertaking research and developing best practice.</li> <li>• Objective 2: Promoting awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of our waterway heritage with a focus on community engagement.</li> <li>• Objective 3: Promoting the integrated management, conservation, protection and sustainable use of the inland navigable waterway asset.</li> <li>• Objective 4: To develop Waterways Ireland as a heritage organisation committed to achieving the aim of this plan.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Tourism Development and Innovation – A strategy for Investment 2016-2022, (Fáilte Ireland, 2016)</b>	This strategy sets out the framework and mechanism for the delivery of investment to cities, towns, villages, communities and businesses across the country. It identifies priorities to support innovation in the sector to retain and grow the country's competitiveness in the marketplace. Its ultimate aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland for international visitors.	The objectives of the Tourism Development and Innovation Strategy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To successfully and consistently deliver a world class visitor experience;</li> <li>• To support a tourism sector that is profitable and achieves sustainable levels of growth and delivers jobs;</li> <li>• To facilitate communities to play an enhanced role in developing tourism in their locality, thereby strengthening and enriching local communities; and</li> <li>• To recognise, value and enhance Ireland's natural environment as the cornerstone of Irish tourism.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Regional/ County/Local Level</b>			
<b>Eastern and Midlands Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy,</b>	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy provides a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the Eastern and Midlands Region in order to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	The Eastern and Midlands Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its 12 constituent local authorities: Fingal County Council; Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Louth County Council; Kildare County Council; Meath County Council; Wicklow County Council; Longford County Council; Laois County Council; Offaly County Council; and Westmeath County Council.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Integrated Implementation Plan 2019-2024</b>	The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035, which established an overall framework for transport investment over the next two decades and was subject to full SEA and Stage 2 AA, is a key policy shaping the six-year Integrated Infrastructure Plan. The priorities in the Integrated Infrastructure Plan align with the objectives and priorities set out in the Transport Strategy, focused on improving public and sustainable transport.	The Implementation Plan identifies investment proposals for a number of areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus;</li> <li>• Light Rail;</li> <li>• Heavy Rai;</li> <li>• Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport Investment;</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated Service Plan; and</li> <li>Integration and Accessibility.</li> </ul>	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Longford Tourism Strategy 2017-2022</b>	The Strategy sets out the overall Vision for tourism in County Longford over the relevant period. The primary goal of the Longford Tourism Strategy is to achieve positive outcomes in a set of identified actions over the year life of this strategy.	<p>The Vision will be achieved through the fulfilment of the following key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing tourism infrastructure</li> <li>Delivery of visitor centric experiences</li> <li>Development of a Longford Tourism Brand</li> <li>Generating greater awareness of Longford as a tourism destination</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>The Shannon, Mighty River of Ireland, A Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon 2020 – 2030</b>	The objective of this plan is to reposition the River Shannon as a key destination in Ireland identifying visitor experiences based on the region's natural and cultural assets.	<p>Longford is identified as part of 'Discovery Zone 2: Mid Shannon' in the Shannon Tourism Masterplan. This area stretches from Clondra in the north to Portumna in the south of the region. The area is described as an elemental zone where lakes, rivers and canals meander through wetlands, peatlands and lowland farms, creating the distinctive 'soft' landscapes of the region. Lough Ree is described as the beating heart of Mid Shannon, a wonderful mosaic of open waters, hidden bays, monastic islands and wooded shorelines, renowned for angling, cruising, sailing and kayaking.</p> <p>Specifically, for Longford and the Mid Shannon zone the Shannon Tourism Masterplan recommends Priority Project DZ2.3 Wet'n'Wild Peatlands of Mid Shannon. This involves developing an integrated Discovery Zone focused on peatlands, environmental and industrial heritage, recreational opportunities such as walking, hiking, cycling, guided tours and outdoor classrooms to demonstrate nature, biodiversity and the impact of climate change.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs</b>	<p>Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site</li> <li>To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest</li> <li>To describe the site and its management</li> <li>To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site</li> <li>To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected.</li> <li>These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Groundwater Protection Schemes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs), including the Longford LECP 2016-2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overarching vision for each LECP is: "to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.



