

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

FOR THE

LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015-2021

for: Longford County Council

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Longford
County Longford



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List of Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAHG	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DCENR	Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
DECLG	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIAH	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
NSS	National Spatial Strategy
RBD	River Basin District
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
RPGs	Regional Planning Guidelines
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEO	Strategic Environmental Objective
SI No.	Statutory Instrument Number
SPA	Special Protection Area
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Glossary

Appropriate Assessment

The obligation to undertake Appropriate Assessment 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 or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 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.

Biotic Index Values (Q Values)

The Biotic Index Values, or Q values, are assigned to rivers in accordance with biological monitoring of surface waters - low Q ratings, as low as Q1, are indicative of low biodiversity and polluted waters, and high Q ratings, as high as Q5, are indicative of high biodiversity and unpolluted waters. Good status as defined by the Water Framework Directive equates to approximately Q4 in the national scheme of biological classification of rivers as set out by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Environmental Problems

Annex I of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th 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 so that they come 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.

Protected Structure

Protected Structure is the term used in the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 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 former Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (now Department of Arts, 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 the appropriate bodies.

Strategic Actions

Strategic actions include: *Policies/Strategies*, which may be considered as inspiration and guidance for action and which set the framework for Plans and programmes; *Plans*, sets of co-ordinated and timed objectives for the implementation of the policy; and *Programmes*, sets of projects in a particular area.

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 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 Background

1.1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021. 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. The SEA is carried out in order to comply with the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) as amended. This report should be read in conjunction with the Plan.

1.2 SEA Definition

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 insure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest appropriate stages of decision-making in tandem with economic, social and other considerations.

1.3 SEA Directive and its transposition into Irish Law

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

the Environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including land use planning.

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004). Both sets of Regulations became operational on 21st July 2004. The Regulations have been amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 201 of 2011).

1.4 Implications for the Plan and the Planning Authority

Article 7 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) as amended requires that Strategic Environmental Assessment is undertaken for the preparation of certain Development Plans.

The findings of the SEA are expressed in this Environmental Report, an earlier version of which accompanied the Draft Plan on public display and was altered in order to take account of recommendations contained in submissions and in order to take account of any changes which are made to the Plan on foot of submissions. Members of the planning authority took into account the findings of this Report and other related SEA output during their consideration of the Draft Plan and before its adoption.

An SEA Statement has been prepared which summarises, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the adopted Plan.

Section 2 The Plan

2.1 Review Process and Statutory Context

Under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, each Planning Authority is obliged to prepare a development plan for its functional area every six years, the review of which should commence four years after its adoption. Accordingly the review process of the previous County Development Plan in preparation of the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021, began in March 2013 when extensive notification of the review process was given and notice was published and forwarded to the relevant bodies.

2.2 Purpose of the Plan

The main purpose of the Plan is to set out a framework for the sustainable physical development of the county, while considering the conservation and protection of the built and natural environment. It also aims to carefully consider the needs of all groups and individuals within the county and promote equal opportunities.

2.3 Content of the Plan

The Plan has been prepared by Longford County Council and comprises of a written document with maps, and various appendices including zonings and policy for the county's settlements and county Housing and Retail Strategies.

The Plan contains a *Core Strategy* and various other strategies including those related to Settlement and Retail. Additional provisions are also included under the headings of *Economic Development, Infrastructure and Environment, Heritage and Amenities*.

Apart from the details and zoning maps for the core settlement strategy, the Plan generally does not prescribe the particular locations of any developments of infrastructure. Overall, the Plan underpins the development of housing, communities and urban centres with supporting transport, water, waste, energy and communication infrastructure within the County.

2.4 The Plan Core Strategy and Aims

The Core Strategy contained in the Plan articulates a medium to longer term evidence and quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of County Longford, whilst demonstrating consistency with national and regional development objectives. The strategic aims of the Core Strategy are set out as follows:

Aim 1

To provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County over the plan period.

Aim 2

To provide alignment and integration between strategic planning and settlement policy and the prioritisation of physical infrastructure investment.

Aim 3

To build on the unprecedented growth which has occurred over recent years and maximise the economic and social benefits that can be achieved from this in a manner which is compatible with the principles of sustainable development.

Aim 4

To secure the future vitality and viability of County Longford through optimising the County's economic, social and physical development.

Aim 5

To demonstrate that the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021 is consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region and other national guidelines and policies.

Aim 6

To facilitate the closer alliance of County and sub-county level plans with regional policy.

Aim 7

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 the National Spatial Strategy and Midland Regional Planning Guidelines.

Aim 8

To develop this quantum of land in a manner that supports public transport and existing services.

Aim 9

To provide a framework supported by evidence based settlement strategy, for deciding on the scale, phasing and location of new development, having regard to existing services and planned investment over the coming years.

Aim 10

To provide a framework within which the provision of sustainable infrastructure, amenities, economic investment and development can take place to maximize the use of resources in the plan area.

2.5 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

2.5.1 Introduction

The Plan sits within a hierarchy of land use forward planning strategic actions. The Plan must comply with relevant higher level strategic actions and may, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions. The following sections identify a number of these strategic actions, further details of which are contained in the Plan.

The following sub-sections reproduce text included in the Plan concerning other relevant plans and programmes to which the Plan relates.

2.5.2 The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) was introduced in 2002 and sets out the spatial planning framework for the country. The strategy consists of a twenty year planning framework designed to achieve a better

balance of social, economic, and physical development and population growth between regions in Ireland. Its focus is on people and places, and on building communities.

The NSS has established a platform upon which policies can be put in place to ensure that more balanced development is achieved.

2.5.3 Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines

The Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) were adopted in July 2010 and document the regional spatial planning context for the region, which includes the Counties of Longford, Laois, Westmeath and Offaly. National policy contained in the NSS, is translated to a regional level in the Midland RPGs, which will guide policy making decisions at a local level through the County Development Plan (CDP).

The Midland RPGs provide population targets for Longford which are also indicated in terms of future housing land requirements for the County. This coupled with the requirements of the Planning and Development (amendment) Act 2010, ensures that CDPs are now consistent with the RPGs, whereas CDPs were previously only required to have regard to the RPGs. The 'Core Strategy' contained as part of the Longford CDP 2015-2021 is therefore central to ensuring such compliance with the RPGs.

The RPGs provide a provide a regional framework for the formulation of the policies and strategy in the CDP and define a regional development model that is based on a spatial hierarchy centred on the linked gateway of Athlone, Tullamore, and Mullingar as identified in the NSS and supported by the principal towns of Longford and Portlaoise.

Relevant to County Longford, Longford Town is described as a 'Principal Town' in the RPGs with the function of driving the northern part of the Midland Region. Granard is described as a 'Key Service Town'. The purpose of key service towns is to drive their own local economies within their area. Edgeworthstown is described as a 'Service Town' and the function of these towns is to perform important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for essentially local hinterlands and support nearby gateway and principle towns. Ballymahon and Lanesboro

are described as 'Local Service Towns' and the regional guidelines envisage these towns performing important local level, residential, retailing, social and leisure functions and providing appropriate local services to a wider rural hinterland.

2.5.4 National Planning Guidelines

The plan has considered the following guidelines;

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009);
- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004);
- Architectural Heritage Protection for Places of Worship - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2003);
- Architecture Policy Guidelines 2009-2015;
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual (May 09) - Part 1;
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual (May 09) - Part 2;
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001);
- Development Contribution Scheme for Planning Authorities – (Circular PD 5/2007);
- Development Contribution Scheme for Planning Authorities - Circular PD4/2003;
- Development Management Guidelines-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (June 2007);
- Development Plans Guidelines - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (June 2007);
- Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (January 2012);
- Funfair Guidance;
- Implementation of new EPA Code of Practice on WasteWater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses - Circular PSSP1/10;
- Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines- Best Practice Guidance (December 2010);
- Landscape and Landscape Assessment;
- Provision of Schools and the Planning System – Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, The Department of Education and Science and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2008);
- Quarries and Ancillary Activities-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004);
- Retail Planning Guidelines;
- Section 261A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and related provisions, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (January 2012);
- Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines (2005);
- Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines - Map;
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (May 09);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartment - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007);
- Taking in Charge of Housing Estates / Management Companies;
- Taking in Charge of Residential Developments Circular Letter PD 1/08;
- Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (1996);
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Local Authorities (Nov 09);
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Technical Appendices (Nov 09);
- Tree Preservation Guidelines;
- Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations - Circular PD 7/09; and
- Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006).

2.5.5 River Basin Management Plans

Local Authorities, including Longford County Council, have prepared the Shannon and North West International River Basin Management Plans which are implemented in order to help protect and improve waters in the county and wider River Basin Districts. The Shannon and North Western International RBD Management Plans and associated Programmes of Measures include provisions to help ensure that water

bodies in the districts meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

2.5.6 Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies

Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Studies are being undertaken for the Shannon and North Western International River Basin Districts by the Office of Public Works.

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. In 2015, draft Flood Maps will be finalised. The final output from the studies will be CFRAM Plans, to be published in December 2016. The Plans will define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.

2.5.7 Smarter Travel 2009

"Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 - 2020" is the Government's action plan to free towns and cities from traffic congestion, substantially cut CO2 emissions, encourage car based commuters to leave their cars at home, and encourage a shift toward walking, cycling and greater public transport usage.

2.5.8 GRID 25 and associated Implementation Plan

Grid25 is a high-level strategy outlining how EirGrid intends to undertake the development of the electricity transmission grid in the short, medium and longer terms, to support a long-term sustainable and reliable electricity supply. The Grid25 strategy thereby seeks to implement the provisions of the 2007 Government White Paper on Energy - "Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland" in terms of development of electricity transmission infrastructure.

The Grid25 Implementation Programme (IP) is a practical strategic overview of how the early

stages of Grid25 are intended to be implemented.

2.5.9 Food Harvest 2020

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 in 2015.

2.5.10 National Rural Development Programme

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.

At a more detailed level, the programme also:

- Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation;
- 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
- 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.

2.5.11 National Forestry Programme

The National Forestry Programme is currently being prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and views of stakeholders are now being sought on the composition of the new proposed forestry measures. These proposed measures represent a continuation of the previous Forestry Programme 2007-2013 which has been effective in supporting the growth and development of the forestry sector and rural economies.

2.5.12 National Peatlands Strategy

The National Peatlands Strategy (and associated Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Area Network), prepared by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, will, when finalised, establish principles in relation to Irish peatlands in order to guide Government policy. The Draft Strategy aims to provide a framework for which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution.

2.5.13 Draft National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has published the Draft National Raised Bog Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Management Plan to provide clarity to all parties regarding how SAC raised bogs will be managed and restored into the future.

2.5.14 Environmental Protection Objectives

The Plan is subject to a number of high level environmental protection policies and objectives with which it must comply, including those which have been identified as Strategic Environmental Objectives in Section 5.

Examples of Environmental Protection Objectives include the aim of the EU Habitats Directive - which is to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of Member States - and the purpose of the Water Framework Directive - which is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which, among other things, prevents deterioration in the status of all water bodies and protects, enhances and restores all waters with the aim of achieving good status by 2015.

Section 3 SEA Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach

This section details how the SEA has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan. Figure 3.1 lays out the main stages in the Plan/SEA preparation process.

The Plan and associated SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) documents were prepared in an iterative manner whereby multiple revisions of each document were prepared, each informing subsequent iterations of the others.

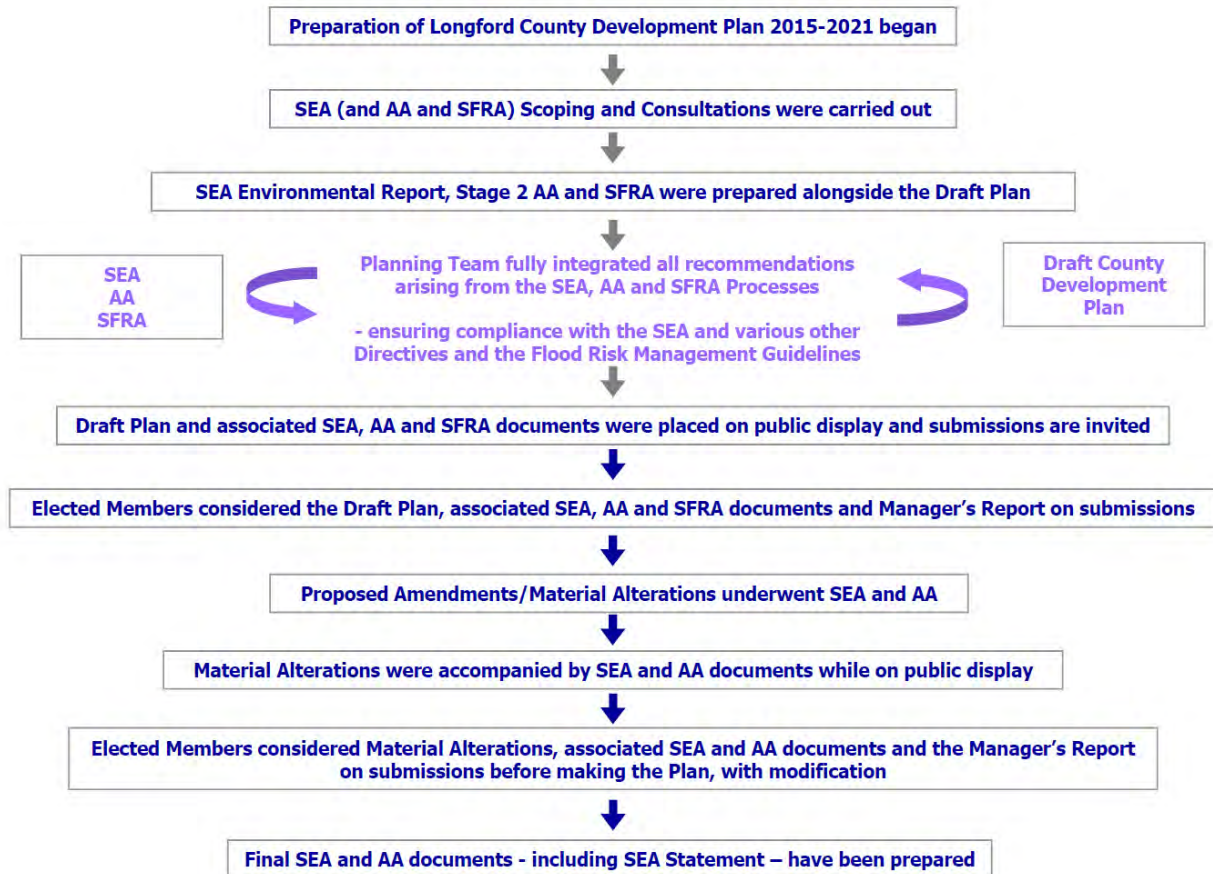


Figure 3.1 County Development Plan and SEA, AA and SFRA Stages

3.2 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

3.2.1 Appropriate Assessment

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been undertaken alongside the preparation and adoption of the Plan.

The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The AA concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network¹.

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed both the Plan and the SEA. All recommendations made by the AA were integrated into the Plan.

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 (including European sites, habitats and species and supporting environmental features) were identified for consideration at scoping stage and these are now detailed in Section 4.4.
- Reference to the zone of influence is provided, including at Section 4.4.

Baseline

- Biodiversity data sources relevant for this County level assessment have been identified and datasets collated/gathered.
- The biodiversity baseline addresses designated sites, habitats, species and supporting environmental features.
- AA screening information has been incorporated into the SEA/EIA baseline.

¹ Except as provided for in Section 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.

Alternatives

- Impacts upon biodiversity are considered under each of the alternatives and potential conflicts can be mitigated under 3 alternatives.

Impact assessment

- Effects on biodiversity are identified and assessed and the AA gives due consideration to the interrelationship between biodiversity-relevant environmental factors and any 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 consistent and compatible.
- All the AA and SEA mitigation measures have been simultaneously considered for incorporation into the plan/programme/project
- Indicators and associated targets been included in SEA for monitoring European sites.

Reporting

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

Communication and consultation

- Submissions (both written and those made at a Scoping Meeting on 22 May 2013) from both the EPA and NPWS have been taken on board.
- The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed both the Plan and the SEA.

3.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken alongside the Plan.

The requirement for SFRA is provided under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DEHLG, 2009).

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and SFRA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the SFRA have informed both the Plan and the SEA. All recommendations made by the SFRA have been integrated into the Plan.

3.4 Scoping

3.4.1 Introduction

In consultation with the relevant authorities, the scope of environmental issues to be dealt

with by the SEA 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 which are specified under the SEA Directive².

As the Plan is not likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State transboundary consultations as provided for by Article 7 of the SEA Directive were not undertaken.

3.4.2 Scoping Meeting

In order to inform the scoping of the SEA, AA and SFRA, a scoping meeting with the EPA and OPW was held on 22 May 2013.

3.4.3 Scoping Notices

All relevant environmental authorities³ identified under the SEA Regulations as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by the Council 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. Environmental authorities were informed that submissions, or parts of submissions, made on the AA or SFRA would also be taken into account.

3.4.4 Scoping Responses

Submissions were made by Leitrim County Council, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the

² 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.

³ These comprise the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Longford Town Council, Cavan County Council, Westmeath County Council, Roscommon County Council and Leitrim County Council.

Gaeltacht. These submissions influenced the scope of the assessments.

Acknowledgement letters were received from Roscommon County Council and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

3.5 Environmental Baseline Data

The SEA process is informed by the environmental baseline (i.e. the current state of the environment) to facilitate the identification and evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the provisions of the Plan and the alternatives and the subsequent monitoring of the effects of implementing the provisions of the Plan as adopted.

3.6 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, three alternative scenarios for the County Development Plan are examined.

3.7 The SEA Environmental Report

In this Environmental Report, an earlier version of which was placed on public display alongside the Plan, the likely environmental effects of the Plan and the alternatives are predicted and their significance evaluated.

The Environmental Report provides the Council, stakeholders and the public with a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of implementing the Plan.

Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects posed by the Plan are identified in Section 9 - these have been integrated into the Plan.

The Environmental Report has been updated in order to take account of recommendations contained in submissions and in order to take account of changes which were made to the

original, Draft Plan that was placed on public display in 2014.

The Environmental Report is required to contain the information specified in Schedule 2 of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004) as amended (see Table 3.1).

3.8 The SEA Statement

An SEA Statement has been prepared which includes information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan, highlighting the main changes to the Plan which 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.

3.9 Difficulties Encountered

The lack of a centralised data source that could make all environmental baseline data for the county both readily available and in a consistent format posed a challenge to the SEA process. This difficulty is one which has been encountered while undertaking SEAs at local authorities across the country and was overcome by investing time in the collection of data from various sources and through the use of Geographical Information Systems.

Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report

Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report	Corresponding Section of this Report
(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 and 9
(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 and 8
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Non-Technical Summary (Appendix I)
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section

Section 4 Environmental Baseline

4.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the information on the baseline environment is focused upon the relevant aspects of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected and the likely evolution of the current environment in the absence of the Plan. Being consistent with the strategic provisions of the Plan, this section provides a strategic description of aspects of environmental components which have the greatest potential to be affected by implementation of the Plan.

Article 5 of the SEA Directive states that the report shall include the information that may *reasonably* be required taking into account:

- Current knowledge and methods of assessment;
- The contents and level of detail in the plan or programme and its stage in the decision-making process; and
- The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment.

What this means in practice is, inter alia, with regard to Plan, that SEA involves collating currently available, relevant environmental data; *it does not require major new research*. Where data deficiencies or gaps exist, this should be acknowledged in the report.

4.2 Monitoring Review

As part of the scoping exercise, a monitoring review was undertaken by examining the environmental effects of planning applications upon the environment between 2009 and 2013. The following points summarise this review:

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

- No significant effects on protected biodiversity or flora and fauna arising from implementation of the 2009 CDP as amended were identified.
- No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity were identified as being

lost without remediation resulting from development provided for by the CDP.

Population and Human Health

- No significant effects on human health arising from implementation of the 2009 CDP were identified.
- Population change appears to be in compliance with the provisions contained in the 2009 Plan.

Soil

- No significant brownfield lands were developed over the lifetime of the previous Plan.