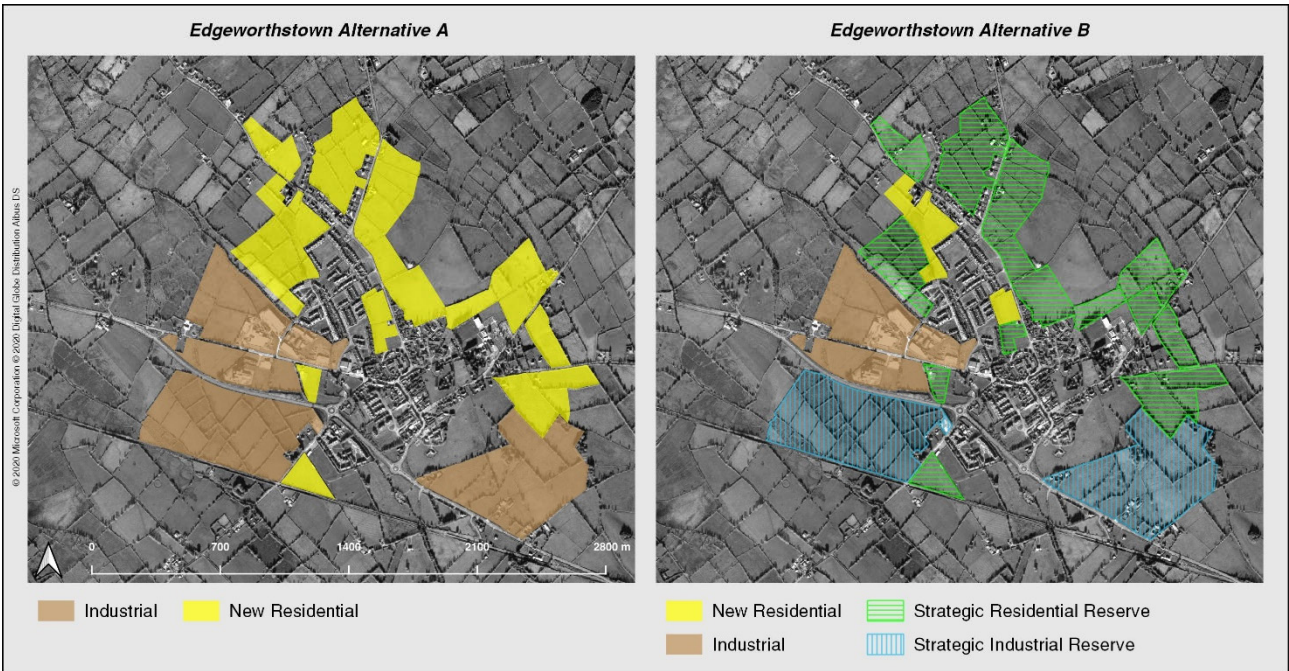
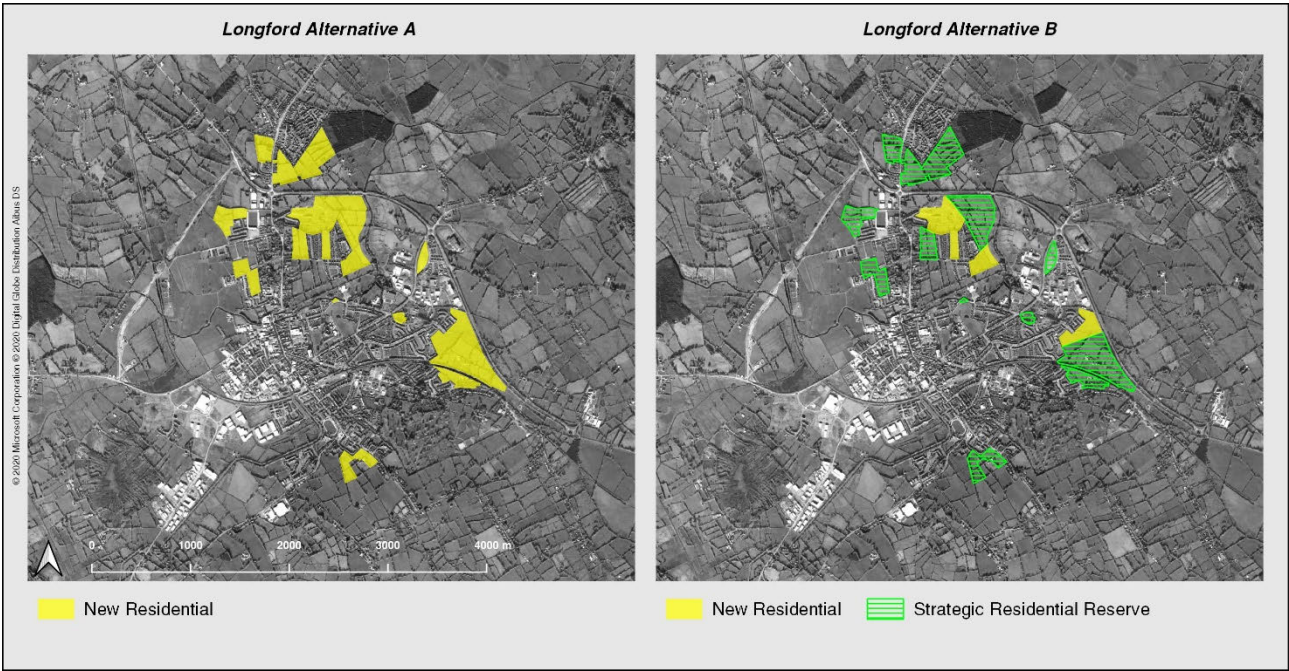
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<b>Land Use Plans (those in force in County Longford and in other adjoining planning authorities)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline planning objectives for land use development (including transport and tourism objectives).</li> <li>Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies.</li> <li>Set out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify future infrastructure, development and zoning required.</li> <li>Protect and enhances amenities and environment.</li> <li>Guide planning authority in assessing proposals.</li> <li>Aim to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development.</li> <li>Aim to promote sustainable development.</li> <li>Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>County Longford Heritage Plan 2019-2024 (Incorporating Longford Biodiversity Action Plan)</b>	Aims to protect, conserve, enhance and restore heritage, biodiversity and ecosystem services across all spectrums.	Plan's objectives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement key Strategic Actions over the lifetime of the Heritage Plan to achieve</li> <li>greater awareness and protection of all aspects of the heritage of County Longford</li> <li>To develop knowledge, appreciation and access to Longford's heritage through</li> <li>research and innovation.</li> <li>Promote the protection and best practice in heritage management within the county</li> <li>Promote heritage education and awareness.</li> <li>Support organisations and communities in promoting sustainable enjoyment of Longford's countryside, waterways and heritage</li> <li>Implement the County Longford Biodiversity Action Plan.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>County Longford Landscape Character Assessment</b>	Characterises the geographical dimension of the landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies the quality, value, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape area.</li> <li>Guides strategies and guidelines for the future development of the landscape.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Eastern and Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021</b>	These plans give effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Longford Noise Action Plan 2018-2023</b>	Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.	The main purpose of Noise Action Plans is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects and the measures which may be considered to address noise problems Address strategic noise issues by requiring competent authorities to draw up action plans to manage noise issues and their effects Reduce noise, where possible, and maintain the environmental acoustic quality where it is good</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Longford County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024</b>	Respond to the impact that climate change is having, and will continue to have. Attempt to climate change adaptation and mitigation.	The Plans' objectives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that climate action awareness and adaptation responses are embedded within governance and management structures in Longford County Council.</li> <li>Incorporate climate action awareness and responses throughout Council policy.</li> </ul>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with

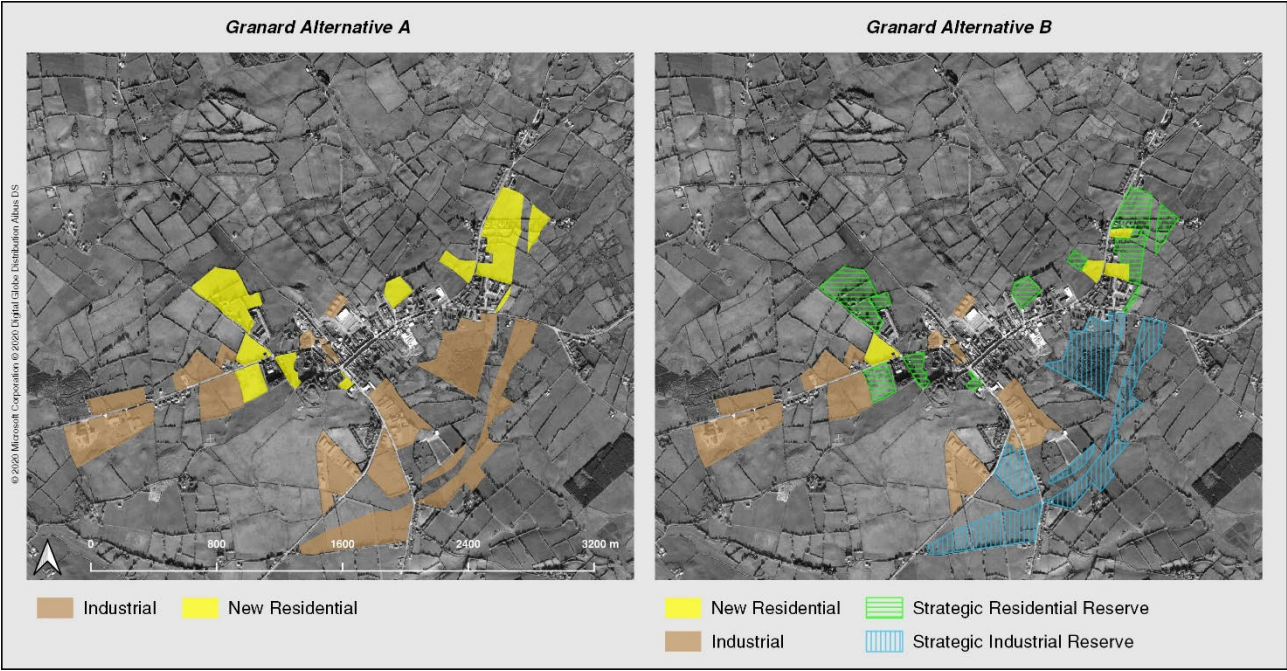
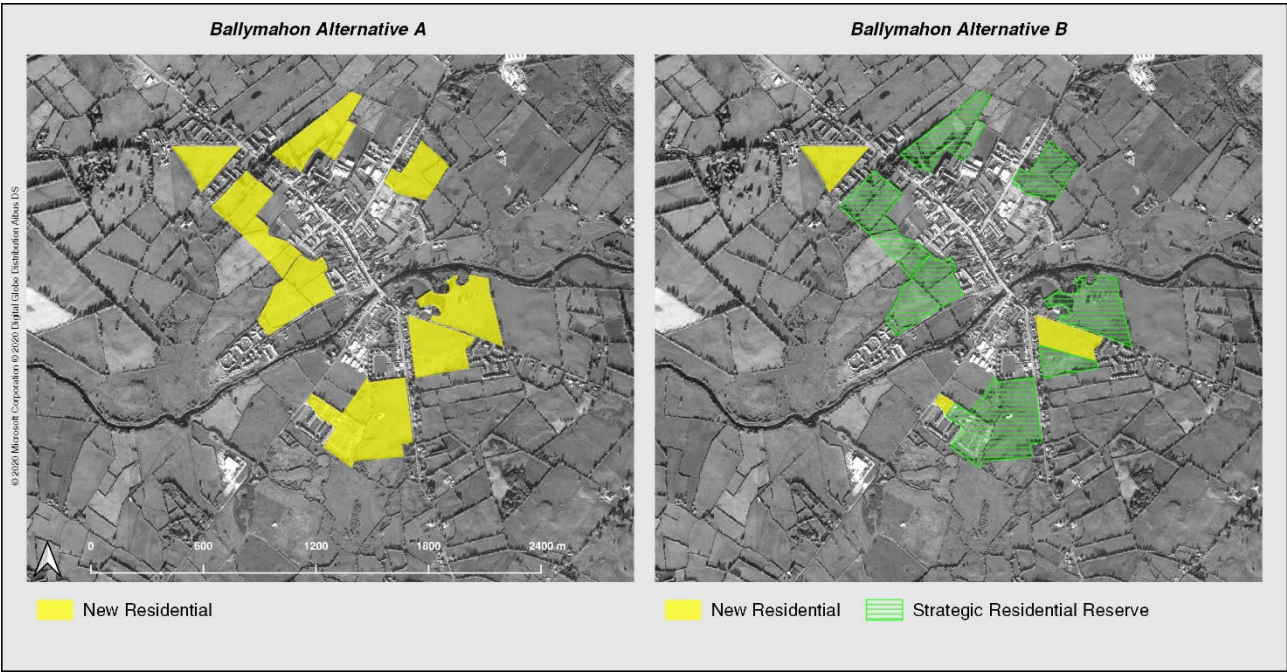
SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan and Alterations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that structures are in place to secure continuity of service and business operations as part of adaptation mechanisms.</li> <li>• Ensure/increase the resilience of infrastructural assets and inform investment decisions.</li> <li>• Maintain the integrity of public infrastructure against negative climate change impacts and increase the design resilience of planned developments into the future.</li> <li>• Promote a combined climate action response to infrastructure provision.</li> <li>• Integrate climate action considerations into land use planning policy and influence positive behaviour.</li> <li>• Manage the risk of flooding through a variety of responses and to mitigate the risk and impact of flooding.</li> <li>• Provide for enhancement of natural environment to work positively towards climate action, to promote effective bio-diversity management and enhance protection of natural habitats and landscapes and to protect heritage and cultural infrastructure.</li> <li>• Support climate action initiatives in line with Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) actions.</li> <li>• Build capacity and resilience within communities.</li> </ul>	other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Fáilte Ireland Tourism plans, strategies, including those relating to the Ireland's Ancient East and Hidden Heartlands brands</b>	Fáilte Ireland's work includes preparing various plans and strategies for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and other brands and initiatives. These plans are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment.	Some of Fáilte Ireland's plans and strategies include various projects relating to land use and infrastructural development, including those relating to development of land or on land and the carrying out of land use activities. Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Various existing, planned and emerging projects provided for by the above plans and programmes</b>	These projects have been provided for by higher-level plans and programmes.	These projects will contribute towards the development of the area to which the Plan relates and/or wider area and will contribute towards environmental protection and management.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 8.2) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