Water

- The most recent Q values for testing locations within the County are for 2011. The most recent trophic classification from the EPA is for the period 2007-2009. For details on these indicators and the current status of surface waters please refer to Section 4.7.
- Areas of specified flood risk across the entire County have not been identified however all permissions have been granted in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Material Assets

- All new developments which have been granted permission over the lifetime of the CDP have been - or will be prior to operation - connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment.
- With regard to drinking water quality between 2009 and 2011, Microbial Compliance Levels have slightly increased while Chemical Compliance Levels have slightly decreased. The number of entries on the RAL has decreased from 2 in 2009 to 1 in Q4 of 2012.
- The preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan is to be investigated once this is required to be prepared by legislation.
- Between 2009 and 2011 the total *collected and brought household waste* has decreased while the total

packaging recovered by self-complying packagers has increased.

impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

Air and Climatic Factors

- Figures from CSO show an overall decrease of 2.9% of the entire population aged 5 years and over travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means in the County between 2006 and 2011.

Cultural Heritage

- All entries to the Record of Monuments and Places have been protected from inappropriate development granted permission under the previous CDP.
- All entries to the Record of Protected Structures have been protected from inappropriate development granted permission under the previous CDP.

Landscape

- No complaints have been received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape.

4.3 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of a new Plan

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

As indicated under Section 4.2, the previous County Plan has contributed towards environmental protection within County Longford.

If the previous Plan was allowed to expire and not be replaced by a new Plan, this would have resulted 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 have still applied, the deterioration of this framework would have meant that new development would be less coordinated and controlled. Such development could have resulted in an increase in the occurrence of adverse effects on all environmental components, especially those arising cumulatively. Cumulative effects occur as a result of the addition of many small

Such adverse effects could have included:

- Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites;
- Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity;
- Loss of biodiversity with regard to Wildlife Sites and species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976;
- Loss of population of the county involved in land management;
- Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health;
- Damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource;
- Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies;
- Increase in the risk of flooding;
- Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment;
- Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean;
- Increases in waste levels;
- Failure to contribute towards sustainable transport and associated impacts;
- Effects on entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and other archaeological heritage;
- Effects on entries to the Records of Protected Structures and other architectural heritage; and
- Occurrence of adverse visual impacts.

4.4 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

4.4.1 Habitats, Species, Networks and Land Cover

County Longford supports a wide diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats and a wide range of plant and animal species, some of which have come under threat due to development pressures and increased demand for new development land.

Ecological networks are important in connecting areas of local biodiversity with each other and with nearby designated sites so as to prevent islands of habitat from being isolated entities. They are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows and rivers/streams, which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range. They are important for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna particularly for mammals, especially for bats and small birds. They facilitate linkages both between and within designated ecological sites, the non-designated surrounding countryside and the more urban areas of the county.

CORINE land cover mapping, indicative of habitat type, for County Longford for the year 2006 is shown on Figure 4.1. The main types of cover in the County are pastures with areas of peat bogs, transitional woodland scrub with coniferous forests interspersed throughout. CORINE land cover mapping for County Longford for the year 2006 is shown on Figure 4.1. The main types of cover in the County are pastures with areas of peat bogs, transitional woodland scrub with coniferous forests interspersed throughout. The most common land cover change between the CORINE 2000 data and the data for the year 2006 was from transitional woodland scrub to coniferous forests.

4.4.2 Designations

Special Areas of Conservation (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) by the DAHG due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. There are 6 SACs located in County Longford: Fortwilliam Turlough (Site Code: 000448); Lough Forbes Complex (Site Code: 001818); Lough Ree (Site Code: 000440); Ardagullion Bog (Site Code: 002341); Brown Bog (Site Code: 002346); and Clooneen Bog (Site Code: 002348).

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) by the DEHLG due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the European Union. There are 5 designated SPAs located in County Longford: Glen Lough (Site Code: 004045); Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough (Site Code: 004061); Lough Ree (Site Code: 004064); Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog (Site Code: 004101); and Glen Lough (Site Code: 004045).

SPAs along with SACs comprise Natura 2000 - a network of protected areas throughout the EU established under the Habitats Directive. Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites can help protect whatever is important in Natura 2000 sites while enabling appropriate development.

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been undertaken alongside and informs this SEA for the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC). The AA concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network⁴.

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 were published on a non-statutory basis

⁴ Except as provided for in Section 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.

in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

There are 6 designated NHAs located in County Longford: Aghnamona Bog NHA (Site Code: 000422); Rinn River NHA (Site Code: 000691); Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough NHA (Site Code: 000985); Cloonageeher Bog NHA (Site Code: 001423); Forthill Bog NHA (Site Code: 001448); and Mount Jessop Bog NHA (Site Code: 001450).

Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas in the County are mapped on Figure 4.2.

Also shown on Figure 4.2 are the boundaries of Water Management Units (WMUs) including those which are shared with Counties Roscommon, Leitrim, Cavan, Westmeath, Meath and Offaly. The Zone of Influence of the Plan with respect to impacts upon ecology via surface waters upon ecological resources can be estimated to be all WMUs either wholly within or partially within the County. WMUs and River Basin Districts are shown on Figure 4.6.

Important stands of trees are designated under the previous CDP. These are mapped on Figure 4.3.

There are 2 ecologically based entries to Water Framework Directive Registers of Protected Areas in County Longford; water dependent habitat SAC and water dependent habitat SPA. These are similar to the areas designated as SAC and SPA and are mapped on Figure 4.12.

4.4.3 Human Management of Land

Human management of land is essential for the existence of many of the habitats within the managed landscape of the County. Figures from CSO show overall increase (+0.8% of the specified population) in the population involved in land management in the County between 2006 and 2011 - see Table 4.1.

Broad Industrial Group	2006	2011	Change
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,176 (8.1%)	1,300 (9.4%)	+124 (+1.3%)
Mining, quarrying and turf production	184 (1.3%)	116 (.8%)	-68 (-.5%)
Total Population involved in land management	1360 (9.4%)	1416 (10.2%)	+56 (+.8%)
Total Persons aged 15 years and over	14,527	13,871	-656 (-4.5%)

Table 4.1 Persons aged 15 years and over at work in County Longford classified by broad industrial group

4.4.4 Existing Problems

Previous developments such as residential, commercial and transportation have resulted in loss of biodiversity and flora and fauna across the County however legislative objectives governing biodiversity and fauna were not identified as being conflicted with.

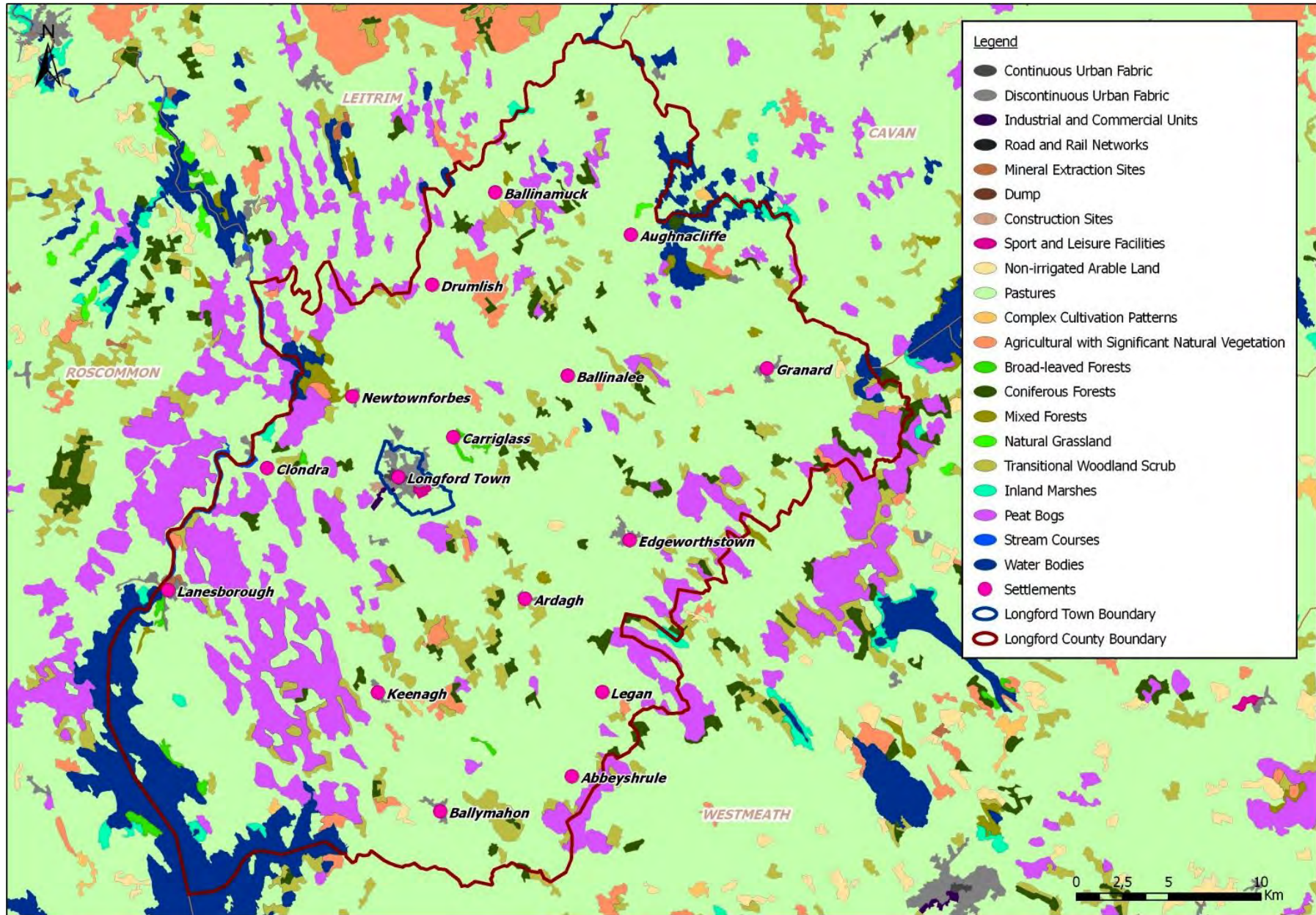


Figure 4.1 CORINE Land Cover Data 2006

Source: EPA (2009)

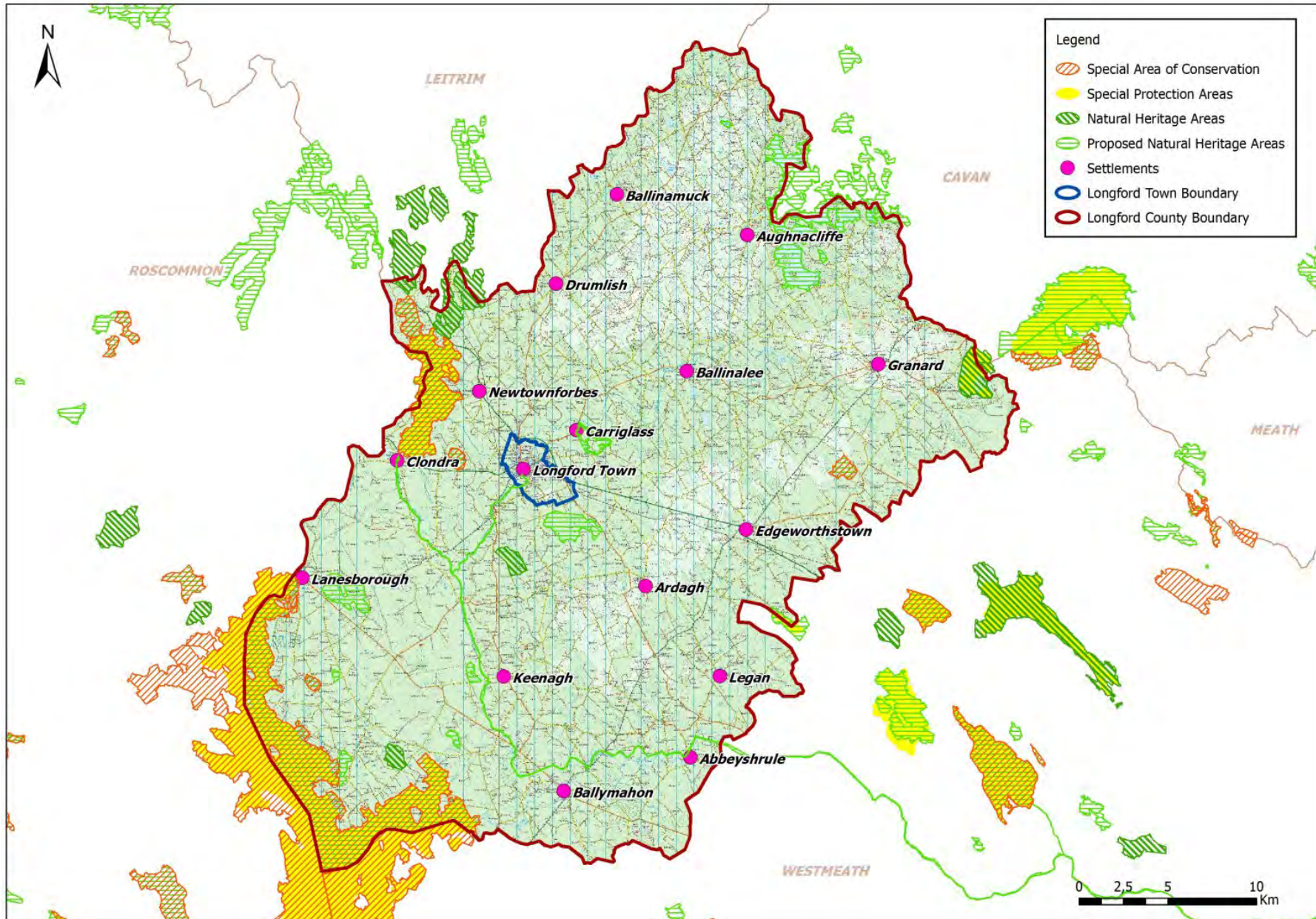


Figure 4.2 SPAs, SACs, NHAs, pNHAs and Water Management Units (WMUs)

Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded April, 2013)

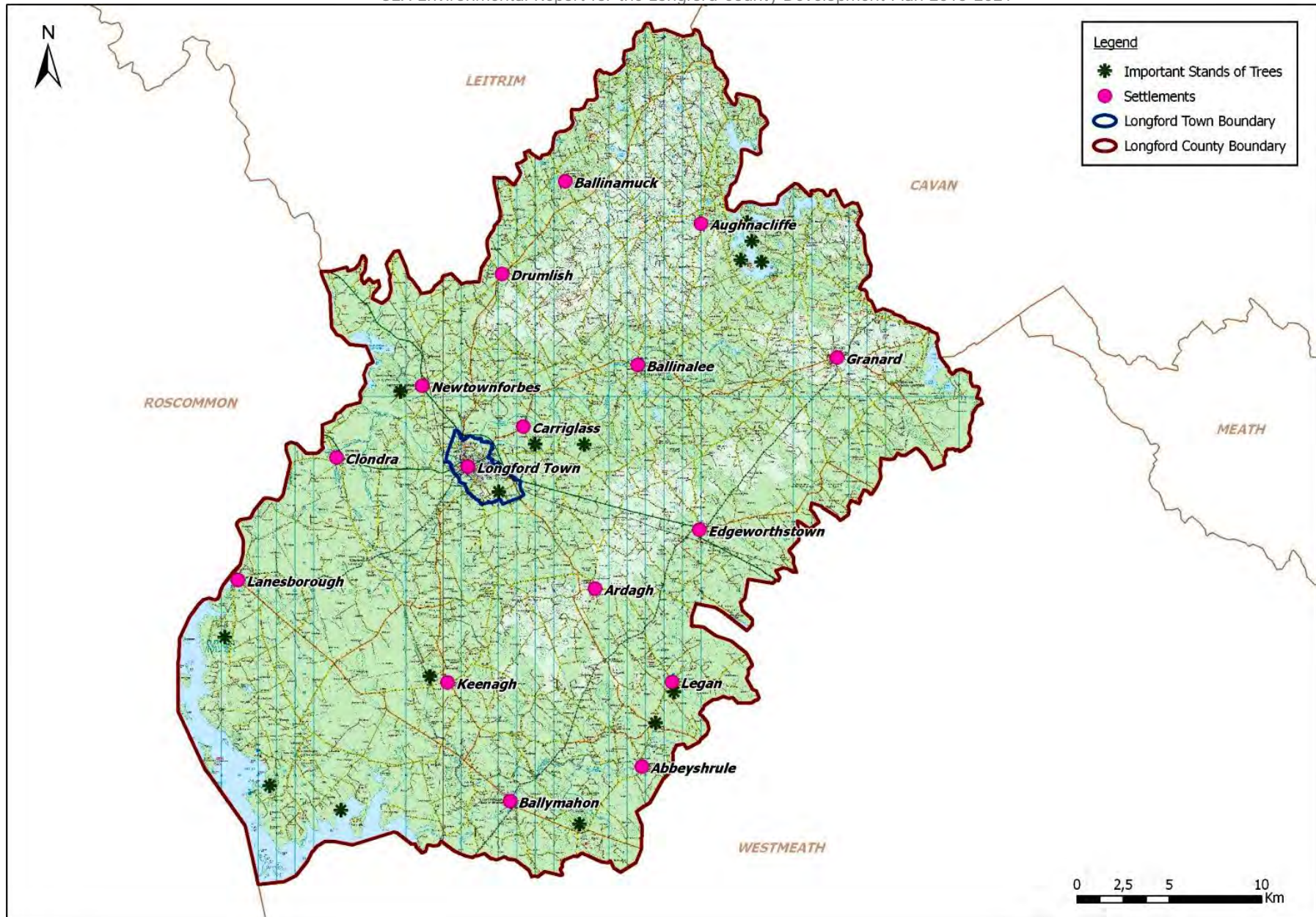


Figure 4.3 Important Stands of Trees

Source: Longford County Council (2009)

4.5 Population and Human Health

4.5.1 Population

Longford is a relatively small county of approximately 1,091 km². Population⁵ for the County currently stands at 39,000 persons. This sees an increase of 4,609 persons or 13.4% on the previous Census which was carried out in 2006.

4.5.2 Human Health

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

4.5.3 Existing Problems

Legislative objectives governing population and human health were not identified as being conflicted with.

4.6 Soil

4.6.1 Introduction

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. However, there is currently an EU Thematic Strategy on the protection of soil which includes a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive which proposes common principles for protecting soils across the EU.

4.6.2 Soil Types

Soil types, as classified by Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI⁶, are mapped on Figure 4.4.

This map indicates that deep well drained mineral soil and cutaway peat are the most prevalent soil types in the county. Areas of blanket bog occur in the south west and north of the county.

4.6.3 Sites of Geological Interest

Sites of Geological Interest in County Longford are mapped on Figure 4.5.

4.6.4 Existing Problems

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

⁵ CSO (2011), *Census 2011*: Dublin: CSO

⁶ Teagasc, GSI, Forest Service & EPA (2006) *Soils and Subsoils Class* Dublin: DEHLG

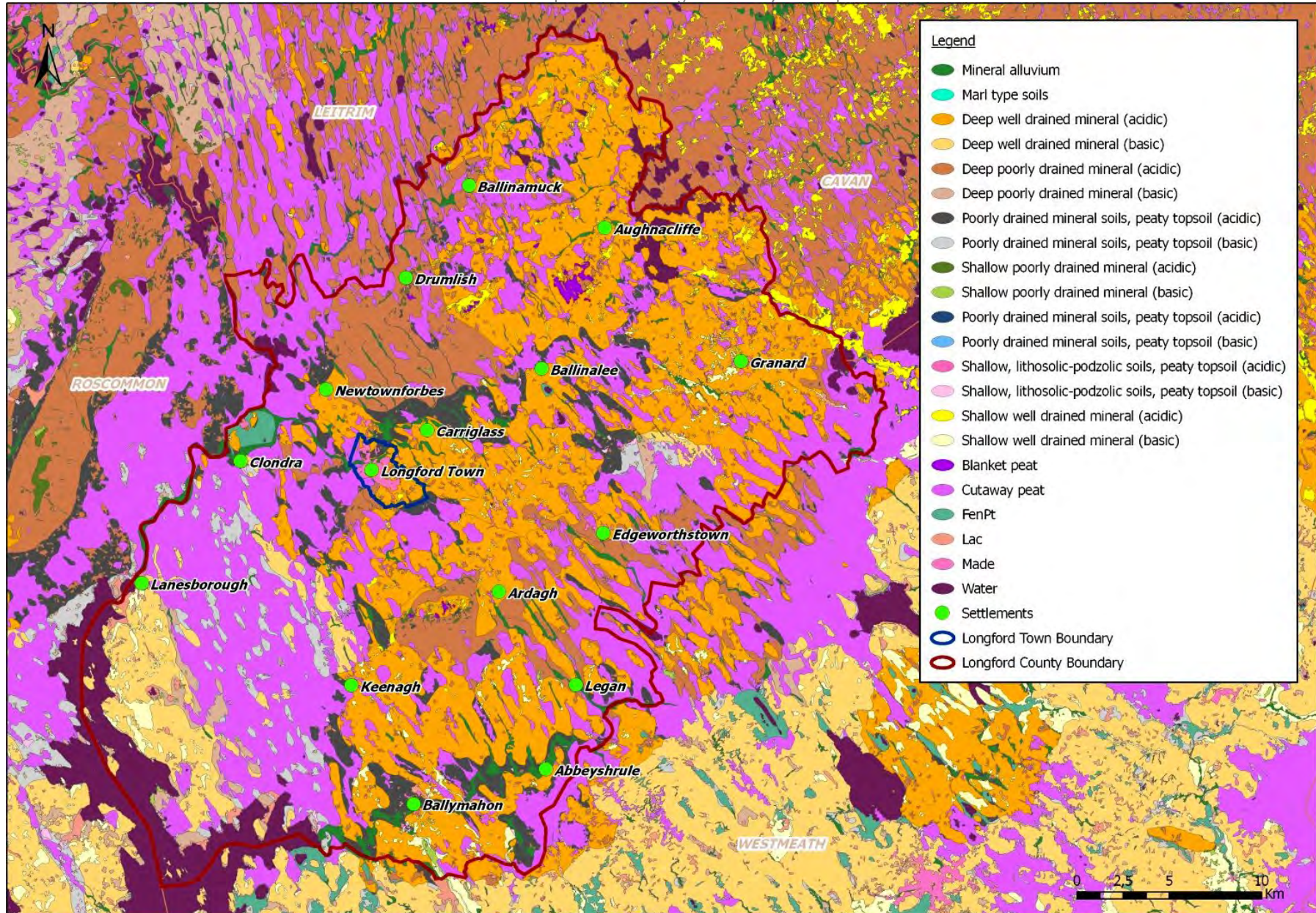


Figure 4.4 Soil Type

Source: Teagasc, GSI, Forest Service & EPA (2006) *Soils and Subsoils Class* Dublin: DEHLG

CAAS Ltd. for Longford County Council

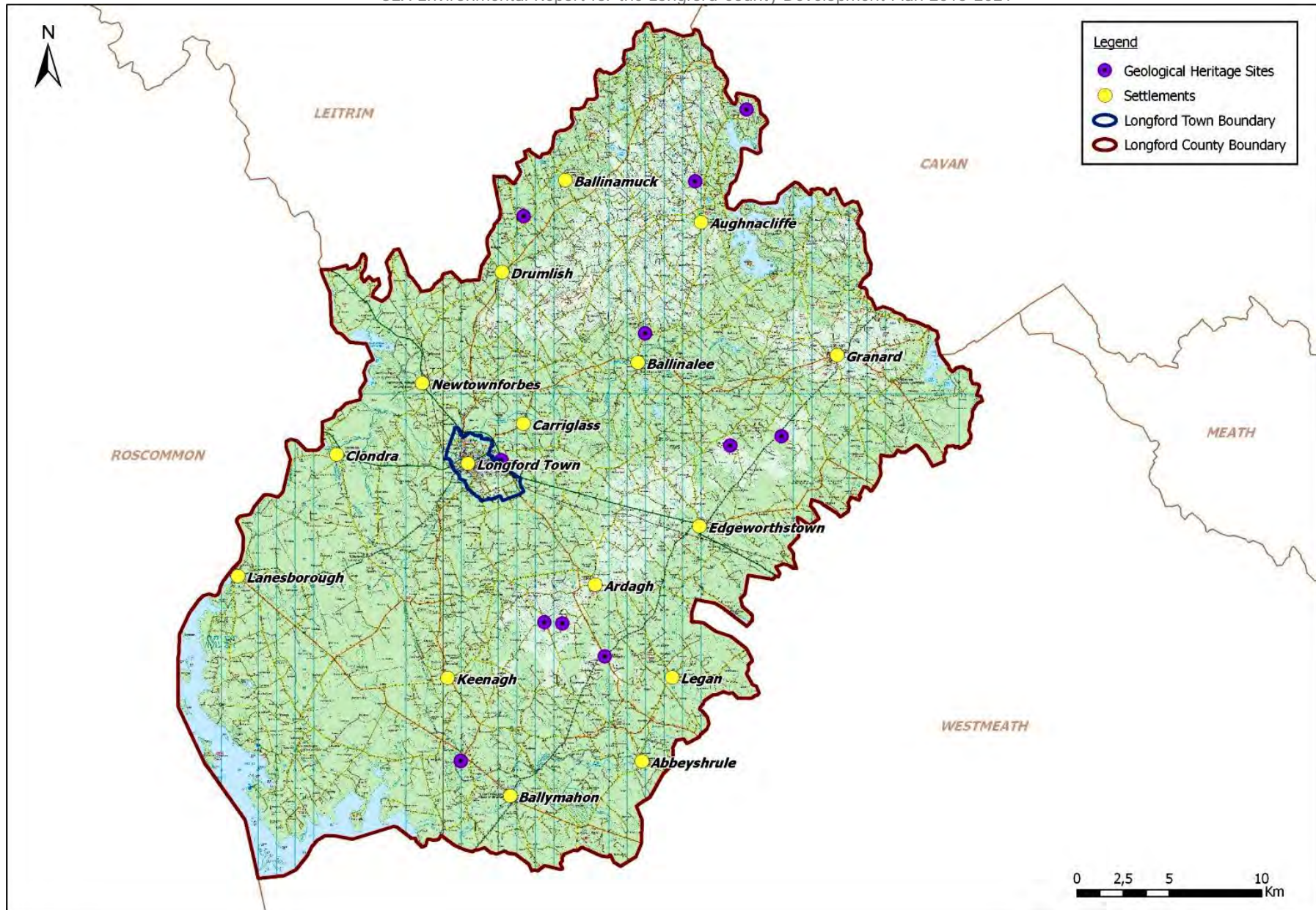


Figure 4.5 Geological Heritage Sites

Source: Longford County Council (Unknown)

CAAS Ltd. for Longford County Council

4.7 Water

4.7.1 Potential Pressures on Water Quality

Human activities, if not properly managed, can cause deterioration in water quality. Pressures exerted by human activities include the following:

- sewage and other effluents discharged to waters from point sources, e.g. pipes from treatment plants;
- discharges arising from diffuse or dispersed activities on land;
- abstractions from waters; and,
- structural alterations to water bodies.

A point source pressure has a recognisable and specific location at which pollution may originate. Examples of significant point source pressures include direct discharges from waste water treatment plants, licensed discharges from industrial activities, landfills, contaminated lands (e.g. disused gas works) and mines.

A diffuse source pressure unlike a point source is not restricted to an individual point or location. The source of a diffuse pressure can be quite extensive. Significant examples of diffuse pressures include runoff from forestry and agricultural lands.

Excessive abstractions from surface waters and groundwater for drinking and industrial purposes can create pressures on the ability of a water body to maintain both chemical and ecological status.

Structural alterations such as river straightening; construction of embankments, weirs, dams, port facilities and dredging can create conditions such that a water body is no longer able to support the natural ecology which would have existed prior to such modifications. These pressures are also referred to as morphological pressures.

4.7.2 The Water Framework Directive

4.7.2.1 Introduction and Requirements

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" by 2015. 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 by 2015.

Article 4 of the WFD sets out various exemptions e.g. Article 4.7 gives an exemption for deterioration in status caused as a result of certain physical modifications to water bodies, for example, dredging or construction. 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 relevant river basin management plan.

4.7.2.2 River Basin Districts and Water Bodies

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine / coastal areas. The management of water resources will be on these river basin districts. County Longford falls within the North Western and Shannon International RBDs.

Within each river basin district - for the purpose of assessment, reporting and management - water has been divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters which are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies.

4.7.2.3 River Basin Management Plans

Local Authorities, including Longford County Council, have prepared the Shannon and North West International River Basin Management

Plans which are implemented in order to help protect and improve waters in the county and wider RBDs. The Management Plans provide specific policies for individual river basins in order to implement the requirements of the WFD.

4.7.3 Surface Water

4.7.3.1 Introduction

The County lies within two major river catchments, the Shannon and the Erne. It falls within the secondary catchment of the River Inny, which flows into Lough Ree and forms part of the wider Shannon catchment and the Camlin river which flows from Granard through Longford Town to the Shannon at Clondra.

Figure 4.2 shows Water Management Units (WMUs) boundaries including those which are shared with Counties Roscommon, Leitrim, Cavan, Westmeath, Meath and Offaly. The Zone of Influence with respect to water resources can be estimated to be all WMUs either wholly within or partially within the County, surrounding estuarine and coastal water bodies and all connecting bodies of groundwater. WMUs and River Basin Districts are shown on Figure 4.6.

4.7.3.2 WFD Surface Water Status

The WFD defines '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, 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.

Figure 4.7 illustrates the status of surface water bodies within and surrounding County Longford, as currently available from the EPA⁷. Rivers in the south of the county are of moderate status while rivers in the centre of the county are generally of moderate or good status. WFD status for rivers is good in the north west, moderate in the north and poor in the north east. The status of some rivers is identified as 'not monitored' as they were not included in this round of monitoring but may be included in the next round.

There are 4 main lakes in the County, positioned along the County boundary, and all are identified as being of moderate status.

4.7.3.3 Quality of Rivers

River water quality within the County is monitored by the EPA at a number of locations. Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately *Q4* in the national biological classification scheme of rivers as set out by the EPA.

Figure 4.8 maps 2010 and 2011 data. Of the 28 locations which have data available for 2010/2011, 18 (64%) are identified as being of either high or good status, 8 (29%) are identified as being of moderate status, and 2 (7%) are identified as being of poor status.

4.7.3.4 Quality of Lakes

The EPA also monitors the quality of these lakes (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.8). Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately *Mesotrophic* in the national biological classification scheme of lakes as set out by the EPA. Mesotrophic lakes are lakes with an intermediate level of productivity, greater than oligotrophic lakes, but less than eutrophic lakes. Mesotrophic lakes are commonly clear water lakes and ponds with beds of submerged aquatic plants and medium levels of nutrients.

⁷ Dataset downloaded May 2013.

Lake	Overall Status 2001-2003	Overall Status 2004-2006	Overall Status 2007-2009
Boderg	Oligotrophic	Mesotrophic	Oligotrophic
Bofin (Shannon)	Oligotrophic	Oligotrophic	Oligotrophic
Forbes	Oligotrophic	Oligotrophic	Oligotrophic
Gowna	unknown	unknown	Moderately Eutrophic
Key	Oligotrophic	Mesotrophic	Oligotrophic
Kinale	Moderately Mesotrophic	Mesotrophic	Mesotrophic
Ree	Mesotrophic	Mesotrophic	Oligotrophic

Table 4.2 Trophic Status of Lakes

4.7.4 Ground Water

4.7.4.1 Introduction

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.

Groundwater bodies within County Longford follow the pattern of the underlying geology, the empty spaces of which they are contained in. Ground water is important for drinking water supply together as well as the source of some surface waters across County Longford.

4.7.4.2 WFD Groundwater Status

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.

As shown on Figure 4.9 most of the county's aquifers are of good status. An area in the west of the county is of poor status.

4.7.4.3 Aquifer Buffer Zones

Aquifer Buffer Zones are mapped on Figure 4.10. Buffers have been given to the known water supply sources in the county in an effort to protect them from pollution.

4.7.4.4 Aquifer Vulnerability

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates aquifers according to their vulnerability to pollution. Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water.

Figure 4.11 shows aquifer vulnerability data which varies across the county. Areas of low vulnerability occur along county boundaries. A large area of high vulnerability can be found at the centre of the county, with some other areas of high vulnerability scattered throughout the county. Some areas of extreme vulnerability occur in the upland areas of Longford. Smaller areas where the rock is near the surface, or "karst" can be found within these areas of extreme vulnerability.

4.7.5 Register of Protected Areas

In addition to risk assessments, 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.

A number of water bodies within and surrounding the County Longford area have been listed on the WFD Register of Protected Areas (RPAs) - these are mapped on Figure 4.12. There are six different types of RPAs in Longford, namely Nutrient Sensitive Rivers (e.g. Camlin River) and Lakes (e.g. Lough Ree), Lakes and Groundwater listed for drinking water and water dependent habitats - SPAs and SACs.

4.7.6 Flooding

4.7.6.1 Introduction

Flooding is an environmental phenomenon which, as well as having economic and social impacts, could in certain circumstances pose a risk to human health.

4.7.6.2 EU Floods Directive

European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks requires Member States to carry out a preliminary assessment by 2011 in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding. For such zones, flood

risk maps will be finalised in 2015. Flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness are likely to be finalised in 2016. The Office of Public Works has prepared Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) maps which identify areas where the risks associated with flooding might be significant. These areas, Areas for Further Assessment (AFAs), are where more detailed assessment is required to more accurately assess the extent and degree of flood risk.

4.7.6.3 DEHLG Flood Risk Management Guidelines

In 2009 the DEHLG published *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* for Planning Authorities. These are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach which will fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system. Planning authorities are required to undertake flood risk identification, assessment and management processes as appropriate when preparing Development Plans and other plans and in the consideration of applications for planning permission.

4.7.6.4 SFRA

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the new County Plan. This assessment provided Flood Risk Zones for each of the zoned areas within the county. The Flood Risk Zones were delineated taking into account various flood risk indicators and the findings of site walkovers which were informed by local knowledge (Local Council Engineers) and an examination of, inter alia: the potential source and direction of flood paths; the locations of topographic and built features, including those that coincide with the flood indicator boundaries; and vegetation indicative of standing water.

A selection of historical flood risk indicators are provided on Figure 4.13.

4.7.7 Existing Problems

Some areas of poor water quality exist in the east of the County. Lough Gowna is moderately eutrophic. Groundwater in the west of the County is of poor status. Based on available water data, some of the Counties water bodies will need improvement in order to comply with the objectives of the WFD.

The Shannon and North Western International RBD Management Plans and associated Programmes of Measures include provisions to help ensure that these water bodies meet the objectives of the WFD. The Plan will contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of these Management Plans.

Flood risk indicators provide historic evidence of flooding in various locations across the County however the recommendations made by the SFRA in respect of these areas have been integrated into the Plan.

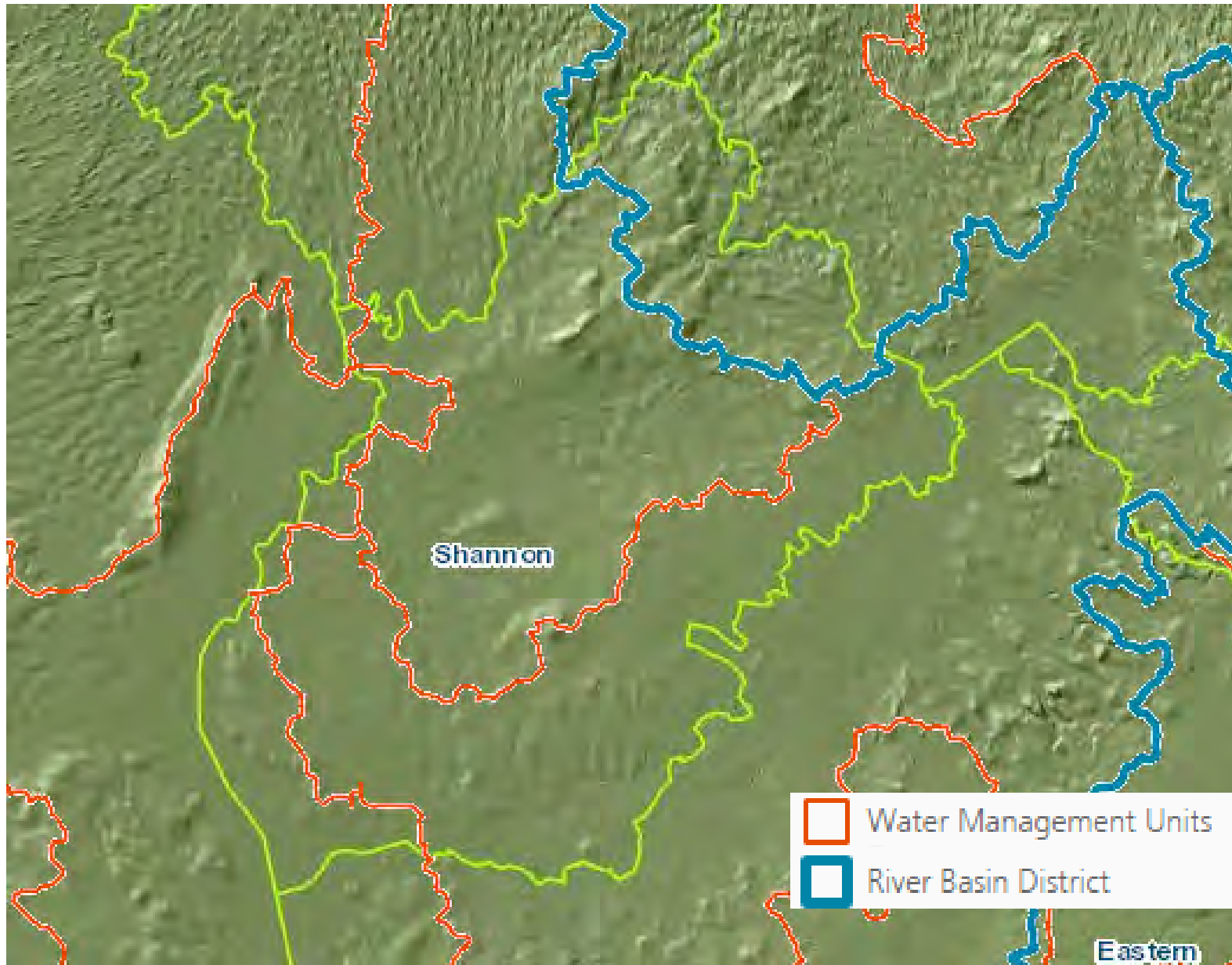


Figure 4.6 Water Management Units and River Basin Districts

Source: EPA (downloaded from ENVision, 2015)