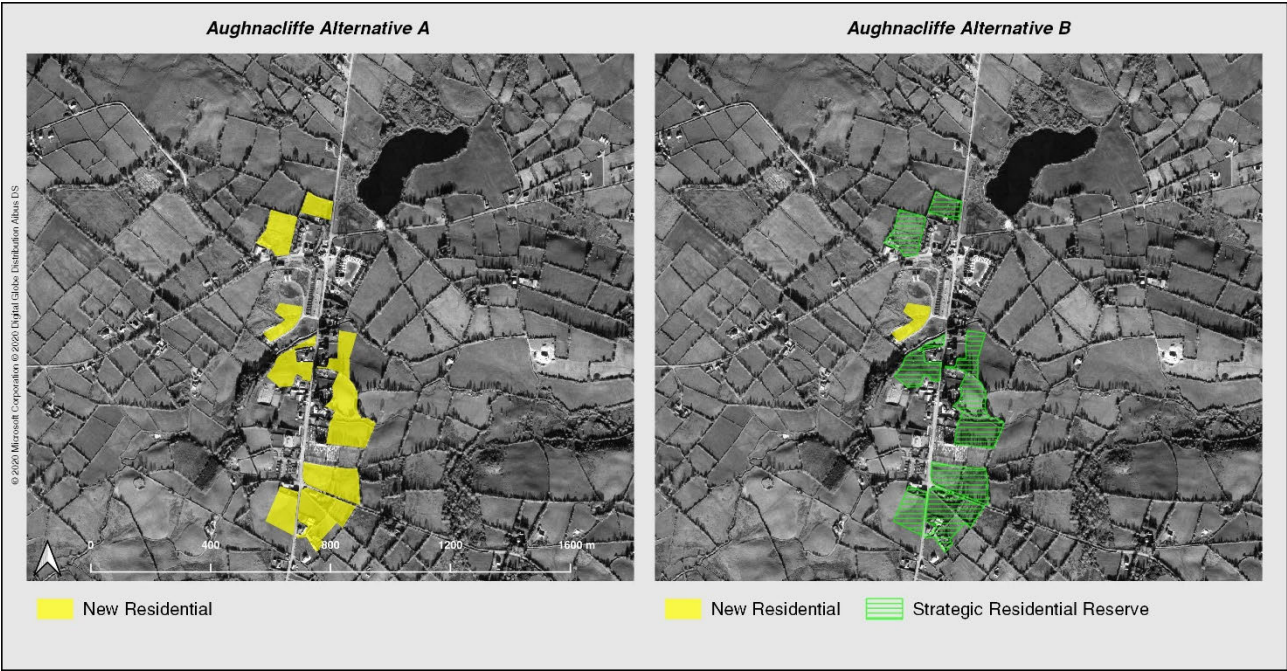
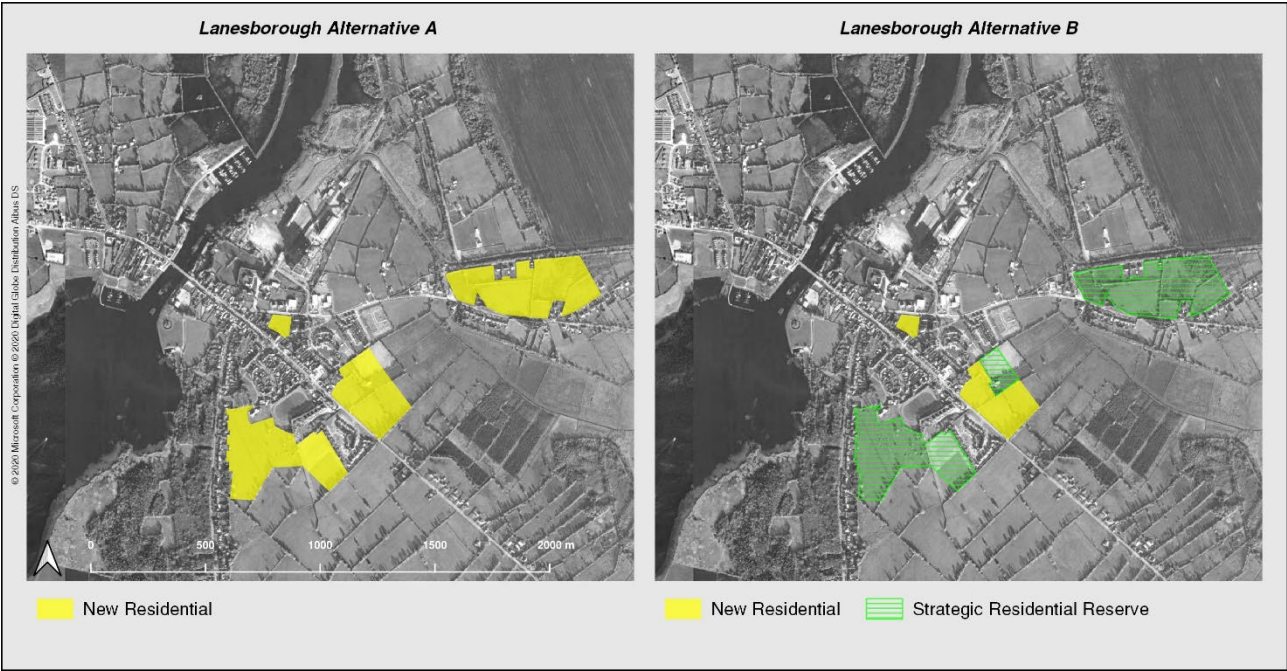
# Appendix II Indicative Mapping of Land Use Zoning Alternatives



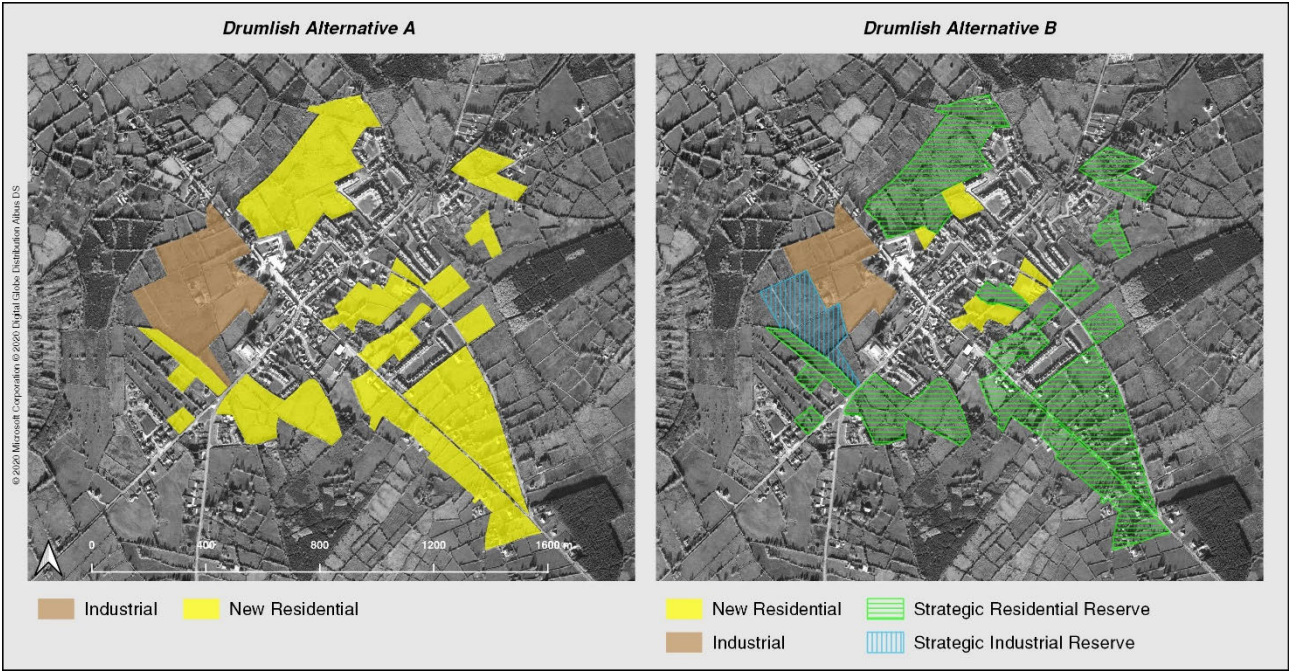




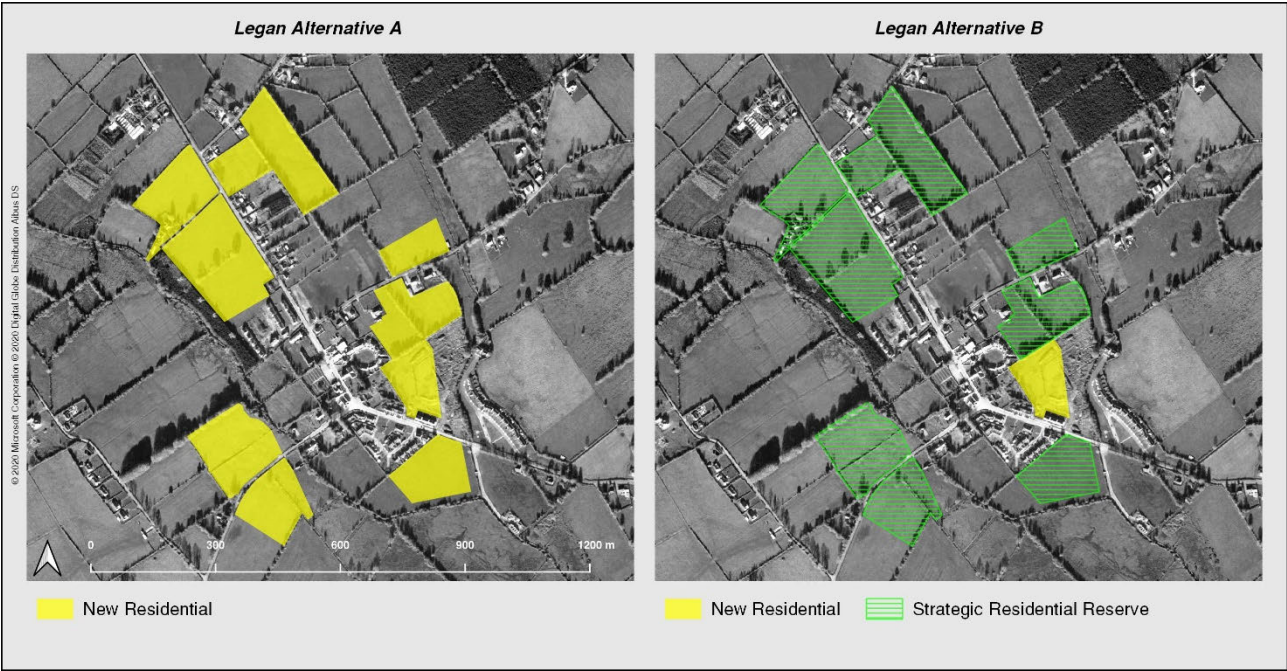
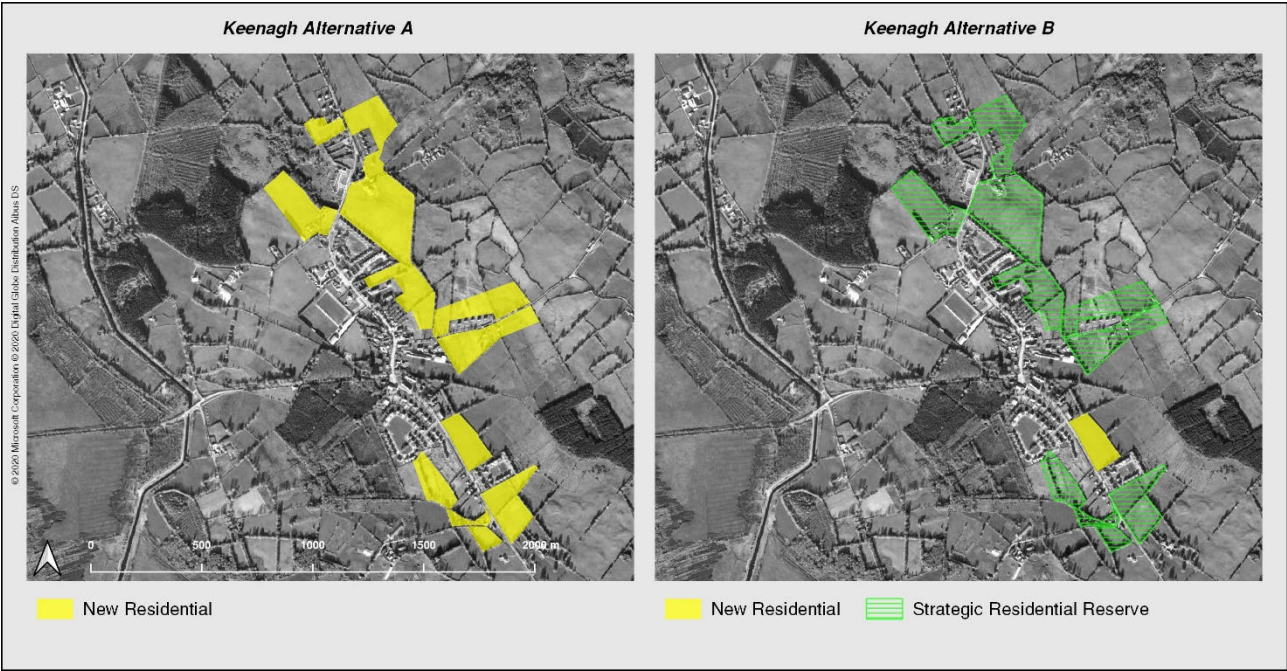