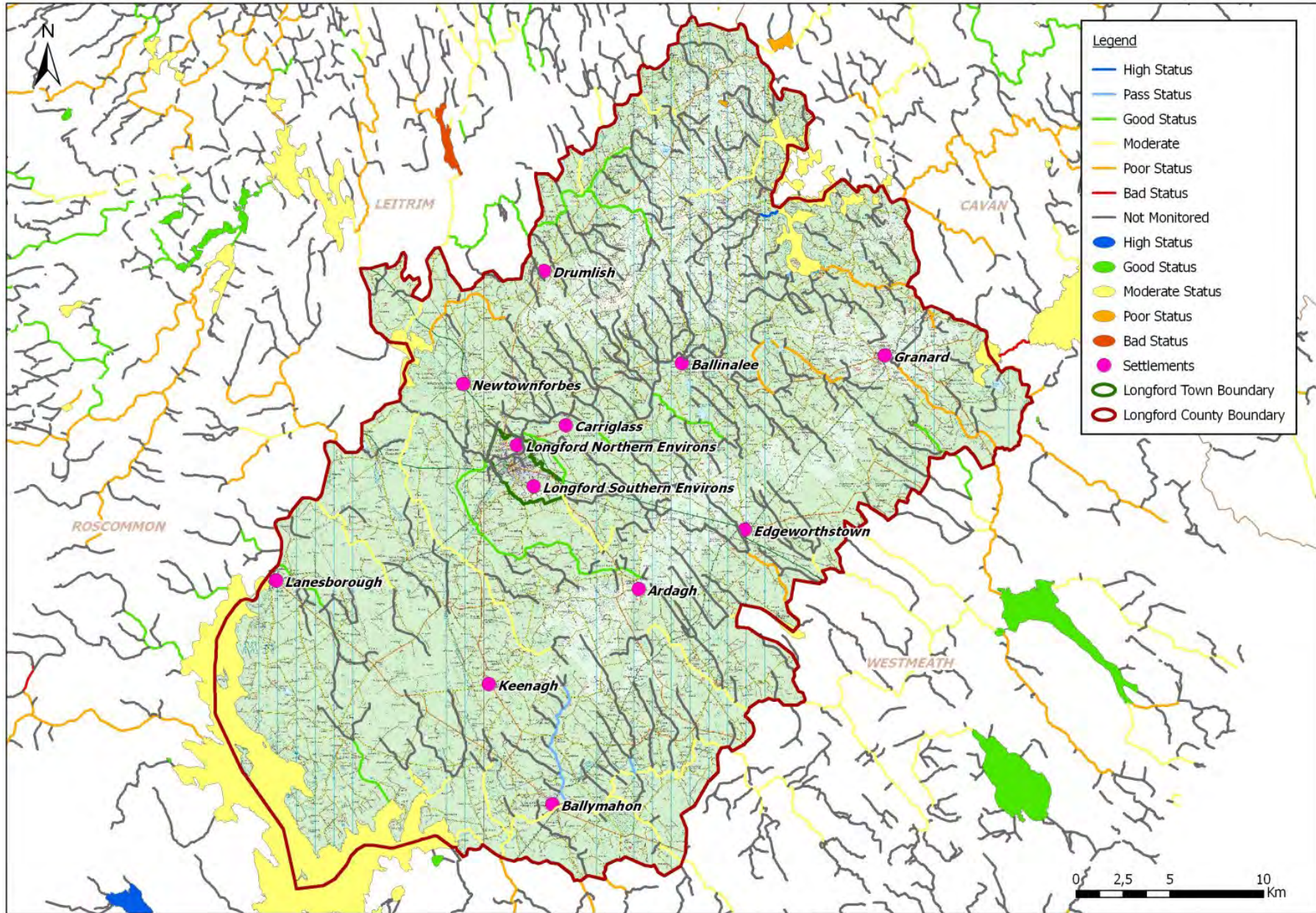


Figure 4.7 WFD Status of Surface Waters

Source: EPA (2011)

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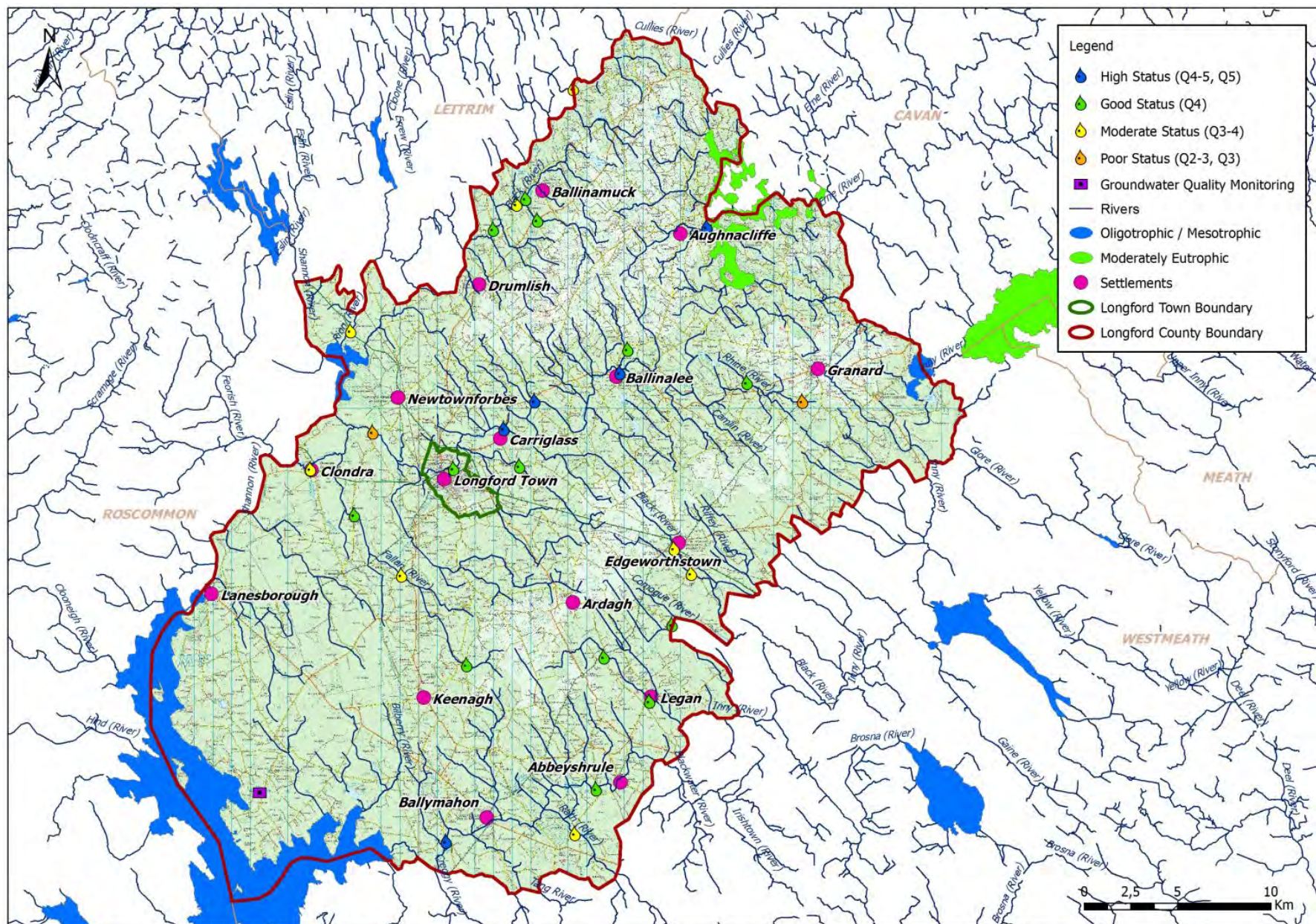


Figure 4.8 2010 and 2011 Q-Values at Points on Rivers and Lake Water Quality

Source: EPA (Various)

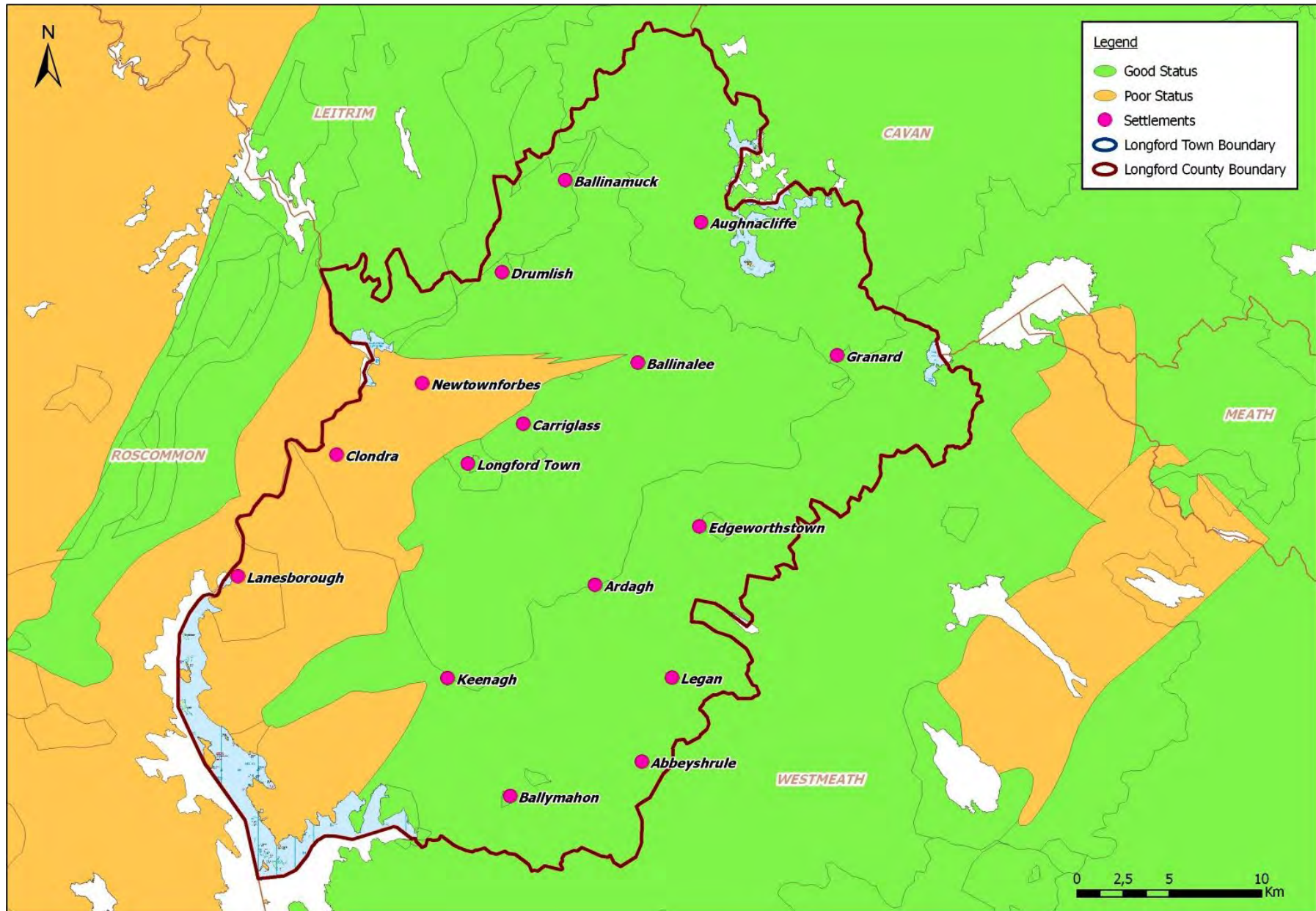


Figure 4.9 WFD Status of Groundwater

Source: EPA (2011)

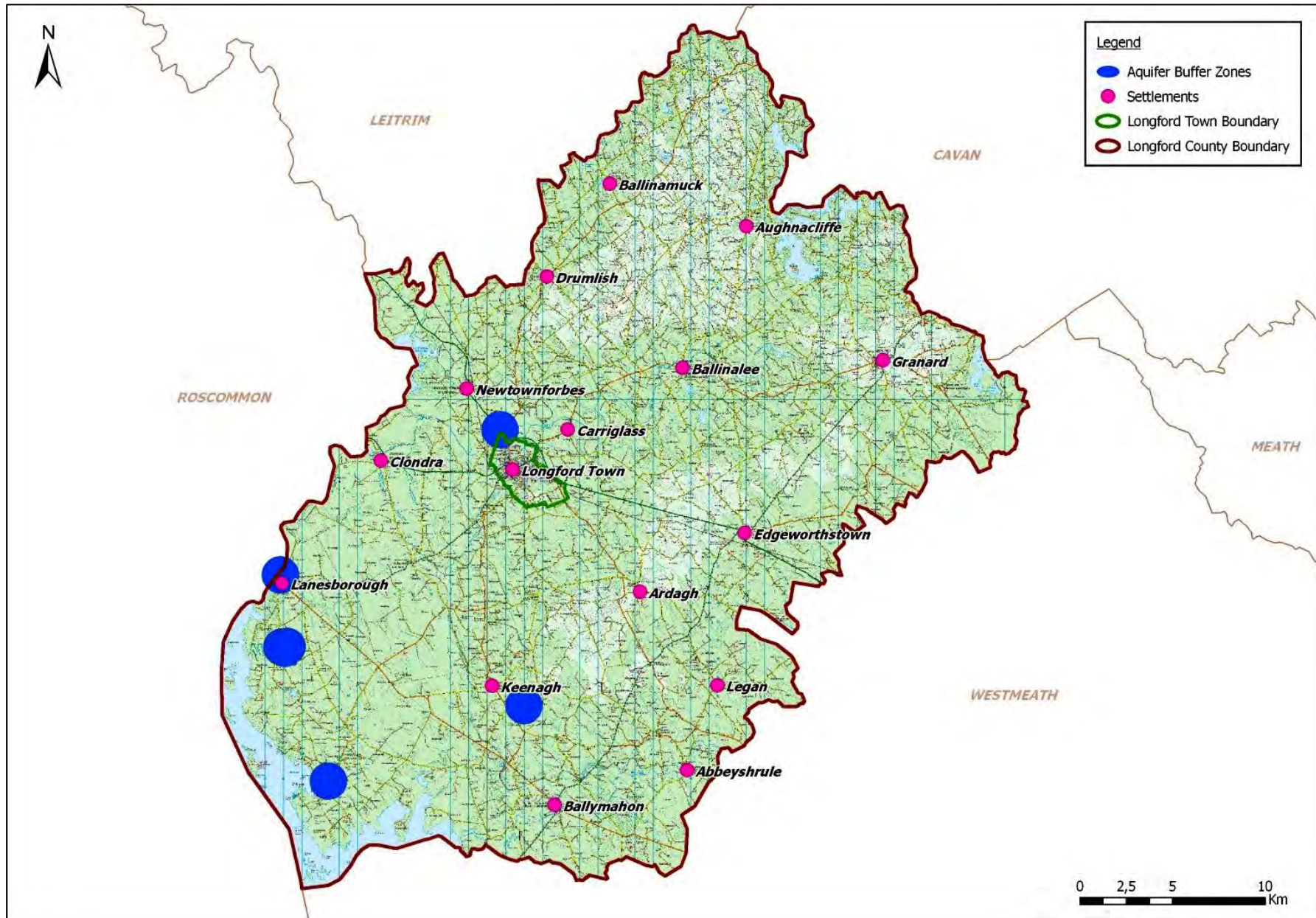


Figure 4.10 Aquifer Buffer Zones

Source: Longford County Council (unknown)

CAAS Ltd. for Longford County Council

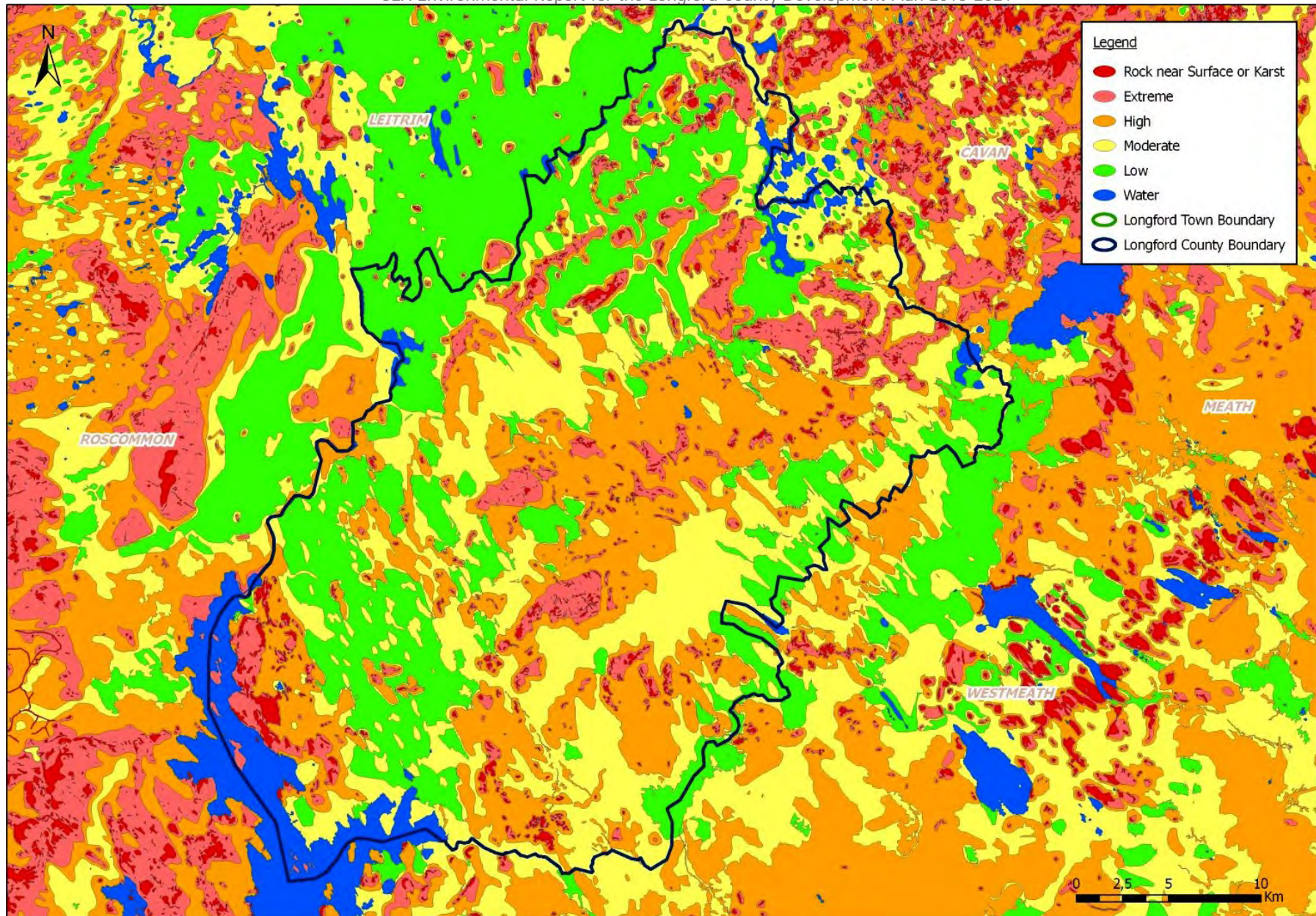


Figure 4.11 Aquifer Vulnerability

Source: GSI (2006)

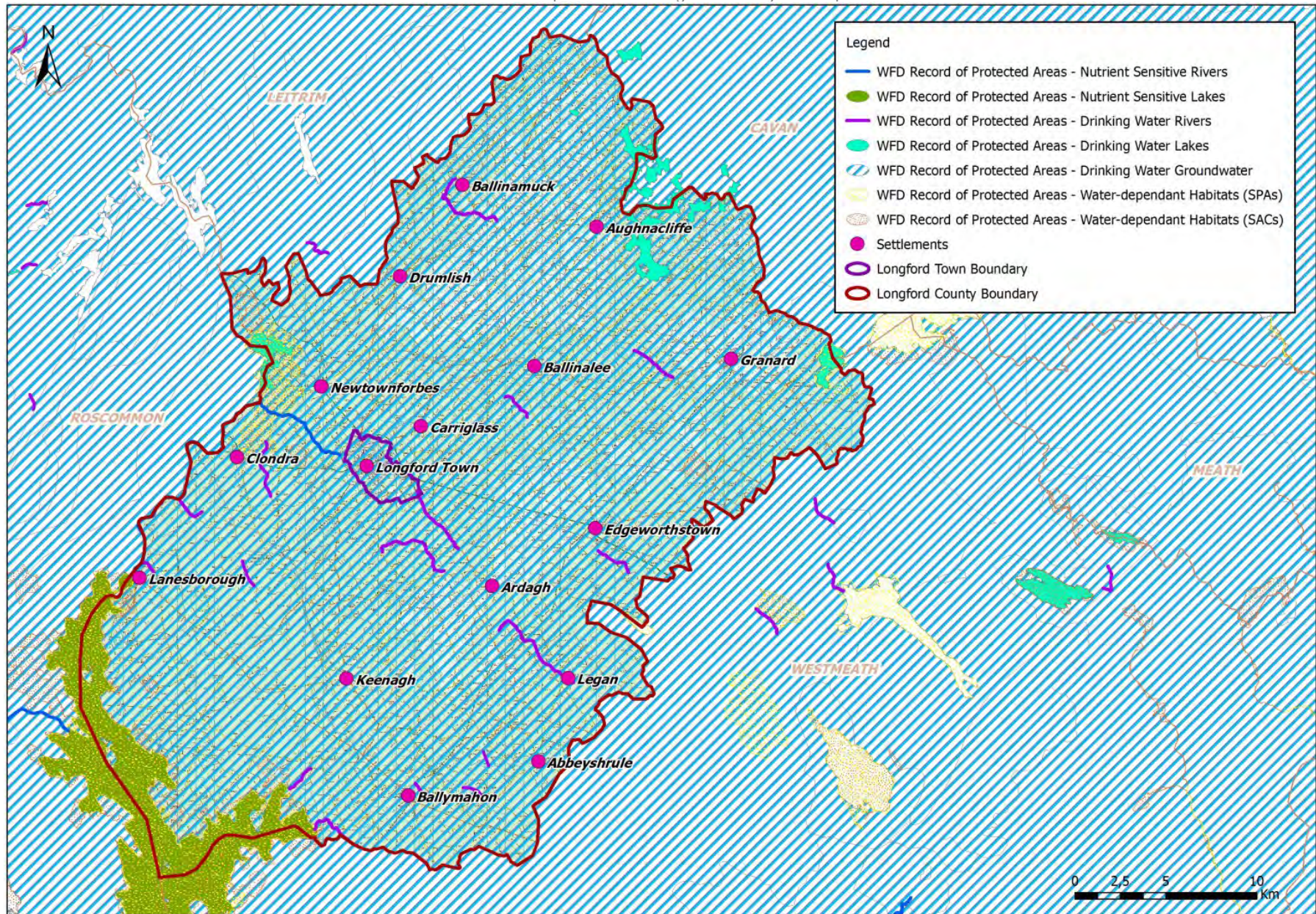


Figure 4.12 Entries to the Registers of Protected Areas

Source: EPA (2011)