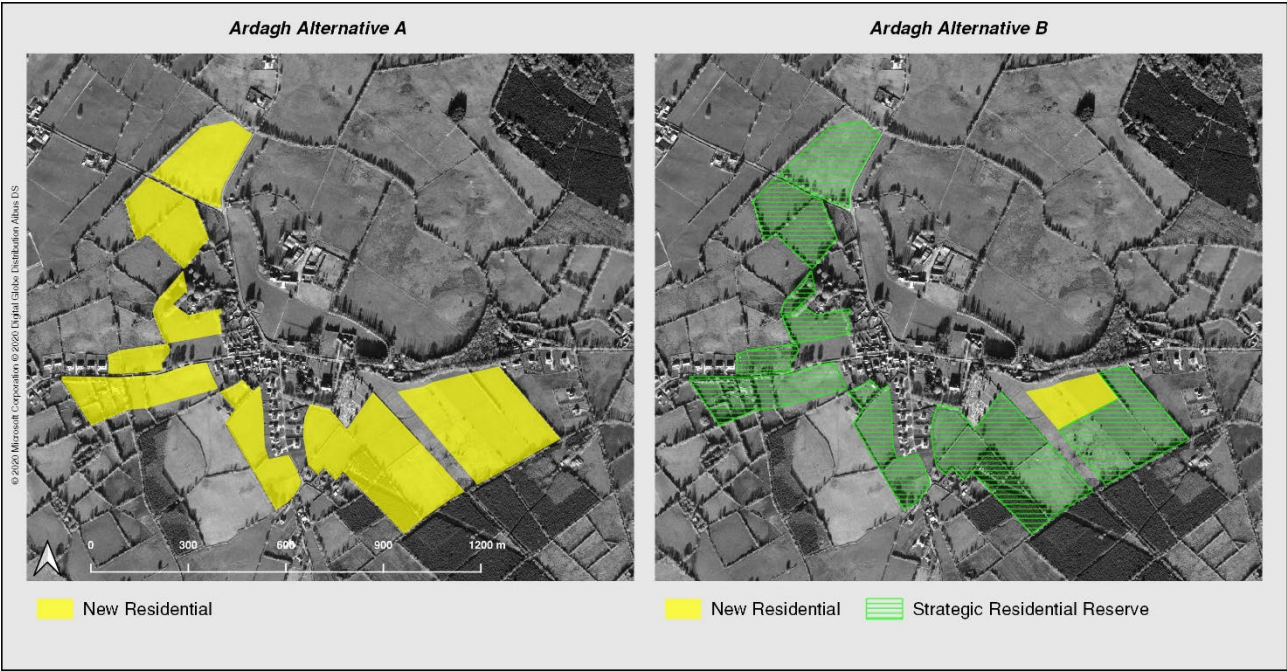
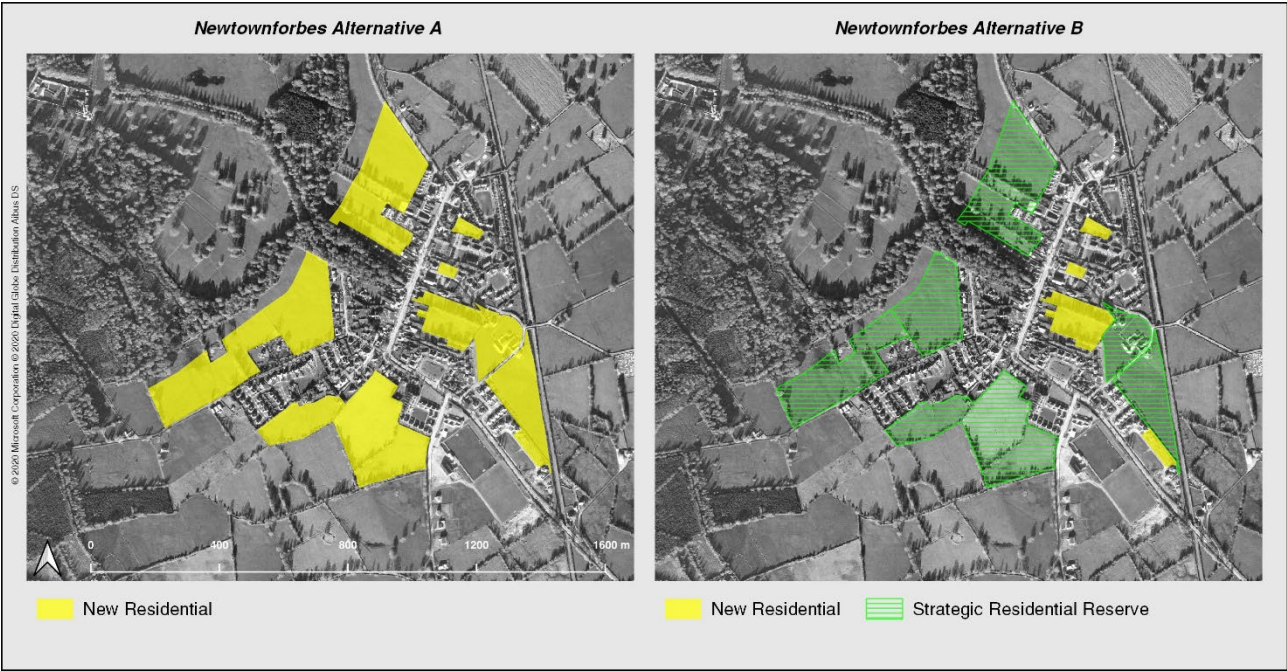