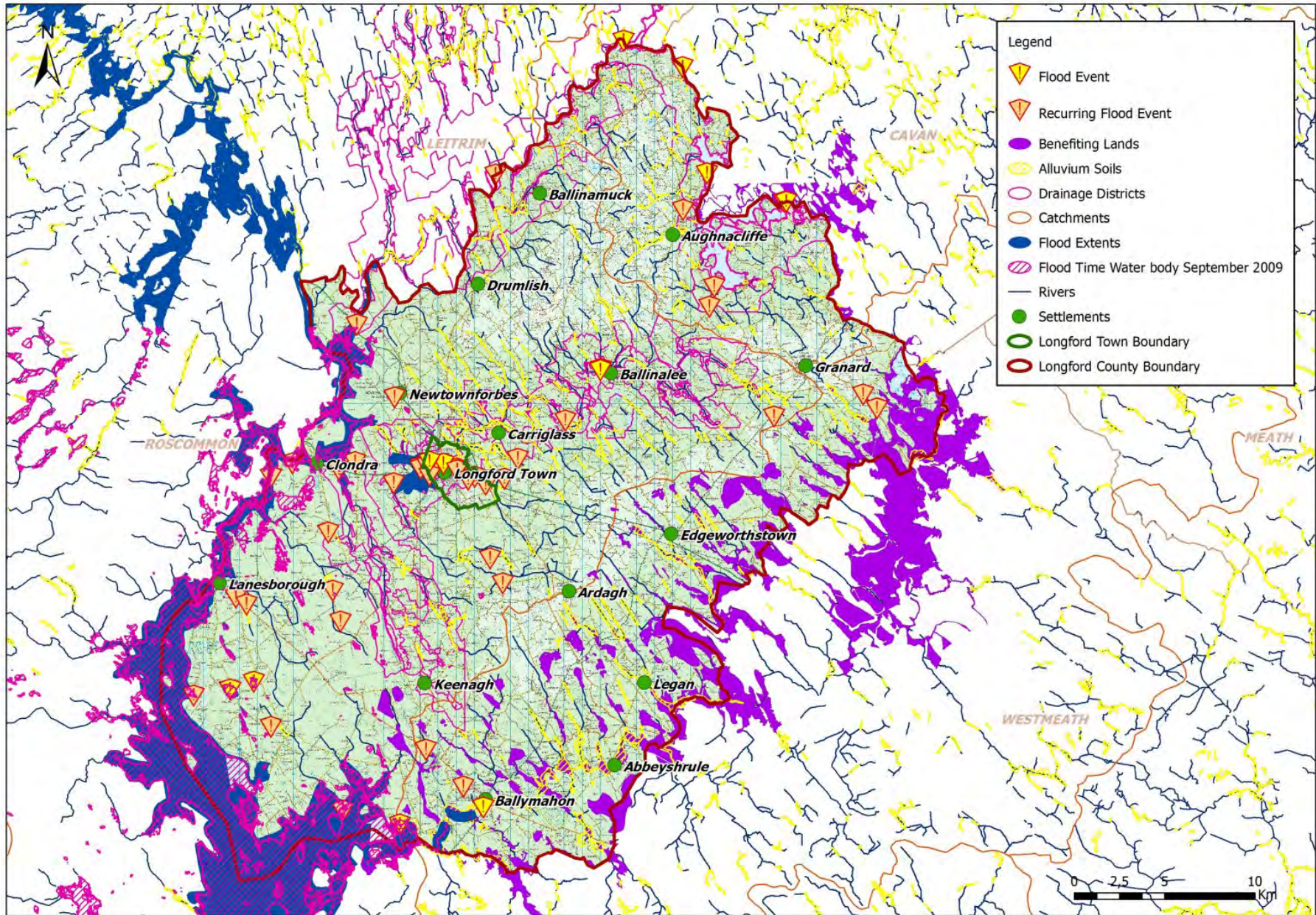


Figure 4.13 Occurrence of Available Historical Flood Risk Indicators

Source: various

4.8 Air and Climatic Factors

4.8.1 Ambient Air Quality

4.8.1.1 Introduction and Legislation

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 under the Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 as transposed into Irish law under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 (Ambient Air Quality Assessment and Management) Regulations 1999 (SI No. 33 of 1999).

Four daughter Directives lay down limits or thresholds for specific pollutants. The first two of these directives cover: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter and lead; and, carbon monoxide and benzene. Two more daughter directives deal with: ozone; and polyaromatic hydrocarbons, arsenic, nickel, cadmium and mercury in ambient air.

4.8.1.2 Air Zones

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 main areas defined in each zone are:

- Zone A: Dublin Conurbation.
- Zone B: Cork Conurbation.
- Zone C: 21 Other cities and large towns including Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Clonmel, Kilkenny, Sligo, Drogheda, Wexford, Athlone, Ennis, Bray, Naas, Carlow, Tralee and Dundalk.
- Zone D: Rural Ireland, i.e. the remainder of the State - small towns and rural areas

of the country - excluding Zones A, B and C.

The administrative area of Longford County Council is located in Zone D. Air quality in Zone D is currently "good". The EPA's (EPA, 2012) *Air Quality in Ireland 2011* identifies that air quality in Ireland continues to be good and is among the best in Europe noting challenges of levels of nitrous oxides in traffic-impacted city centre areas, traffic emissions and particular matter concentrations.

4.8.2 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. The Environmental Noise Regulations (SI No. 140 of 2006) transpose into Irish law the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise, which is commonly referred to as the Environmental Noise Directive or END. The END defines a common approach intended to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. The END 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. Limit values are left to each member state. At this point in time, Ireland does not have any statutory limit values.

4.8.3 Climatic Factors

The key issue involving the assessment of the effects of implementing the plan on climatic factors relates to greenhouse gas emissions arising from transport.

It is noted that flooding - see Section 4.7.6 - is influenced by climatic factors and that the implications of climate change with regard to flood risk in relevant locations have been considered by the SFRA which has been undertaken for the Plan. It is also noted that there are emerging objectives relating to climate adaptation and that there is likely to be future Guidance for climate change proofing of land use plan provisions as is flagged in the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (DECLG, 2012). Some of these objectives might relate to green infrastructure which can achieve synergies with regard to the following:

- Provision of open space amenities;
- Sustainable management of water;

- Protection and management of biodiversity;
- Protection of cultural heritage; and
- Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

In 2009, Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions decreased across all sectors due to the effects of the economic downturn with a decline in total emissions of 7.9 per cent. In 2010, Ireland's emissions fell by a further 0.7 per cent.

Ireland's emissions profile has changed considerably since 1990, with the contribution from transport more than doubling and the share from agriculture reducing since 1998. Travel is a source of:

1. Noise;
2. Air emissions; and
3. Energy use (38.8% of Total Final Consumption in Ireland in 2010 was taken up by transport, the largest take up of any sector)⁸.

Land-use planning contributes to what number and what extent of journeys occur. By addressing journey time through land use planning and providing more sustainable modes and levels of mobility, noise and other emissions to air and energy use can be minimised. Furthermore, by concentrating populations, greenfield development - and its associated impacts - can be minimised and the cost of service provision can be reduced.

Maximising sustainable mobility will also help Ireland meet its emission target for greenhouse gases under the 2020 EU Effort Sharing target which commits Ireland to reducing emissions from those sectors that are not covered by the Emissions Trading Scheme (e.g. transport, agriculture, residential) to 20% below 2005 levels.

Figures from CSO show an overall decrease of 2.9% of the entire population aged 5 years and over travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means in the County between 2006 and 2011 - see Table 4.3.

Means of Travel	2006	2011	Change
On foot	2656 (12.3%)	2602 (11.6%)	-54 (-.7%)
Bicycle	218 (1%)	189 (.8%)	-29 (-.2%)
Bus, minibus or coach	2660 (12.3%)	2165 (9.7%)	+495 (-2.6%)
Train, DART or LUAS	120 (.6%)	216 (1%)	+96 (+.4%)
Total travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means	5654 (26%)	5172 (23.1%)	-482 (-2.9%)
Total Persons aged 15 years and over	21543	22396	+853 (+4%)

Table 4.3 Population aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college

4.8.4 Existing Problems

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

⁸ Sustainable Energy Ireland (2011) *Energy in Ireland 1990 – 2010*

4.9 Material Assets

4.9.1 Water Services

4.9.1.1 Introduction

The Government decided in 2011, based on the recommendations of an independent assessment, to establish a public water utility company, Irish Water, to take over the operational and capital delivery functions of local authorities in the water services area. Irish Water is currently being

In April 2012, the Government announced reform of public water services including the creation of a public water utility, Irish Water, which has taken over responsibility for delivering public water and waste water services from the Local Authorities.

4.9.1.2 Waste Water

Available information (compiled in 2012 and provided by the Waste Services department of Longford County Council) for waste water capacity, existing utilisation, available capacity and planned infrastructure for the county is shown on Table 4.4.

A review of this information indicates that Waste Water Treatment plants within the towns included in the settlement strategy have sufficient capacity to treat wastewater produced by the existing population. The Plan provides for the permitting of new development only where adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided.

Three of the wastewater treatment plants are identified by the EPA (Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland, 2012) as having failed to comply with the overall requirements of the Urban Waste Water Regulations (2001). Clondra failed due to the sample number while Drumlish and Newtown Forbes both failed as they both do not have secondary treatment in operation.

4.9.1.3 Drinking Water

Drinking Water Supply

Public drinking water within the County is abstracted from the Shannon in the north and west of the County and from groundwater aquifers in the west and south of the County. Longford County Council produces over 14.5

million litres of water each day which is collected at source, treated and distributed to over 25,000 people.

County Longford has six main Regional Water Supply Schemes (RWSSs), the capacity and demand of which are shown on Table 4.5 below. Five of the six RWSSs are operating under capacity. The Longford RWSS is operating beyond the identified capacity volume however the water services Department have identified that an abstraction order for an additional 4,800m³ was obtained in 2010 however the water treatment plant upgrade for this increased capacity is still waiting approval from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Drinking Water Quality

Drinking water must be clean and wholesome. That means it must meet the relevant water quality standards and must not contain any other substance or micro-organism in concentrations or numbers that constitute a potential danger to human health.

Compliance with the drinking water requirements is determined by comparing the results of analyses submitted by water suppliers to the standard for 48 parameters specified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2), 2007. To ensure that these standards are met, each water supply must be monitored on a regular basis.

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 which are supported by Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies which are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above.

The EPA's 'The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland A Report for the Year 2011 (EPA, 2012) identified that microbiological compliance levels in Public Water Supplies in County Longford have improved from 98.2% in 2009 to 100% in 2011 whilst chemical compliance levels have improved from decreased from 99.7% in 2009 to 96.8% in 2011.

The EPA Remedial Action List (Q2 of 2013) identifies that the Newtowncashel RWSS has inadequate treatment for Cryptosporidium. The Proposed Action Measure identified by the Remedial Action List is the upgrade of the treatment plant to include effective barrier against Cryptosporidium.

4.9.2 Waste

At present, there are a number of private companies providing a waste collection service to both householders and businesses within the County. There are no active landfill sites in the County.

4.9.3 Transport

The central position of County Longford is important in terms of the road network within it. 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/Galway 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. The Dublin-Sligo rail line traverses the County from east to west, generally following the line of the N4 and serves Longford and Edgeworthstown stations.

4.9.4 Existing Problems

Three wastewater treatment plants in the county are identified by the EPA (Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland, 2012) as having failed to comply with the overall requirements of the Urban Waste Water Regulations (2001). Clondra failed due to the sample number while Drumlish and Newtown Forbes both failed as they both do not have secondary treatment in operation.

The Longford RWSS is operating beyond the identified capacity volume however the water services Department have identified that an abstraction order for an additional 4,800m³ was obtained in 2010 however the water treatment plant upgrade for this increased capacity is still waiting approval from the

Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

The EPA Remedial Action List (Q2 of 2013) identifies that the Newtowncashel RWSS has inadequate treatment for Cryptosporidium.

The provisions of the new Plan 2015-2021 will contribute towards protection of the environment with regard to impacts arising from material assets.

	Existing Capacity ⁹ PE	Existing Loading PE	Available capacity PE	Planned Infrastructure
Longford Town	20,000	18600	- 4100 ¹⁰	Study being undertaken by Water Services Department in the Council examining the future needs of the town over the next 20 years. Trade effluent under review
Granard	3200 (2700)	2000	700	None identified
Edgeworthstown	2750	1950	500 ¹¹	Trade effluent under review (funding required to facilitate growth)
Ballymahon	2125	1925	200	None identified
Lanesborough	1550	950	600	None identified
Abbeysrule	300	250	50	None identified
Ardagh	300	100 (estimate)	200 (estimate)	New plant to be constructed (completion end 2013)
Aughnaccliffe	400	225 (estimate)	175 (estimate)	New plant to be constructed (completion end 2013)
Ballinamuck	500	150	350	None identified
Ballinalee	600	400 (estimate)	200 (estimate)	New plant to be constructed (completion end 2013)
Clondra	600	200	400	None identified
Drumlish	1200	1200	0 ¹²	New plant to be constructed (completion end 2013)
Keenagh	1000	380	620	None identified
Legan	1000	240	760	None identified
Newtownforbes	1800	1300	500	New plant to be constructed (completion end 2013)

Table 4.4 Waste Water Treatment Infrastructure Information

Regional Water Supply Scheme	Daily Capacity m ³	Daily Demand m ³
Longford RWSS	7200	8053 ¹³
Granard RWSS	2500	1290
Gowna RWSS	2000	1909
Ballymahon RWSS	5000	4264
Lanesborough RWSS	3500	2685 ¹⁴
Newtowncashel RWSS	460	360

Table 4.5 Drinking Water Supply Information

⁹ Operational design limit

¹⁰ Green Isle has 6000 booked. If it drops to 2000, on upcoming review, then capacity will move from -4100 to 0.

¹¹ C&D have a booked capacity of 1050 which is currently being reviewed.

¹² On implementation of second phase of current program, availability will rise to 600.

¹³ Abstraction order for additional 4,800m³/day was obtained in 2010 however water treatment plant upgrade for increased capacity is still awaiting approval from the DECLG.

¹⁴ Preliminary report with DECLG in respect of network upgrade and treatment works. 20 year design horizon with proposed increased capacity of 2,500m³.

4.10 Cultural Heritage

4.10.1 Introduction

Heritage, by definition, means inherited properties, inherited characteristics and anything transmitted by past ages and ancestors. It covers everything, from objects and buildings to the environment. Cultural heritage includes physical buildings, structures and objects, complete or in part, which have been left on the landscape by previous and indeed current generations.

4.10.2 Archaeological Heritage

4.10.2.1 Introduction

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological heritage consists of such material remains (whether in the form of sites and monuments or artefacts in the sense of moveable objects) and environmental evidence. As archaeological heritage can be used to gain knowledge and understanding of the past it is of great cultural and scientific importance.

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 sites may have no visible surface features; the surface features of an archaeological site may have decayed completely or been deliberately removed but archaeological deposits and features may survive beneath the surface.

4.10.2.2 Record of Monuments and Places

County Longford's archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004), National 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. The RMP includes all known monuments and sites of archaeological importance dating to before 1700 AD, and some sites which date from after 1700 AD.

Figure 4.14 shows the spatial distribution of entries to the RMP. Over 1700 archaeological sites and monuments are recorded in County Longford under the Record of Monuments and Places.

4.10.3 Architectural Heritage

4.10.3.1 Introduction

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.

The physical form of the individual structures in the countryside and in the towns and villages of County Longford has evolved through many periods. The built heritage which has developed has attained a character that contributes to varied, locally distinctive areas in the County.

4.10.3.2 Record of Protected Structures

The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) included in the Development Plan is legislated for under Section 12 and Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Protected Structures are defined in the Planning and Development Act (2000) 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:

- (i) the interior of the structure;
- (ii) the land lying within the curtilage¹⁵ of the structure;
- (iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- (iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

Entries to the RPS in County Longford are mapped on Figure 4.15.

4.10.3.3 Architectural Conservation Areas

In addition to these Protected Structures, Ardagh is an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA).

An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape which 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 which might alter the character of the structure or the ACA.

ACAs enable the protection of the existing character of areas within the settlements listed above throughout the County. This character is a combination of the various layers of development from earliest times to the present. Though often not individually very important, vernacular buildings contribute to

the acknowledged distinctive character of many of the County's towns. Collectively, if properly used and maintained, they can make a significant impact on the retention and enhancement of that character which is important in maintaining local distinctiveness for both inhabitants and visitors.

In addition to showing entries to the RPS, Figure 4.15 shows the location of the ACA within the County.

4.10.4 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.

¹⁵ 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.