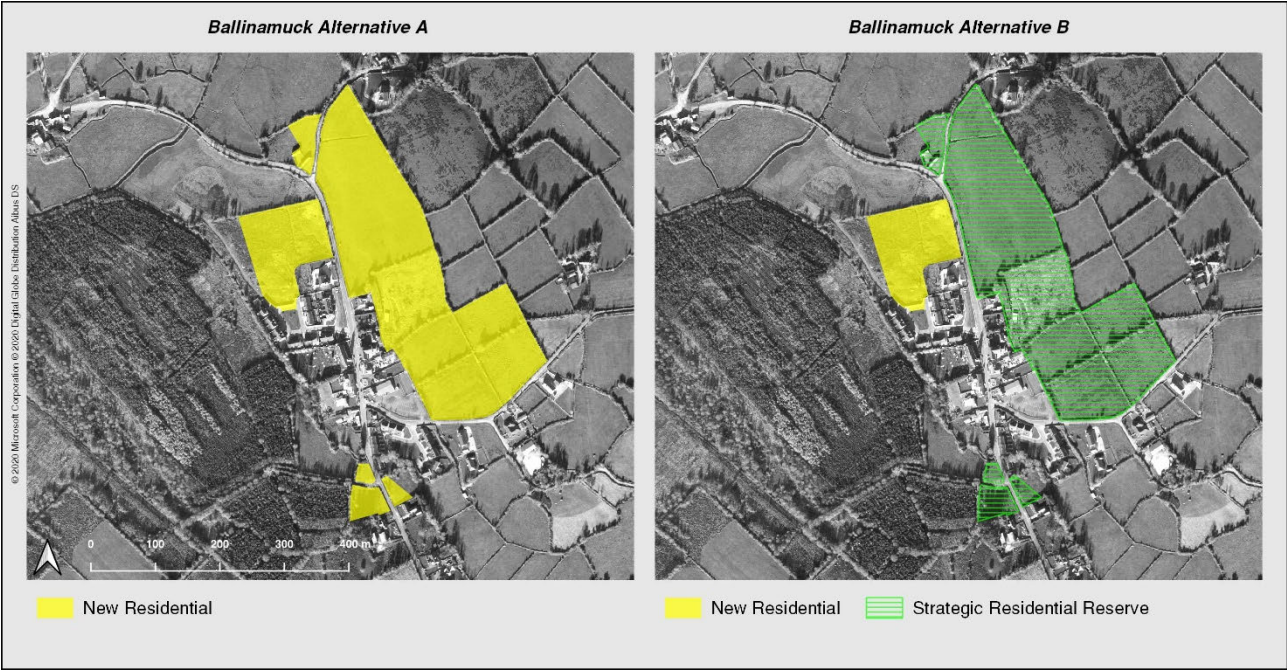












## **Appendix III SEA Screening Report**



# STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

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FOR  
**PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS**  
TO THE  
**DRAFT LONGFORD  
COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027**

**for: Longford County Council**

Great Water Street  
Longford  
County Longford



**by: CAAS Ltd.**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
24-26 Ormond Quay Upper  
Dublin



**JULY 2021**

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# Section 1 Introduction and Background

## 1.1 Introduction

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report for the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford County Development Plan (CDP) 2021-2027.

SEA is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or alteration to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it. The SEA Directive<sup>1</sup> requires, inter alia, that SEA is undertaken for certain plans, programmes or alterations to these. Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular plan - or alteration to a plan -, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA.

The purpose of this report is to inform whether or not to undertake SEA on the Proposed Material Alterations to the Longford CDP. Requirements in relation to the screening of Proposed Material Alterations to CDPs are provided under Section 12 (7) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

This report should be read in conjunction with the CDP and all other associated documents including the:

- Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027;
- Appropriate Assessment (AA) Natura Impact Report (including information on AA Screening) for Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027.
- SEA Environmental Report for the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027;
- AA Natura Impact Report for the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027; and
- AA Screening Report for Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Longford CDP 2021-2027.

## 1.2 Process so far

The CDP has been progressed to date in compliance with Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

SEA<sup>2</sup> was undertaken on and informed the CDP in order to comply with the SEA Directive and transposing Regulations – the SEA Environmental Report that accompanied the CDP on public display contains the findings of the assessment.

AA<sup>3</sup> was also undertaken on the CDP (informing both the CDP and the SEA) in order to comply with the Habitats Directive and transposing Regulations. An AA Natura Impact Report was prepared that contains the findings of this assessment.

The CDP associated SEA and AA documents were placed on public display and submissions were invited. Submissions were responded to in a Chief Executive's Report and Elected Members decided upon Proposed Material Alterations to the CDP and these are the subject of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Environmental Assessment is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or alteration to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it.

<sup>3</sup> Appropriate Assessment is an impact assessment process concerning European Sites designated on foot of habitats and species.

### 1.3 SEA Environmental Report (October 2020)

The SEA Environmental Report for the CDP contains the information specified in Annex I of the SEA Directive and Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004) as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 201 of 2011). The relevant sections of the SEA Environmental Report that address these information requirements are detailed on Table 1.1 below.

The assessment undertaken on relevant Proposed Material Alterations (the findings of which are presented later in this document) has used the information contained in the SEA Environmental Report.

**Table 1.1 Information contained within the SEA Environmental Report that accompanies the County Development Plan**

<b>Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report</b>	<b>Corresponding Section of this Report</b>
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 2, 5 and 8
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, particularly those relating to European protected sites	Section 4
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or National level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the Plan	Sections 5, 7, 8, 9 and Appendix I
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment	Sections 7 and 8
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme	Section 9
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken (including any difficulties)	Sections 3, 6, 7, 8 and Appendix II
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Appendix III Non-Technical Summary
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section

## Section 2 SEA Screening

### 2.1 Introduction

The section examines whether each Proposed Material Alteration to the CDP would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus would warrant the undertaking of SEA).

This examination takes account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, as amended, (see Section 2.5).

### 2.2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

SFRA is being undertaken to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations. The SFRA process has informed this report.

The SFRA has considered the Proposed Material Alterations and finds that all Proposed Material Alterations, apart from one, comply with "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). Proposed Material Alteration Reference AP.1E.18 does not comply with the Guidelines as it proposes incompatible New Residential Zoning in an area of elevated flood risk that would fail the Justification Test under the Guidelines.

### 2.3 Appropriate Assessment

AA is an impact assessment process concerning *Natura 2000*, or *European*, sites - these sites have been designated or proposed for designation by virtue of their ecological importance. The Habitats Directive<sup>4</sup>, its transposing Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provide the requirement to screen for effects on European Sites. If the effects are deemed to be *significant, potentially significant or uncertain* then Stage 2 AA must be undertaken.

The County Development Plan is being subject to Stage 2 AA and a Draft Natura Impact Report was placed on public display alongside the Draft Plan. At adoption of the Plan, the Natura Impact Report will be finalised and an AA determination made by the Council.

An AA screening process has been undertaken on the Proposed Material Alterations. This process has determined that Stage 2 AA for certain Alterations is necessary. An AA Natura Impact Report contains the findings of this assessment for the Proposed Material Alterations, has informed this SEA Screening Report and accompanies the Proposed Material Alterations.

### 2.4 Screening Analysis of Proposed Material Alterations

The analysis of Proposed Material Alterations is undertaken considering interactions Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Table 2.1). Table 2.2 examines whether each part of the Proposed Material Alterations would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus would warrant the undertaking of SEA).

Table 2.2 is supplemented by Table 2.3 which provides details on:

- The likely significant effects of implementing the Draft Plan, if unmitigated;
- Key mitigation measure(s) that are already contained within the Draft Plan; and

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<sup>4</sup> Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora



- Residual non-significant adverse effects arising from the Draft Plan.

Effects encompass the full range of effects<sup>5</sup>, including those arising cumulatively – such as those potentially arising as a result of interactions with other plans and programmes.

The examination of Proposed Material Alterations also takes into account relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' of the SEA Regulations, as amended, (see Section 2.5).