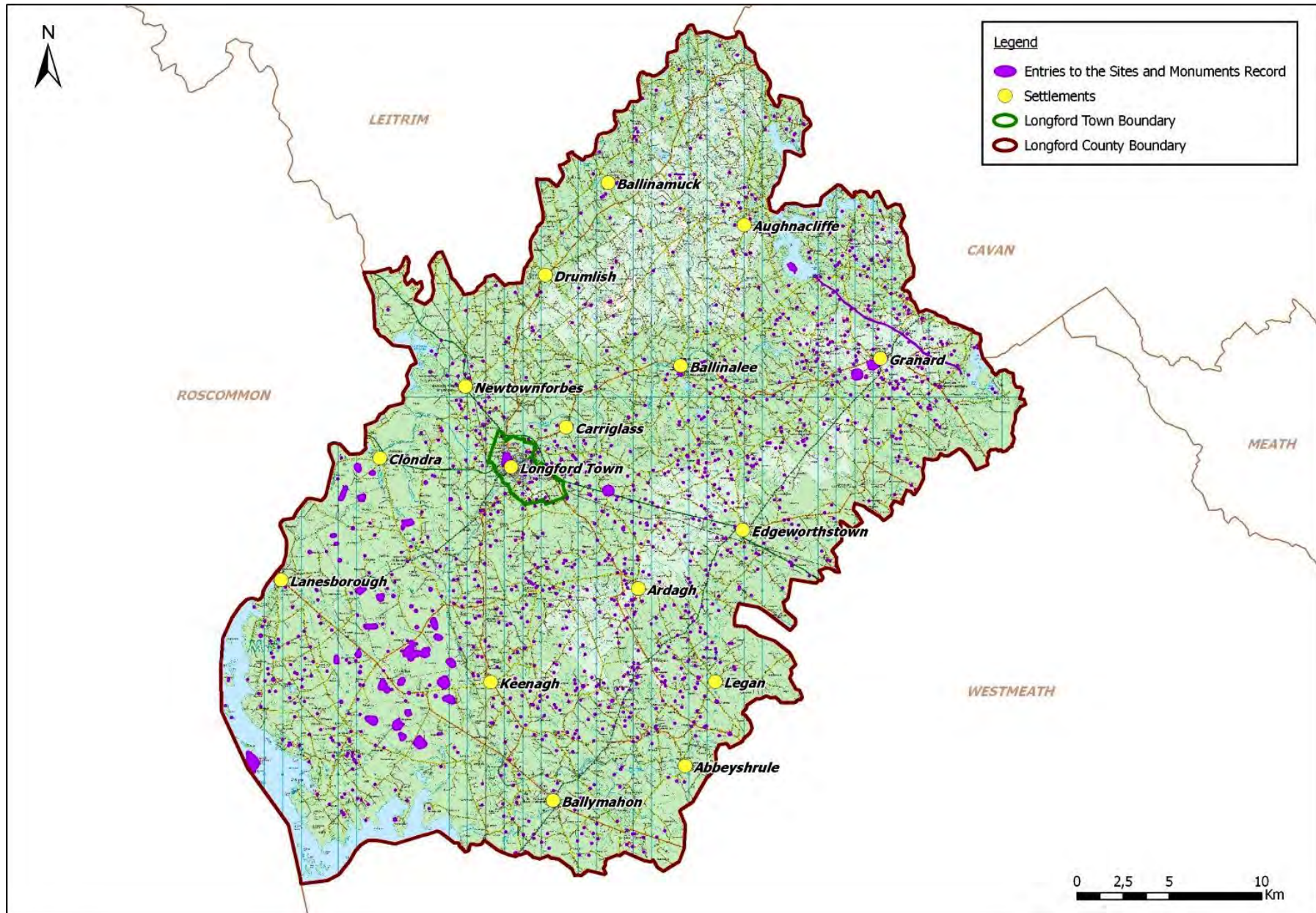


Figure 4.14 Archaeological Heritage - Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places

Source: Longford County Council (Unknown)

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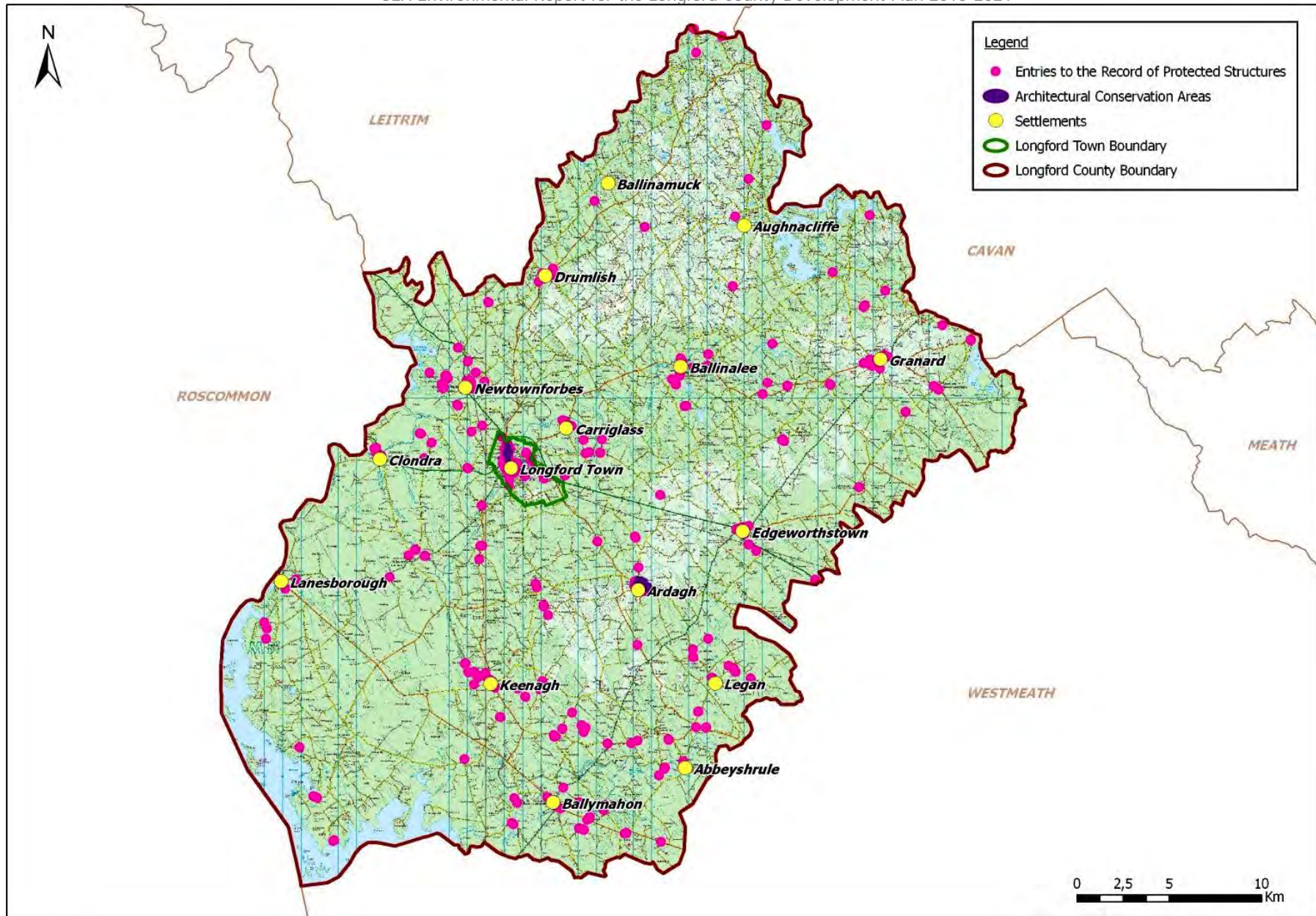


Figure 4.15 Architectural Heritage - Entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas

Source: Longford County Council (Unknown)

4.11 Landscape

4.11.1 Introduction

Landscapes are areas which are perceived by people and are made up of a number of layers: landform, which results from geological and geomorphological history; landcover, which includes vegetation, water, human settlements, and; human values which are a result of historical, cultural, religious and other understandings and interactions with landform and landcover.

Human interaction with the natural heritage has produced a variety of characteristic landscapes and landscape features. The natural diversity of the landscapes of the County coupled with cultural features such as the archaeological monuments, stone walls, hedgerows, woodlands, field patterns, settlements and buildings has given the County its distinctive character.

County Longford is richly endowed with a variety of landscape types. The general topography of the County may be described as undulating lowland, however, within this classification comes several sub-types such as the extensive commercial peatlands of the southwest, lakeland of the west, south and north-east and agricultural lowland with deciduous forest of the south-east and intermittent pockets of coniferous forest. Ardagh Mountain and the Cornhill area through to Lough Gowra represent the two upland areas.

4.11.2 Legislation

The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of its protection are recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000, which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty.

The increasing development pressure of recent years has caused changes in the national landscape, which are unprecedented in scale and nature. Guidelines¹⁶ have been set for

¹⁶ DEHLG (2000) *Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines* Dublin: Government of Ireland

landscape assessment in order to help ensure that landscapes are maintained in a sustainable manner, while at the same time enabling a proactive approach to development. Longford County Council has prepared a Landscape Character Assessment for the County which classifies the different landscapes of the county in relation to their different characteristics and values and their degree of sensitivity to various kinds of development.

4.11.3 Landscape Character Assessment¹⁷

Character can be defined as a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another. Landscape character assessments differ from landscape evaluations in that they attempt to classify landscapes on their individuality rather than defining one as better as or worse than another.

Landscape character types (LCT) are defined as landscapes that may occur in many areas throughout the Country and are composed of similar combinations of elements such as topography, geology, drainage and settlement patterns, landcover and use. Landscape character areas (LCA) are sections of the County that are treated as a unit in visual and physical terms, and that may consist of several landscape character types. Landscape Character types in County Longford would include the peatlands/wetlands, Shannon basin and northern uplands. Landscape character areas are the individual representation of a landscape character type, e.g. Beggagh Bog.

In broad terms, there are seven basic landscape character units in Longford which are illustrated on Figure 4.16.

- Unit 1 - Northern Drumlin Lakeland.
- Unit 2 - Northern Upland.
- Unit 3 - Shannon Basin/Lough Ree.
- Unit 4 - Central Corridor.
- Unit 5 - Inny Basin.
- Unit 6 - Peatlands.
- Unit 7 - Open Agricultural.

The Plan provides a level of protection for *Broad Zones*, which include the county's lakes,

¹⁷ Text in this section is sourced from the Council's 2009 Landscape Character Assessment

rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands, and *Intermittent Views and Full Views*. These designations and the landscape character units are mapped on Figure 4.16.

4.11.4 Landscape Designations in adjacent counties

4.11.4.1 Introduction

Planning applications within the Council's administrative area have the potential to affect landscape designations in the administrative areas of Roscommon, Leitrim, Cavan and Westmeath. Many of the areas within County Longford adjacent to County borders are subject to landscape designations.

4.11.4.2 Roscommon

The Landscape Character Assessment of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2014-2020 (see Figure 4.17) identifies Landscape Values for Landscape Character Areas within Roscommon. Values range from *exceptional* to *very high* to *high* to *moderate*. The border between County Roscommon and County Longford largely comprises the River Shannon and the landscape value on the Roscommon side of the border is identified as being *very high*.

4.11.4.3 Leitrim

The SEA for the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021 identifies Areas of High Visual Amenity and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (mapping is produced at Figure 4.18).

Gulladoo Lough which is located in both Counties Leitrim and Longford is designated as an Area of High Visual Amenity.

4.11.4.4 Cavan

Scenic viewing points and Scenic Routes in County Cavan are identified on Figure 4.19 but none of these cover areas adjacent to County Longford. The Cavan County Development Plan 2015-2021 flags an intention to undertake new landscape analysis for the County.

4.11.4.5 Westmeath

High Amenity Areas and Views to be Preserved or Improved that have been designated by the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020 are mapped on Figure 4.20. The greatest extent of these designations occurring at the Longford/Westmeath border occur in the south

of Longford and the west of Westmeath at Lough Ree.

4.11.5 Existing Environmental Problems

New residential, commercial and transportation (etc.) 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.

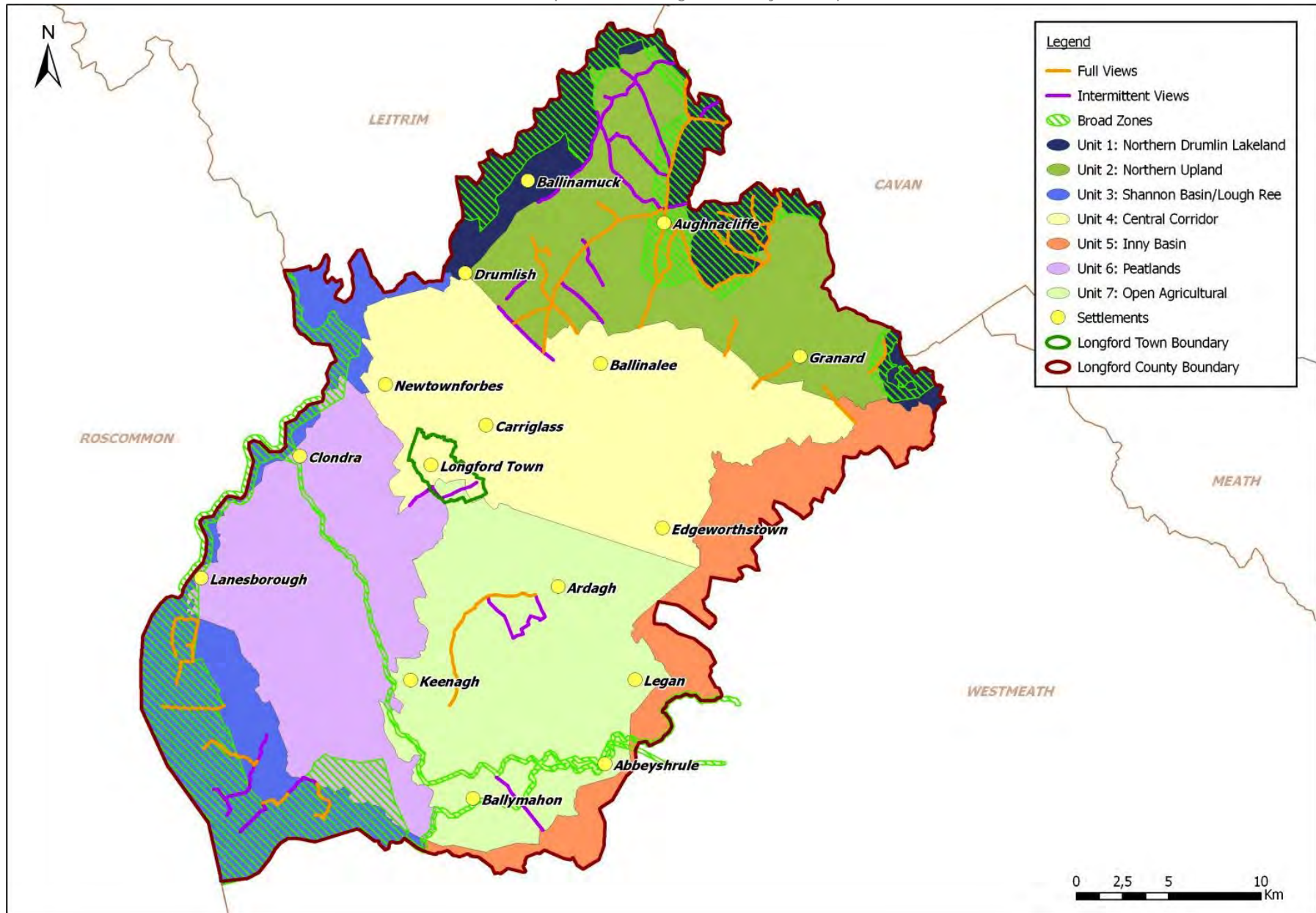


Figure 4.16 Landscape Character Assessment

Source: Longford County Council (2009)

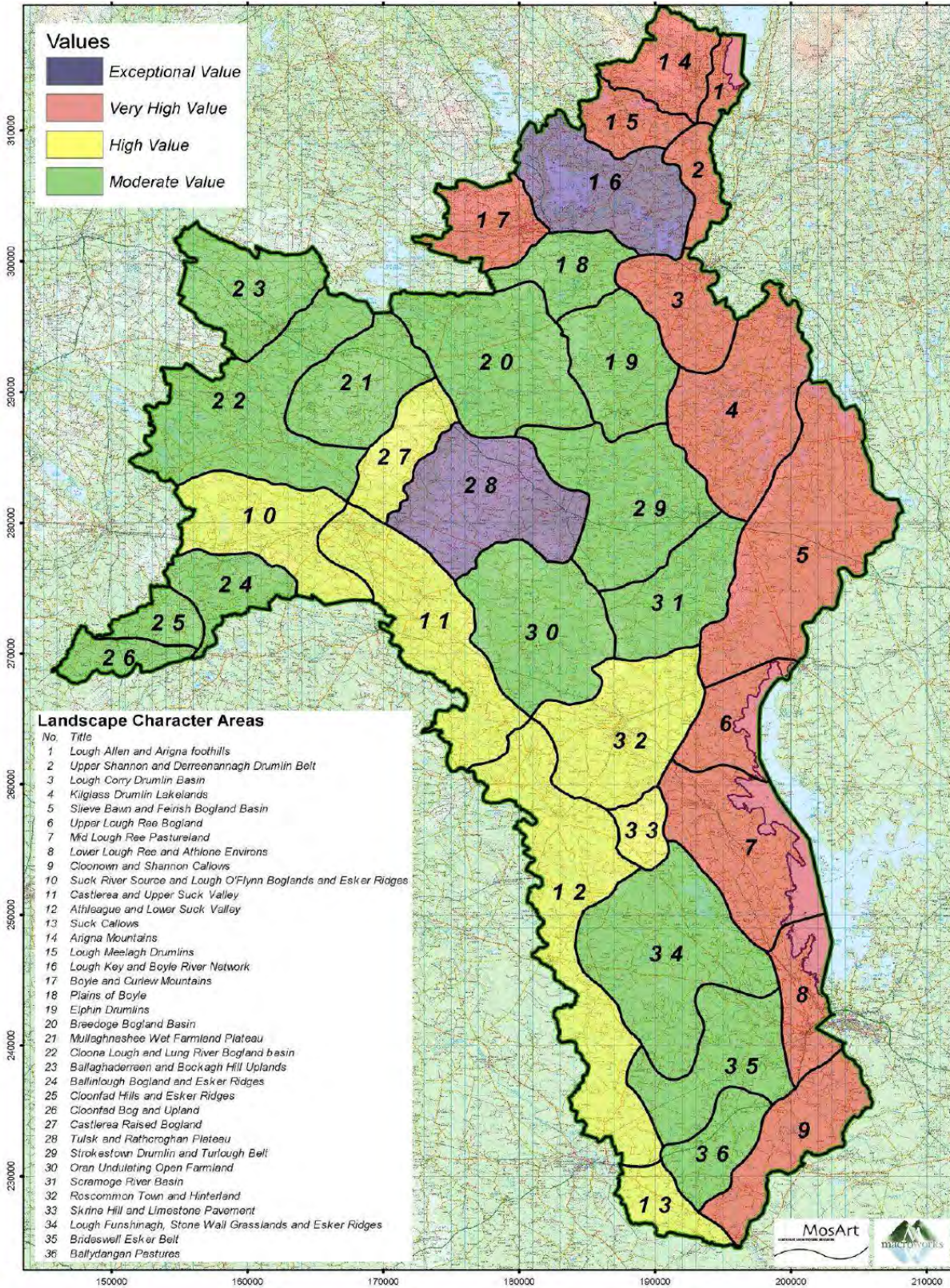


Figure 4.17 Roscommon Landscape Values

Source: Roscommon County Council (2014)



Figure 4.18 Leitrim Areas of High Visual Amenity and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Source: Leitrim County Council (2015)



Figure 4.19 Cavan Scenic Views and Points Reference

Source: Cavan County Council (2014)

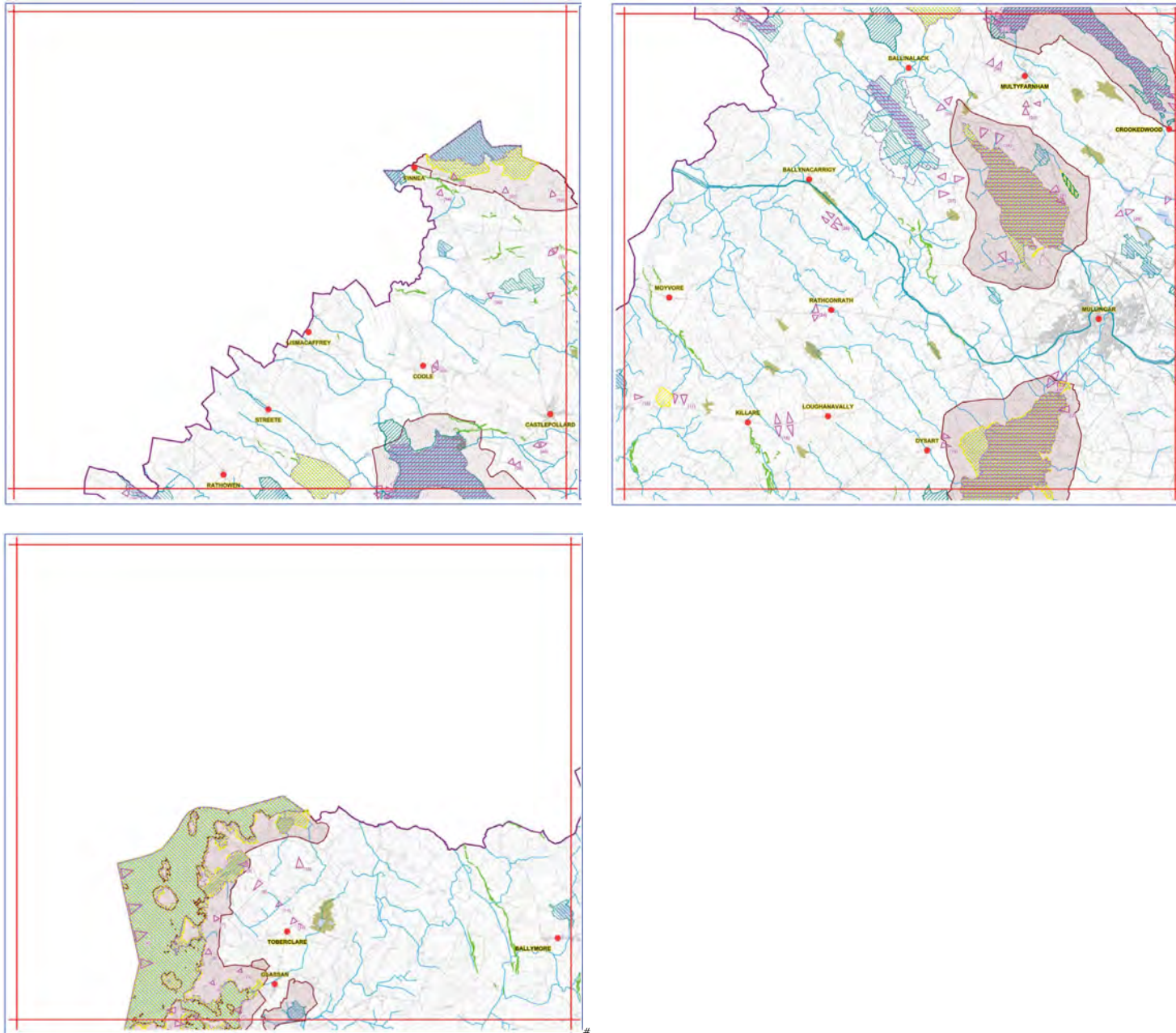


Figure 4.20 Westmeath High Amenity Areas and Views to be Protected or Improved

Source: Westmeath County Council (2014)

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4.12 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities

4.12.1 Introduction and Methodology

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 4.21 provides an overlay of environmental sensitivities for the county. The settlements are also included on this map.

It is emphasised that the occurrence of environmental sensitivities does not preclude development; rather it flags at a strategic level that the mitigation measures - which have already been integrated into the County Development Plan - will need to be complied with in order to ensure that the implementation of the Plan contributes towards environmental protection.

Environmental sensitivities are indicated by colours which range from acute vulnerability (brown) extreme vulnerability (red) to high vulnerability (dark orange) to elevated vulnerability (light orange) to moderate vulnerability (yellow) to low vulnerability (green). 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.

A weighting system applied through Geographical Information System (GIS) software was used in order to calculate the vulnerability of all areas in the County. Environmental considerations are given equal weight as follows, with a slight differentiation is made in certain layers:

- Ecological designations (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas - 10 points - and proposed Natural Heritage areas - 5 points);
- Cultural Heritage (Architectural Conservation Areas, entries to Records of Protected Structures and entries to

- the Entries to the Record of Sites and Monuments - 10 points);
- High Amenity Areas and Protected Views - 10 points;
- Geological Sites of Importance - 10 points;
- Sensitive Landcover categories (broad-leaved forests, peat bogs, natural grassland, inland marshes and water bodies - 10 points);
- Entries to the Register of Protected Areas for drinking water lakes and groundwater that is used for drinking water - 10 points;
- Flood extents and risk areas - 10 points;
- Surface and groundwaters with bad (10 points) and poor (5 points) ecological status; and
- Aquifers which are highly (5 points) or extremely (10 points) vulnerable to pollution.

The scale of sensitivity for each area of the County corresponds to the sensitivity factors: 5 points corresponds to one sensitivity factor; 10 points corresponds to two sensitivity factors; 20 points corresponds to four sensitivity factors and so on. The scores for each area are added together in order to determine overall vulnerability as is shown on Table 4.6.

Score	Vulnerability Class
5-15	Low
20-25	Moderate
30-35	Elevated
40-45	High
50-60	Extreme
>60	Acute

Table 4.6 Overall Vulnerability Classes

4.12.2 Conclusions

The overlay mapping shows that environmental sensitivities are not evenly distributed throughout the County. The County's western and south western boundaries are extremely and acutely vulnerable. These levels of sensitivity reflect the sensitive nature of the River Shannon and its Loughs which are protected under the Habitats Directive.

Peatland areas, due to their ecological, hydrological and amenity characteristics,

present higher levels of sensitivity than most of the surrounding agricultural areas throughout the County. This is particularly the case at Clooneen Bog, Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog and Brown Bog.

Likewise, lakes in the area show higher levels of sensitivity in comparison to surrounding areas and in addition to Lough Forbes and Lough Ree on the River Shannon in the west of the County include Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough.

The remainder of the County is generally of low and moderate vulnerability.

As previously referenced, the occurrence of multiple sensitivities in any location does not preclude development; rather it flags at a strategic level that the mitigation measures - which have already been integrated into the County Development Plan as policies and objectives - will need to be complied with in order to ensure that the implementation of the Plan contributes towards environmental protection.

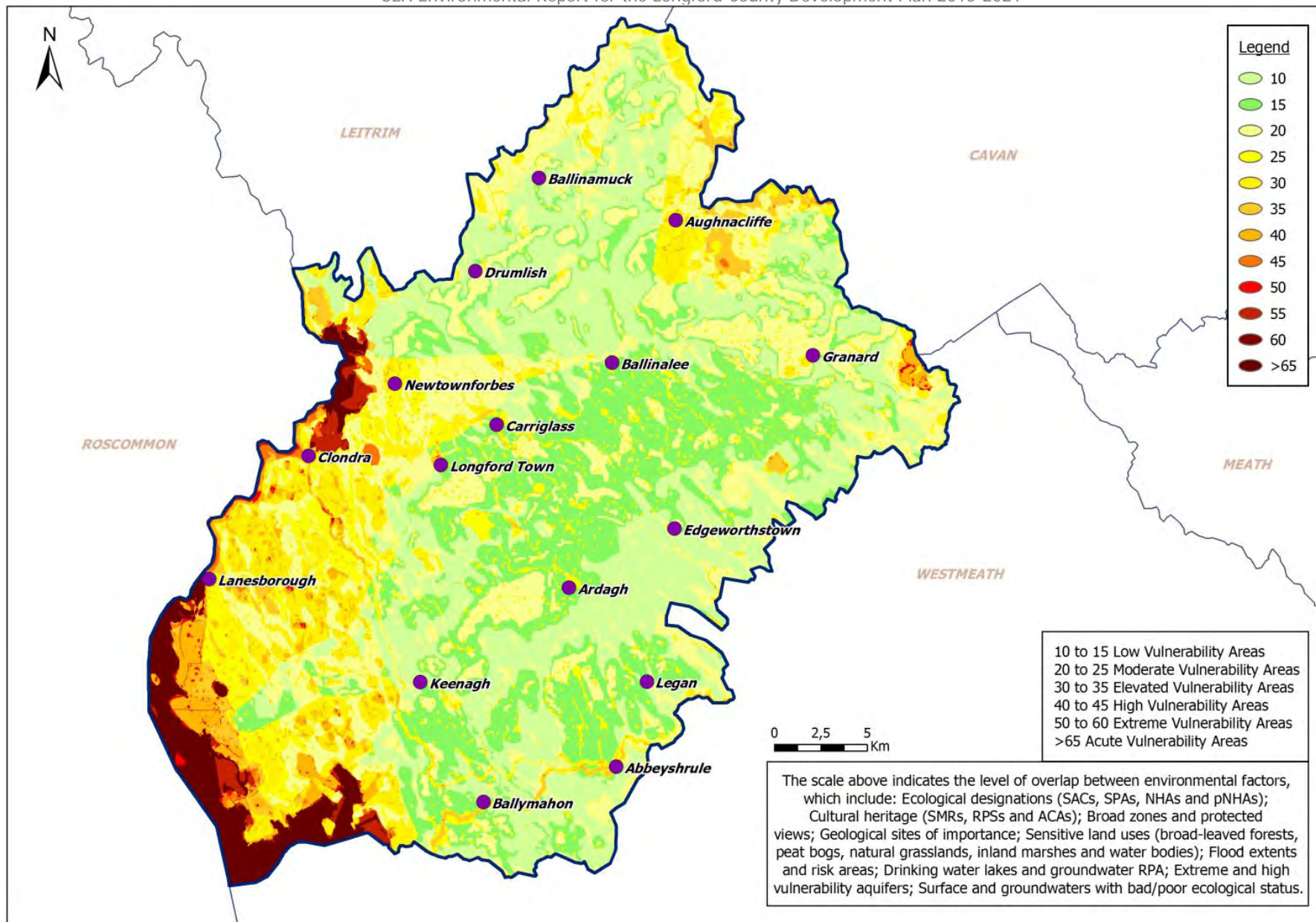


Figure 4.21 Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities

Source: CAAS (2013)

Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives

5.1 Introduction

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level e.g. the environmental protection objectives of various European Directives which 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 Plan and the alternatives 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.

SEOs are distinct from the objectives of the Plan - although they will often overlap - and they are not given statutory weight by virtue of their use in Strategic Environmental Assessments.

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

SEOs were developed taking into account feedback provided by the environmental authorities.

5.2 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

5.2.1 International, European and National Strategic Actions

5.2.1.1 Habitats Directive 1992

The European Council Directive on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC), referred to as the Habitats Directive, aims to ensure the conservation of certain natural habitats and species which are at favourable conservation status.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated and protected under the Habitats Directive 1992 (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union.

The Habitats Directive establishes Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. SACs together with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) - which are designated under the 1979 Birds Directive - make up the Natura 2000 network of protected sites.

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive provides for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessments of plans or projects which have the potential to impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. The Directive requires that ecological connectivity and areas of ecological value outside the network of designated ecological sites are maintained, and it recognises the need for the management of these areas through land use planning and development policies.

In Ireland, the habitats and species occurring in both SACs and SPAs are protected from effects of development occurring outside their boundaries under Section 18 "Prohibition of works on lands outside a European site" of the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997. The Regulations require that where a development is proposed to be carried out, on any land that is not within a protected site and is liable to have an adverse impact on the protected site in question, including direct, cumulative and indirect impacts, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

The integration of the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive into the Planning and Development Act 2010 (Amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 puts the requirement for Appropriate Assessment into context for both projects and plans.

5.2.1.2 Birds Directive 1979

The 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC), referred to as the Birds Directive, - as well as its amending acts - seeks to protect, manage and regulate all bird species naturally living in the wild within the European territory of the Member States, including the eggs of these birds, their nests and their habitats; and to regulate the exploitation of these species.

The Directive places great emphasis on the protection of habitats for endangered as well as migratory species, especially through the establishment of a coherent network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

SPAs are protected under the Directive and have been designated in Ireland by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the European Union.

5.2.1.3 European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011

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, as well as addressing transposition failures identified in the CJEU judgements.

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.

5.2.1.4 UN Convention on Biological Diversity 1992

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 requires the promotion of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

5.2.1.5 National Biodiversity Plan 2011

The preparation and implementation of Ireland's 2nd National Biodiversity Plan 2011¹⁸ 'Actions for Biodiversity 2011 – 2016' complies with an obligation under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The Plan has been developed in line with the EU and International Biodiversity strategies and policies.

The measures Ireland will take are presented as 102 actions under a series of 7 Strategic Objectives. Some of the actions within the plan are continuing elements of existing work and many are requirements under existing EU Directives. The objectives cover the conservation of biodiversity in the wider countryside and in the marine environment, both within and outside protected areas; the mainstreaming of biodiversity across the decision making process in the State; the strengthening of the knowledge base on biodiversity; increasing public awareness and participation; and Ireland's contribution to international biodiversity issues, including North South co-ordination on issues of common interest.

5.2.1.6 Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000

The basic designation for wildlife is the Natural Heritage Area (NHA). 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. Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000), NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation. Proposed NHAs (pNHAs) were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated - designation will proceed on a phased basis over the coming years.

The Planning and Development Act 2010 defines a 'wildlife site' as:

- (a) an area proposed as a natural heritage area and the subject of a notice made under section 16(1) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000,

¹⁸ Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (2002) *National Biodiversity Plan* Dublin: Government of Ireland

(b) an area designated as or proposed to be designated as a natural heritage area by a natural heritage area order made under section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000,

(c) a nature reserve established or proposed to be established under an establishment order made under section 15 (amended by section 26 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976,

(d) a nature reserve recognised or proposed to be recognised under a recognition 5 order made under section 16 (amended by section 27 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976, or

(e) a refuge for fauna or flora designated 10 or proposed to be designated under a designation order made under section 17 (amended by section 28 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976.

SEO B2: To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species

Indicator B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan

Target B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from development provided for in the Plan

5.2.2 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

SEO B1: To ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species¹⁹

Indicator B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive

Target B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan²⁰

¹⁹ 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

²⁰ Except as provided for in Section 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.

SEO B3:	To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites ²¹ and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
Indicator B3i:	Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan
Target B3i:	Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan
Indicator B3ii:	Number of significant impacts on the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976
Target B3ii:	No significant impacts on the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976

SEO B4:	To sustain 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
Indicator B4:	Population of the county involved in land management
Target B4:	Sustain the population of the county involved in land management

²¹ The Planning and Development Act 2010 defines a 'wildlife site'. See Section 5.2.1.

5.3 Population and Human Health

5.3.1 Population

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

- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes - consideration of SEOs B1, B2 and B3 cover this issue;
- Increase in demand for wastewater treatment at the municipal level - consideration of SEO M1 covers this issue;
- Increase in demand for water supply - consideration of SEO M2 covers this issue;
- Potential development in flood-sensitive areas - consideration of SEO W3 covers this issue; and
- Effect on water quality - consideration of SEOs W1 and W2 cover this issue.

5.3.2 Human Health

5.3.2.1 Overview

The impact of implementing the Plan on human health is determined by the impacts which the Plan will have upon 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 so that they come into contact with human beings. Impacts would be influenced by the extent to which new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure - this relates to SEOs M1 and M2; Impacts upon the quality of water bodies - these relate to SEOs W1 and W2; and the extent of development provided which would affect flood risk - this relates to SEO W3.

5.3.2.2 Emission Limits

Emission limits for discharges to air, soil and water are set with regards to internationally recognised exposure limit values. These are generally set to be many times the safe exposure limit - in order to provide protection. In the event that a land-use plan began to have adverse health effects on surrounding populations it is likely that it would have been

identified as being in breach of such emission standards at a very early stage - and long before the manifestation of any adverse health effects in the population.

5.3.3 SEO, Indicator and Target

SEO PHH1: To protect populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses

Indicator PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from development provided for by the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency

Target PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan

5.4 Soil

5.4.1 Overview

Soil is potentially subject to a series of threats including erosion, decline in organic matter, local and diffuse contamination, sealing, compaction, decline in biodiversity, salinisation, floods and landslides. A combination of some of these threats can ultimately lead arid or sub-arid climatic conditions to desertification.

Given the importance of soil and the need to prevent further soil degradation, the Sixth Environment Action Programme²² called for the development of a Thematic Strategy on Soil Protection.

²² Decision No 1600/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22nd July 2002 laying down the Sixth Community Environment Action Programme (OJ L 242, 10.9.2002, p. 1).

5.4.2 SEO, Indicator and Target

SEO S1: To avoid damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource in County Longford

Indicator S1: Soil extent and hydraulic connectivity

Target S1: To minimise reductions in soil extent and hydraulic connectivity

5.5 Water

5.5.1 The Water Framework Directive 2000

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD has been transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (SI No. 722 of 2003). 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 by 2015.

5.5.2 Quality Standards for Surface Waters

The European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) is the final major piece of legislation needed to support the WFD and gives statutory effect to Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy. The Surface Waters Regulations also give further effect to the WFD, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy and Directive 2006/11/EC on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community.

The Surface Waters Regulations apply to all surface waters - including lakes, rivers, canals, transitional waters, and coastal waters - and provide, inter alia, for:

- The establishment of legally binding quality objectives for all surface waters and environmental quality standards for pollutants;
- The examination and where appropriate, review of existing discharge authorisations by Public Authorities to ensure that the emission limits laid down in authorisations support compliance with the new water quality objectives/standards;
- The classification of surface water bodies by the EPA for the purposes of the Water Framework Directive;
- The establishment of inventories of priority substances by the EPA, and;
- The drawing up of pollution reduction plans by coordinating local authorities (in consultation with the EPA) to reduce pollution by priority substances and to cease and/or phase out discharges, emissions or losses of priority hazardous substances.

In order to satisfy the overall WFD objective of 'good status', a surface water body must achieve the requirements of the good ecological²³ and chemical²⁴ status.

5.5.3 Quality Standards and Threshold Values for Ground Water

Detailed provisions to achieve the aims of the WFD for ground water have been presented in a Groundwater Directive (Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration).

This Directive sets up environmental objectives of good groundwater quantity and good groundwater quality (chemical status), as well as ensuring a continuity to the 1980 Groundwater Directive (Directive 80/68/EEC on the protection of groundwater against

pollution caused by dangerous substances) which is due to be repealed under the WFD by the end of 2013.

Article 3 of the 2006 Directive requires that the assessment of the chemical status of groundwater use both quality standards identified in Annex I of the Directive and threshold values to be set by individual member states.

Groundwater quality standards are environmental quality standards expressed as the concentration of a particular pollutant, group of pollutants or indicator of pollution in groundwater, which should not be exceeded in order to protect human health and the environment. Annex I of the Directive sets standards for two pollutants: Nitrates - 50mg/l - and; Active substances in pesticides²⁵, including their relevant metabolites, degradation and reaction products - 0,1 µg/l and 0,5 µg/l (total²⁶).

Irish groundwater threshold values²⁷ are currently in the process of being set by the EPA.

²³ Ecological status comprises: biological quality elements, physiochemical conditions and hydromorphological quality elements. The overall ecological status of the water body is determined by the lowest level of status achieved across all quality elements.

²⁴ Chemical status assessment is based on compliance with the standards laid down for priority substances by Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy (the Surface Waters Regulations give effect to the environmental standards established by this Directive).

²⁵ 'Pesticides' means plant protection products and biocidal products as defined in Article 2 of Directive 91/414/EEC and in Article 2 of Directive 98/8/EC, respectively.

²⁶ 'Total' means the sum of all individual pesticides detected and quantified in the monitoring procedure, including their relevant metabolites, degradation and reaction products.

²⁷ Threshold values are to be established by Member States for all pollutants and indicators of pollution which characterise groundwater bodies classified as being at risk of failing to achieve good groundwater chemical status under the WFD. Threshold values are required to be established in a way that, should the monitoring results at a representative monitoring point exceed the thresholds, this will indicate a risk that one or more of the conditions for good groundwater chemical status - with regard to the ability of groundwater to support human uses and with regard to waters used for the abstraction of drinking water - are not being met.

5.5.4 River Basin Management Plans

County Longford is located within the Shannon and North Western International River Basin Districts. Each of these districts has a River Basin Management Plan and a Programme of Measures which provide measures to be implemented in order to enable the achievement of the requirements of the WFD.

5.5.5 Flooding

5.5.5.1 EU Floods Directive

European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks aims to reduce and manage the risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. The Directive applies to inland waters as well as all coastal waters across the whole territory of the EU.

The Directive is to be carried out in coordination with the Water Framework Directive and flood risk management plans and river basin management plans should be coordinated.

5.5.5.2 DEHLG Flood Risk Management Guidelines

In November 2009 the DEHLG issued *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* for Planning Authorities. These are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach which will fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system.

The Guidelines require the planning system to, among other things:

- Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, particularly flood plains, unless there are proven sustainability grounds that justify appropriate development and where flood risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level, without increasing flood risk elsewhere;
- Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management when assessing the location for new development based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of flood risk; and
- Incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on

planning applications and planning appeals.

5.5.5.3 SFRA

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the new County Plan. This assessment provided Flood Risk Zones for each of the zoned areas within the county. The Flood Risk Zones were delineated taking into account various flood risk indicators and the findings of site walkovers which were informed by local knowledge (Local Council Engineers) and an examination of, inter alia: the potential source and direction of flood paths; the locations of topographic and built features, including those that coincide with the flood indicator boundaries; and vegetation indicative of standing water.

5.5.6 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

Note that SEOs W1 and W2 also relate to the quality of soils.

SEO W1:	To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters
Indicator W1:	Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)
Target W1:	Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' ²⁸ by 2015

SEO W2:	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
Indicator W2:	Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold

²⁸ Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately the following in the current national schemes of classification as set out by the EPA:

- *Q4* in the biological classification of *rivers*; and
- *Mesotrophic* in the classification of *lakes*.