**Table 2.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>BFF</b>	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species</li> <li>• Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function</li> <li>• Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species</li> <li>• Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets</li> <li>• To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH</b>	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management</li> <li>• Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services</li> <li>• Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (and Land)</b>	<b>S</b>	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource</li> <li>• Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County</li> <li>• Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<b>W</b>	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>• Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments</li> <li>• Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion</li> <li>• Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>MA</b>	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County</li> <li>• Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels</li> <li>• Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development</li> <li>• Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes</li> <li>• Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> These include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Air</b>	<b>A</b>	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture.</li> <li>• Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency.</li> <li>• Promote continuing improvement in air quality.</li> <li>• Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution</li> <li>• Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive</li> <li>• Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic Factors</b>	<b>C</b>	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses.</li> <li>• Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).</li> <li>• Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets.</li> <li>• Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change</li> <li>• Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH</b>	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L</b>	Protect and enhance the landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention</li> </ul>

**Table 2.2 SEA Screening Analysis of Proposed Material Alterations<sup>6</sup>**

Ref	SEA Screening Consideration
1	There is an established planning need for this alteration. This alteration would further contribute towards provisions related to this sector/topic that are already contained within the Draft Plan. Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is determined that all potential effects arising from this Proposed Alteration: either are present already (beneficial) and will be further contributed towards; and/or will be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse). <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b> Refer also to Table 2.3 and Section 2.5.
2	A future plan/assessment/feasibility study/ investigation of potential would not result in different environmental outcomes or effects. <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b> Was such an assessment to be followed by recommendations, such as varying the Plan, such recommendations would have to be subject to SEA and AA screening and other requirements as appropriate.
3	The update to terminology/language/wording/numbering/mapping would not change the effects arising from the Plan. Where the change relates to mapping, the implications of the change may have been considered under other related Alterations. As such, this alteration would not be considered as being likely to result in significant environmental effects. <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b>
4	This Proposed Alteration relates to Plan text that sets the context for, summarises and/or provides clarification to Plan provisions. It does not interact with existing Plan provisions to an extent that it would have additional significant environmental effects. <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b>
5	This amendment adds more detail but would not have the potential to affect the integrity of any European site. <b>Consequently, Stage 2 AA is not required.</b>
6	This Proposed Alteration provides consistency with other parts of the Plan and/or with the wider planning and policy framework. It would not interact with Plan provisions to the extent that it would have environmental effects. <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b>
7	Removal of this provision would remove the potential for any environmental effects; however, removal of the provision would not be likely to result in any environmental effects. <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b>
8	Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development (including those measures to contribute towards the protection of European sites detailed as Section 5 of this report), there is no potential for effects on the integrity of any European site to arise from this Proposed Material Alteration. However, the AA screening process takes into account the need to undertake Stage 2 AA when mitigation is being proposed. As this alteration could be considered mitigation, in relation to the Plan elements that could potentially affect the integrity of European sites under the Plan, further to that already included in the Draft Plan (see Table 2.3), with the objective of protecting the integrity of European Sites brought to Stage 2 under the ongoing AA being undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan, it would be prudent to undertake Stage 2 AA. <b>Consequently, SEA is advised as prudent.</b>
9	There is an established planning need for these alterations relating to land use zoning and the alterations have been identified as being consistent with objectives for proper planning and sustainable development. Overall, there is a significant reduction in the area to be zoned. These alterations would be likely to reduce the residual adverse effects identified under all environmental components as a result of changes in land take. <b>Consequently SEA is required for these changes relating to Appendix I Land Use Zoning.</b> Furthermore Proposed Material Alteration AP.1E.18 would not be in compliance with "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DEHLG/OPW, 2009) and would provide for new vulnerable development on lands, some of which are at elevated risk from flooding.
10	As this alteration could potentially significantly adversely affect the protection of architectural heritage, <b>SEA is required.</b>
11	These changes relate to supporting documents but would not change Plan provisions. <b>Consequently, SEA is not required.</b>

Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.
CH 1.1	4	CH 4.21	1	CH 5.24	4	CH 7.4	1,6	CH 10.12	1	CH 13.1	3	Appendix 4 PMAs	1,3
CH 1.2	4,6	CH 4.22	1	CH 5.25	1	CH 7.5	4	CH 10.13	1	CH 13.2	8		
CH 1.3	4,6	CH 4.23	1	CH 5.26	1	CH 7.6	1,6	CH 10.14	1	CH 13.3	1,2	Appendix 6 PMAs: AP.6.1, AP.6.3	1
CH 1.4	4,6	CH 4.24	1,6	CH 5.27	1	CH 7.7	1	CH 10.15	1	CH 13.4	8		
CH 1.5	4,6	CH 4.25	1,6	CH 5.28	1	CH 7.8	1	CH 10.16	1	CH 13.5	1,2	Appendix 6 PMAs: AP.6.2, AP.6.4, AP.6.5	10
CH 1.6	4,6	CH 4.26	1,6	CH 5.29	1	CH 7.9	1	CH 10.17	3	CH 13.6	1		
CH 1.7	4,6	CH 4.27	1,6	CH 5.30	1	CH 7.10	1	CH 10.18	1	CH 13.7	1	Appendix 8 PMAs	1
CH 3.1	3	CH 5.1	1,6	CH 5.31	5	CH 8.1	1	CH 10.19	1	CH 14.1	1		
CH 3.2	5	CH 5.2	1,6	CH 5.32	2,4	CH 8.2	1,6	CH 10.20	1	CH 14.2	1	Appendix 9 PMAs	1
CH 3.3	2	CH 5.3	1,6	CH 5.33	2	CH 8.3	1,2	CH 10.21	8	CH 16.1	1,6		
CH 4.1	4,6	CH 5.4	1,6	CH 5.34	1,2	CH 8.4	1	CH 10.22	1	CH 16.2	1,6	Volume 3 PMAs	1
CH 4.2	4,6	CH 5.5	1,6	CH 5.35	1	CH 8.5	1	CH 11.1	1	CH 16.3	1,6		
CH 4.3	4	CH 5.6	1,6	CH 5.36	1	CH 8.6	2	CH 11.2	1	CH 16.4	1,6	Volume 4 PMAs	11
CH 4.4	1	CH 5.7	1	CH 5.37	1	CH 8.7	1,6	CH 11.3	5	CH 16.5	1,6		
CH 4.5	4,6	CH 5.8	3	CH 5.38	1	CH 8.8	1	CH 12.1	8	CH 16.6	1,6	Appendix 1 PMAs	9
CH 4.6	4,6	CH 5.9	3	CH 5.39	4	CH 9.1	4	CH 12.2	8	CH 16.7	1,6		
CH 4.7	4	CH 5.10	1,6	CH 5.40	2	CH 9.2	1,6	CH 12.3	8	CH 16.8	1,6	Appendix 3 PMAs	1,3
CH 4.8	1	CH 5.11	1,6	CH 5.41	1	CH 9.3	1,6	CH 12.4	8	CH 16.9	1		
CH 4.9	1	CH 5.12	1,6	CH 5.42	1	CH 9.4	1	CH 12.5	8	CH 16.10	1	Appendix 1 PMAs	9
CH 4.10	1	CH 5.13	1,6	CH 6.1	4	CH 10.1	1	CH 12.6	1	CH 16.11	1,6		
CH 4.11	1,6	CH 5.14	1	CH 6.2	1,6	CH 10.2	8	CH 12.7	8	CH 16.12	1,6	Appendix 3 PMAs	1,3
CH 4.12	1	CH 5.15	1,6	CH 6.3	1,6	CH 10.3	8	CH 12.8	4	CH 16.13	1		
CH 4.13	1	CH 5.16	1,6	CH 6.4	1,6,2	CH 10.4	1	CH 12.9	8	CH 16.14	1,2	Appendix 1 PMAs	9
CH 4.14	1	CH 5.17	1,6	CH 6.5	7	CH 10.5	1	CH 12.10	1	CH 16.15	1		
CH 4.15	1	CH 5.18	1,6	CH 6.6	1,4	CH 10.6	1	CH 12.11	1,8	CH 16.16	1	Appendix 3 PMAs	1,3
CH 4.16	1	CH 5.19	1	CH 6.7	1	CH 10.7	1	CH 12.12	1	CH 16.17	1		
CH 4.17	1,2,6	CH 5.20	5	CH 6.8	1	CH 10.8	1,2	CH 12.13	8	Appendix 1 PMAs		Appendix 3 PMAs	1,3
CH 4.18	2	CH 5.21	1	CH 7.1	1	CH 10.9	1	CH 12.14	8	Appendix 3 PMAs			
CH 4.19	2	CH 5.22	1	CH 7.2	4	CH 10.10	1	CH 12.15	1,2	Appendix 3 PMAs			
CH 4.20	2	CH 5.23	1	CH 7.3	1	CH 10.11	1,2	CH 12.16	8	Appendix 3 PMAs			

<sup>6</sup> For detail on Proposed Material Alterations please refer to Proposed Material Alterations document.  
CAAS for Longford County Council

**Table 2.3 Detail of effects<sup>7</sup>, if unmitigated, mitigation measures for potential effects and residual adverse effects**

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			Mitigation Measures, integrated into the Plan	SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects		
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>	CPO 4.63, CPO 4.64, CPO 4.65, CPO 5.15 and DMS16.70	All
<b>Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats.</li> <li>Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.</li> <li>Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.</li> </ul>	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;</li> <li>Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and</li> <li>Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.</li> <li>Losses or damage to ecology (these would be in compliance with relevant legislation).</li> </ul>	CPOs12.5-12.19 12.5.3 European Sites and Appropriate Assessment CPOs 12.25-12.74 CPOs 10.12-10.15	BFF
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management.</li> <li>Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, including air and water.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.</li> <li>Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors – please refer to residual adverse effects under "Soil", "Water" and "Air and Climatic Factors" below.</li> </ul>	Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors. CPO 5.161-5.162 CPO12.77	PHH
<b>Soil</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination the highest standards of remediation, and where appropriate to consultations with the EPA and other relevant bodies, will be required to resolve any instances of environmental pollution created by contaminated land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.</li> <li>Potential for riverbank erosion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.</li> </ul>	Also see measures under other environmental components including Water. CPO12.75-12.80 CPO 5.118 CPO12.19-12.23 CPO12.42-12.45 CPO12.104-12.112	S

<sup>7</sup> Environmental effects of implementing the Plan, including in combination with the wider planning framework e.g. the National Planning Framework and associated National Development Plan 2018, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.

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<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations.</li> <li>Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.</li> <li>Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by measures that have been integrated into the Plan.</li> </ul>	Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets. CPO 12.81-12.92 CPO 5.89-5.84 CPO 5.95-5.109 Development Management Standard DMS 16.205.	<b>W</b>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.</li> <li>Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments.</li> <li>Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth.</li> <li>Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart buildings, cities and grids.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</li> <li>Increases in waste levels.</li> <li>Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain, including due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however, such risks will be mitigated by: measures, including those requiring the timely provision of critical infrastructure, and compliance with the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies.</li> <li>Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</li> </ul>	Also see measures under CEMP requirement, other environmental components including Population and Human Health, Cultural Heritage, Soil, Water, Air and various Land Use and Phasing provisions from the Plan. CPO 5.72-5.88 CPO 5.110-5.118	<b>MA</b>
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.</li> <li>In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable compact growth;</li> <li>Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport;</li> <li>Drainage, flood risk management and resilience;</li> <li>Sectors including agriculture, residential heating and infrastructure;</li> <li>Sustainable infrastructure design solutions including energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives.</li> <li>Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality.</li> <li>Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors.</li> <li>Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An extent of travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air. This has been mitigated by provisions which have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable compact growth and sustainable mobility.</li> <li>Interactions between noise emissions and sensitive receptors. Various provisions have been integrated into the Plan to ensure that noise levels at sensitive receptors will be minimised.</li> </ul>	CPO12.93-12.103 CPO 3.1-3.18 Also refer to: the overall approach to compact development and sustainability provided by the Plan; and Chapter 4 Housing Climate Context and Associated Actions, Chapter 5 Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Communications - Climate Actions, Chapter 6 Climate Action and 'Just Transition' Fund Opportunities – County Policy Objectives, Chapter 7: Placemaking Climate Context and Associated Actions, Chapter 8 Economic Development Climate Change Actions, Chapter 9 Rural Economy Climate Change Actions, Chapter 10 Tourism Climate Change Actions, Chapter 11 Built and Cultural Heritage Climate Actions, Chapter 12 Natural Heritage and the Environment - Climate Change Actions, Chapter 13 Green Infrastructure Climate Change Actions and Chapter 14 Landscape Character Climate Change Actions	<b>AC</b>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements.</li> <li>Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within existing settlements by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential effects on known architectural and archaeological heritage and unknown archaeology however, these will occur in compliance with legislation.</li> </ul>	CPO11.1-11.55	<b>CH</b>
<b>Landscape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscapes will change overtime as a result of natural changes in vegetation cover combined with new developments that will occur in compliance with the Plan's landscape protection measures.</li> </ul>	CPO14.1-14.8 CPO14.36 A12.1-A12.10	<b>L</b>



## 2.5 Schedule 2A

### PART 1

**1. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources***

The Material Alterations propose a number of text and map-based changes to the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

**Table 2.4 Proposed Material Alterations Requiring SEA<sup>8</sup>**

Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.	Alteration Ref.	SEA Screening Ref.
CH 10.2	8	CH 12.13	8
CH 10.3	8	CH 12.14	8
CH 10.21	8	CH 12.16	8
CH 12.1	8	CH 13.2	8
CH 12.2	8	CH 13.4	8
CH 12.3	8	Appendix 1 PMAs	9
CH 12.4	8	Appendix 6 PMAs: AP.6.2, AP.6.4, AP.6.5	10
CH 12.5	8		
CH 12.7	8		
CH 12.9	8		
CH 12.11	1,8		

Taking the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the degree to which these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan set a framework for projects and other activities, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**2. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy***

The Material Alterations are being proposed to the Draft Plan. The Draft Plan relates to the proper planning and sustainable development of County Longford.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the degree to which these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan influence other plans, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

<sup>8</sup> For detail on Proposed Material Alterations please refer to Proposed Material Alterations document. For detail on SEA Screening Ref please refer to Table 2.2.

**3. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development***

The Draft Plan - to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate - has undergone SEA. This process integrated environmental considerations into the Plan and found that the Plan contributes to environmental protection and management and sustainable development.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the degree to which these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan are relevant for the integration of environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable development, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**4. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: environmental problems relevant to the plan***

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and legislative targets.

Through its provisions relating to environmental protection and management, the Draft Plan contributes towards ensuring that environmental conditions do not get worse and, where possible, they contribute towards its amelioration.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from environmental problems relevant to these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**5. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection)***

The Draft County Development Plan relates to the land use and town planning sector and have fulfilled requirements in relation to SEA. These processes integrated considerations with regard to EU and national legislation on the environment, including those relating to the waste management and the Water Framework Directive.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the relevance of these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

## **PART 2**

### **1. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

### **2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the cumulative nature of the effects**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

### **3. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the transboundary nature of the effects**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

### **4. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

### **5. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

### **6. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:**

#### **a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

**b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, and;**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

**c) intensive land-use.**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

**7. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status**

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

## Section 3 Conclusion

Most Proposed Material Alterations are determined not to result in likely significant effects. Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is identified that all potential effects arising from most Proposed Alterations: either are present already (beneficial) and will be further contributed towards; or will be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse). In addition, some alterations merely added clarifications or amended context setting text for Plan provisions and these will not result in significant environmental effects. Consequently, these Proposed Material Alterations do not require SEA.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 are advised as requiring SEA and consideration in an SEA Environmental Report.

The SEA Environmental Report prepared for the Draft Plan will be finalised in advance of adoption of the Plan. An SEA Statement will be prepared following adoption, which will detail how environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan and how consultations on the SEA and associated Plan-preparation process were taken into account. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Appropriate Assessment reports will be finalised in a similar manner at adoption, taking into account how environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan and how consultations were taken into account.