	Values under Directive 2006/118/EC
Target W2:	Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC

SEO W3:	To comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)
Indicator W3:	Number of incompatible developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk
Target W3:	Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i>

available to a water services authority under the 2007 Act, that are necessary to meet this objective.

The Water Services Act 2014 forms the legislative basis for the revised policy on water charges including the capped charges agreed by the Government and the late payment fees, the proposal for the holding of a plebiscite in relation to any future proposal to change the ownership structure of Irish Water, the introduction of a new water conservation grant, the establishment of a public water forum, a statutory dispute resolution system and a number of other associated measures.

Appropriate treatment is essential in order to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (see Section 5.5.1).

5.6.2 Drinking Water Regulations 2007

The European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 require the compliance of water intended for human consumption with 48 parameters.

Measures have been integrated into the Development Plan in order to help ensure a clean and wholesome water supply.

5.6.3 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

5.6 Material Assets

5.6.1 Water Services Acts

The Water Services Act 2007 incorporates a comprehensive review, update and consolidation of all existing water services legislation, and facilitates the establishment of a comprehensive supervisory regime to ensure compliance with specified performance standards.

The Water Services Act 2013 provides for the establishment of Irish Water/Uisce Éireann as a subsidiary of Bord Gáis Éireann. Irish Water/ Uisce Éireann will be responsible for the installation of water meters for domestic households connected to a public water supply. The Act provides BGE and Irish Water/Uisce Éireann with the authority to install meters in all domestic properties and provides any of the necessary powers,

SEO M1:	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
Indicator M1:	Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan
Target M1:	All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan

SEO M2:	To serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
Indicator M2:	Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan
Target M2:	No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan

SEO M3:	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse.
Indicator M3i:	Total collected and brought household waste
Target M3i:	Minimise increases in and, where possible, reduce household waste generation
Indicator M3ii:	Packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers
Target M3ii:	Maximise increases in packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers

5.7 Air and Climatic Factors

5.7.1 Introduction

The impact of implementing the Plan on air quality and climatic factors will be determined by the impacts which the Plan has upon the greenhouse gas emissions arising from transport which relate to SEO C1.

Travel is a source of:

1. Noise;
2. Air emissions; and

3. Energy use (38.8% of Total Final Consumption in Ireland in 2010 was taken up by transport, the largest take up of any sector)²⁹.

Land-use planning contributes to what number and what extent of journeys occur. By addressing journey time through land use planning, noise and other emissions to air and energy use can be minimised. Furthermore, by concentrating populations, greenfield development - and its associated impacts - can be minimised and the cost of service provision can be reduced.

5.7.2 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 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 under the Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 while four daughter Directives lay down limits or thresholds for specific pollutants.

5.7.3 Climatic Factors

The 2020 EU Effort Sharing target commits Ireland to reducing emissions from those sectors that are not covered by the Emissions Trading Scheme (e.g. transport, agriculture, residential) to 20% below 2005 levels.

5.7.4 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. Traffic noise alone is harming today the health of almost one third of Europeans³⁰.

The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management

²⁹ Sustainable Energy Ireland (2011) *Energy in Ireland 1990 – 2010*

³⁰ World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (2003) *Technical meeting on exposure-response relationships of noise on health 19-21 September 2002* Bonn, Germany Bonn: WHO

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. The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:

- Draw up *strategic noise maps* for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators³¹ and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels;
- Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and
- Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise.

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.

5.7.5 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

SEO C1:	To reduce travel related emissions to air and to encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
Indicator C1:	Percentage of population working within the county travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means
Target C1:	An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means

³¹ [L_{den} (day-evening-night equivalent level) and L_{night} (night equivalent level)]

5.8 Cultural Heritage

5.8.1 Archaeological Heritage

5.8.1.1 National Heritage Plan for Ireland 2002

The core objective of the National Heritage Plan for Ireland 2002³² is to protect Ireland's heritage. In this regard the polluter pays and the precautionary principle are operable.

5.8.1.2 National Monuments Acts

Archaeology in Ireland is protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004.

Recorded monuments are protected by inclusion on the list and marked on the map which comprises the Record of Monuments and Places (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 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 the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

Direct impacts on national monuments in State or Local Authority care or subject to a preservation order require the consent of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004.

5.8.2 Architectural Heritage

Records of Protected Structures (RPSs) are legislated for under Section 51 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 and include structures which form part of the architectural heritage and which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) are places, areas or groups of structures or

³² Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (2002) *National Heritage Plan for Ireland* Dublin: Government of Ireland

townscapes which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contribute 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 which might alter the character of the structure or the ACA.

5.8.3 SEO, Indicators and Targets

SEO CH1:	To protect archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
Indicator CH1:	Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential (and the context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) - protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan
Target CH1:	Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan

SEO CH2:	To protect architectural heritage including entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
Indicator CH2:	Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan
Target CH2:	Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan

5.9 Landscape

5.9.1 Overview

The SEO for landscape is guided by landscape designations within the County.

5.9.2 SEO, Indicator and Target

SEO L1:	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands
Indicator L1:	Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands - which is granted permission under the Plan

Target L1:	No developments permitted which result in avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands - resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan
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Section 6 Description of Alternative Scenarios

6.1 Introduction

As per the requirements of the SEA Directive, this SEA considers reasonable alternatives for the County Development Plan taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the Plan.

This section identifies and describes three different alternative scenarios. These scenarios are realistic and capable of implementation.

The scenarios are evaluated in Section 7 resulting in the identification of potential effects and informing the selection of a preferred alternative for the Plan. The policies and objectives which are required to realise the preferred alternative are evaluated in Section 8.

It is a statutory obligation to have a County Development Plan but, in accordance with the SEA Directive, the likely evolution of the environment in the absence of the Plan must be described (see Section 4.3). Since this is not a feasible alternative it is not included in this stage.

The alternatives considered are constrained by the provisions of the RPGs;

- A target population growth of 5,603 persons has been allocated to County Longford by the RPGs.
- The RPGs require that 4,924 persons of the allocation is assigned Longford Town; there is no alternative to this requirement. Section 8 *Evaluation of Plan Provisions* evaluates the various environmental effects of, inter alia, this allocation.
- The RPGs require that the residual balance of 679 persons is distributed across the remainder of the County, having regard to a county settlement strategy. The location of this residual balance is the basis for the following alternatives.

The settlement hierarchy outlined in the RPG's for County Longford is as follows:

Principal Town:	Longford Town
Key Service Town:	Granard
Service Town:	Edgeworthstown
Local Service Towns:	Ballymahon and Lanesboro
Village Network:	Serviced Settlements and Rural Service Settlements

6.2 Alternative Scenario 1

This alternative involves the general allocation of the residual 679 persons balance to Longford Town/its immediate surrounding areas. A minimal balance is allocated to other settlements within the county and to rural areas.

6.3 Alternative Scenario 2

This alternative involves the general allocation of the residual 679 persons balance to the Open Countryside, to areas outside of existing settlements. A minimal balance is allocated to county settlements other than Longford Town.

6.4 Alternative Scenario 3

This alternative involves the allocation of the residual 679 persons balance to both existing settlements (60%) and the Open Countryside (40%³³).

³³ This figure is an assumption referred to in the RPGs

Section 7 Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios

7.1 Introduction

As previously noted, the alternatives available to be considered constrained by the provisions of the RPGs.

Of the target population growth of 5,603 persons that has been allocated to County Longford by the RPGs, 4,924 persons must be allocated to Longford Town.

This means that alternatives can only be considered with respect to the allocation of the balance of 679 persons (or circa 13% of the total allocation).

This limited scope of consideration therefore limits the difference in environmental effects across available alternatives and the severity of these effects.

This section provides a comparative evaluation of the environmental effects of implementing the three alternative scenarios.

7.2 Methodology

The description of the environmental baseline together with the maps provided in Section 4 of this report (including the Environmental Sensitivity Overlay Mapping) is used in the evaluation.

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) identified in Section 5 and reproduced overleaf are also used.

The provisions of the alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 8.1 below) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the

protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species³⁴.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects³⁵;

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 environmental component to which the SEO relates.
2. Interactions that would probably conflict with the status of an SEO and would be unlikely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a significant negative effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates.
3. Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in potential significant negative effects however these effects could be mitigated (for the chosen alternative these effects will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan).

³⁴ 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

³⁵ These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives³⁷

SEO Code	SEO
B1	To ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species ³⁶
B2	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
B3	To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
B4	To sustain 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
PHH1	To protect populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
S1	To avoid damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource in County Longford
W1	To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters
W2	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
W3	To comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)
M1	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
M2	To serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
M3	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse.
C1	To reduce travel related emissions to air and to encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
CH1	To protect archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
CH2	To protect architectural heritage including entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
L1	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands

Table 7.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives & Plan provisions on SEOs

Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
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³⁶ 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

³⁷ See Section 5.1 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

7.3 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects are one of the types of effects which have been considered in 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 2 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; and,
- Potential *inter-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans or developments.

A variety of potential *intra-Plan* cumulative environmental effects occur when considering the implementation of the alternatives. The interrelationships between environmental components that determine these potential effects are identified on Table 8.4 e.g. interrelationships between: human health and water quality; human health and air quality; and human health and flood risk.

With regard to potential *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects, these occur as a result of the combination of: potential environmental effects which are identified by the assessment as arising from alternatives; and the effects arising from other plans or developments. Other Plans and developments which have been considered by the assessment of environmental effects include those which are detailed under Section 2.5 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes and those which are detailed throughout Section 4 and Section 5.

The assessment of the likely *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects requires knowledge of the likely effects of all plans/developments under consideration. The assessment is limited in this instance as there has been limited assessment of the likely types of developments provided for by other policies, plans and programmes that could occur in combination with the implementation of the County Development Plan. Taking into account available information, the key potential *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects that are included in the assessment relate to effects upon the status of surface and ground waters and associated interactions (in combination with Regional Planning Guidelines, Development Plans and River Basin Management Plans), such as those related to ecology and drinking water resources, and potential effects upon the landscape. Other potential *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects include those occurring on various environmental components within the Longford Town where lower-tier Longford Town Development Plan is in force and the potential cumulative visual impact of development in county boundary areas. Examples of effects include those which may arise from multiple wind energy / renewable energy developments - note the landscape designations in adjacent counties provided at Section 4.11.4. Cumulative effects would have to be taken into account during the preparation of a renewable energy strategy and associated assessments.

7.4 Potentially Significant Adverse Effects

A number of potentially significant adverse environmental effects which are common to all alternatives and are described on the Table below. These effects are shared by the RPGs requirement that 4,924 persons of the entire population allocation is assigned Longford Town.

For the chosen alternative these effects will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

Environmental Component	Potential Effect
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites o Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity o Loss of biodiversity with regard to Wildlife Sites and species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976
Population and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies o Increase in the risk of flooding
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment o Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean o Increases in waste levels
Air and Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Failure to contribute towards sustainable transport and associated impacts
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Effects on entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and other archaeological heritage o Effects on entries to the Records of Protected Structures and other architectural heritage
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Occurrence of adverse visual impacts

Table 7.3 Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects common to all alternatives

7.4.1 Alternative Scenario 1

By generally allocating the residual 679 persons balance to Longford Town/its immediate surrounding areas, many conflicts between the county's most sensitive areas (see Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities at Figure 4.21) and this balance of development would be avoided.

For biodiversity and flora and fauna this would mean avoiding development in areas with the greatest concentration of Natura 2000 sites thereby contributing towards the protection of these sites. However this alternative would result in higher losses of the extent of non-protected habitats and higher levels of 'soil sealing' in the Longford Town area as a result of the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.

By limiting the population allocation in smaller settlements and rural areas, there would be a potential threat to the maintenance of the population of the county involved in land management.

The higher population in the Longford Town area would add demand to the waste water and drinking water services however, subject to appropriate upgrades and maintenance, this demand could be served by the Town's waste water treatment plant and drinking water supply. There is always uncertainty associated with the provision of upgrades however mitigation could require adequate and appropriate infrastructure to be in place in advance of new development. The provision of adequate and appropriate waste water services, or lack thereof, would interact with the protection of water quality, biodiversity and flora and fauna and human health.

There are extensive flood risk zones within and surrounding Longford Town which would need to be considered by new development.

By avoiding development in areas with the greatest concentration of Council landscape designations, this alternative would contribute towards the protection of these designations (although it is noted that *Intermittent Views* are identified to the south of the town).

Impacts upon architectural and archaeological heritage – which has been identified throughout the county - would have to be considered on an application by application basis. The greatest potential conflicts would occur in settled areas.

This alternative would be likely to further contribute towards levels sustainable mobility.

7.4.2 Alternative Scenario 2

By generally allocating the residual 679 persons balance to the Open Countryside this alternative provides a heightened degree of uncertainty as to where exactly outside of existing settlements development would occur. New development and associated conflicts could occur in areas ranging from the most sensitive to the least sensitive areas (see Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities at Figure 4.21).

Provisions would be needed to ensure that inappropriate development is avoided in Natura 2000 sites in the open countryside.

More treated effluent would be dispersed over wider areas within the county. Adequate and appropriate construction and maintenance of on-site treatment systems would be required to ensure that adverse effects upon water quality, biodiversity and flora and fauna, human health do not occur.

'Soil sealing' and loss of non-designated habitats - as a result of the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces - would coincide with new development in the open countryside.

This alternative would help to facilitate the maintenance of the population of the county involved in land management.

There are extensive areas outside of the county's settlements which have been subject to historical flooding or which are at heightened risk of flooding in the future; flood risk would need to be considered by new development.

Higher levels of dispersed, one-off developments across the countryside would have the potential to conflict with Council landscape designations, both individually and cumulatively, if unmitigated.

Impacts upon architectural and archaeological heritage – which has been identified throughout the county - would have to be considered on an application by application basis. The greatest potential conflicts would occur in settled areas.

This alternative would have the potential to conflict with efforts to maximise sustainable mobility levels.

7.4.3 Alternative Scenario 3

This alternative would help to facilitate the maintenance of the population of the county involved in land management.

By generally allocating 60% of the residual 679 persons balance to existing settlements, many conflicts between the county's most sensitive areas (see Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities at Figure 4.21) and this balance of development would be avoided.

- For biodiversity and flora and fauna this would mean avoiding development in areas with the greatest concentration of Natura 2000 sites thereby contributing towards the protection of these sites. However this alternative would result in higher losses of the extent of non-protected habitats and higher levels of 'soil sealing' within zoned settlements as a result of the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces. It is noted that the settlements of Clondra and Lanesborough are located close to Natura 2000 sites.
- The higher population in the county's various settlements would add demand to the waste water and drinking water services however, subject to appropriate upgrades and maintenance, this demand could be served by the existing infrastructure and services. There is always uncertainty associated with the provision of upgrades however mitigation could require adequate and appropriate infrastructure to be in place in advance of new development. The provision of adequate and appropriate waste water services, or lack thereof, would interact with the protection of water quality, biodiversity and flora and fauna and human health.
- There are extensive flood risk zones within the county's settlements which would need to be considered by new development.
- Impacts upon architectural and archaeological heritage – which has been identified throughout the county - would have to be considered on an application by application basis. The greatest potential conflicts would occur within existing settlements.
- This allocation of population would be likely to further contribute towards levels sustainable mobility.

By generally allocating 40% of the residual 679 persons balance to the Open Countryside this alternative provides a degree of uncertainty as to where exactly outside of existing settlements this development would occur. New development and associated conflicts could occur in areas ranging from the most sensitive to the least sensitive areas (see Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities at Figure 4.21).

- Provisions would be needed to ensure that inappropriate development is avoided in Natura 2000 sites in the open countryside.

- Development in the open countryside would disperse treated effluent over wider areas. Adequate and appropriate construction and maintenance of on-site treatment systems would be required to ensure that adverse effects upon water quality, biodiversity and flora and fauna, human health do not occur.
- 'Soil sealing' and loss of non-designated habitats - as a result of the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces - would coincide with new development in the open countryside.
- There are extensive areas outside of the county's settlements which have been subject to historical flooding or which are at heightened risk of flooding in the future; flood risk would need to be considered by new development.
- Higher levels of dispersed, one-off developments across the countryside would have the potential to conflict with Council landscape designations, , both individually and cumulatively, if unmitigated.
- Impacts upon architectural and archaeological heritage – which has been identified throughout the county - would have to be considered on an application by application basis. The greatest potential conflicts would occur in settled areas.
- This allocation of population would have the potential to conflict with efforts to maximise sustainable mobility levels.

Table 7.4 Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios against SEOs

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - would be mitigated
Alternative Scenario 1	<p>B1 B2 B3 S1 W3 (allocating population to existing settlements: protects due to low concentration of ecological sensitivities; minimises soil impacts; and minimises flood risk)</p> <p>M1 M2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 (population served by existing/ upgraded infrastructure and services)</p> <p>L1 (greatest concentration of landscape sensitivities avoided)</p> <p>C1 (further contributes towards levels sustainable mobility)</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 S1 (potential indirect adverse effects through water vector; loss of non- protected habitat and 'soil sealing')</p> <p>B4 (potential conflict with maintaining population of county involved in land management)</p> <p>M1 M2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 (need to secure adequate and appropriate capacity in advance of development)</p> <p>W1 W2 (potential interaction with water services)</p> <p>W3 (extensive flood risk zones surrounding the town would need to be considered by new development)</p> <p>CH1 CH2 (the greatest number and extents of cultural heritage potential conflicts would be likely to occur in settled areas)</p> <p>M3 (potential conflicts arising between this scenario and waste management would be mitigated)</p>
Alternative Scenario 2	<p>B4 (contributes towards maintenance of population of county involved in land management)</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 S1 (potential direct and indirect adverse effects; loss of non-protected habitat and 'soil sealing'; interactions with waste water)</p> <p>M1 M2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 (adequate and appropriate construction and maintenance of on-site systems needed)</p> <p>W1 W2 (potential interaction with water services)</p> <p>L1 (higher levels of dispersed one-off developments have potential to conflict with landscape designations both, individually and cumulatively, if unmitigated)</p> <p>W3 (extensive flood risk areas would need to be considered by new development)</p> <p>CH1 CH2 (the greatest number and extents of cultural heritage potential conflicts would be likely to occur in settled areas)</p> <p>C1 (potential to conflict with efforts to maximise sustainable mobility levels)</p> <p>M3 (potential conflicts arising between this scenario and waste management would be mitigated)</p>
Alternative Scenario 3	<p>B1 B2 B3 S1 W3 (allocating population to existing settlements: protects due to low concentration of ecological sensitivities; minimises soil impacts; and minimises flood risk)</p> <p>M1 M2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 (population served by existing/ upgraded infrastructure and services in existing settlements)</p> <p>L1 (allocating population to existing settlements: allows for greatest concentration of landscape sensitivities avoided)</p> <p>C1 (allocating population to existing settlements: further contributes towards levels sustainable mobility)</p> <p>B4 (allocating population to open countryside: contributes towards maintenance of population of county involved in land management)</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 S1 (potential indirect adverse effects through water vector & loss of non- protected habitat and 'soil sealing' in existing settlements; potential direct and indirect adverse effects in open countryside)</p> <p>M1 M2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 (need to secure adequate and appropriate capacity in advance of development in existing settlements; adequate and appropriate construction and maintenance of on-site systems needed in open countryside)</p> <p>W1 W2 (potential interaction with water services)</p> <p>W3 (extensive flood risk zones and areas both within existing settlements and in open countryside would need to be considered by new development)</p> <p>CH1 CH2 (the greatest number and extents of cultural heritage potential conflicts would be likely to occur in settled areas)</p> <p>L1 (allocation of population to open countryside: higher levels of dispersed one-off developments have potential to conflict with landscape designations both, individually and cumulatively, if unmitigated)</p> <p>C1 (allocating population to open countryside: potential to conflict with efforts to maximise sustainable mobility levels)</p> <p>M3 (potential conflicts arising between this scenario and waste management would be mitigated)</p> <p>B4 (restrictive rural planning policies in some parts of the county have the potential, if unmitigated, to lead to a cessation of management regimes that sustains certain habitats and species)</p>

7.4.4 The Selected Alternative Scenario

The Alternative Scenario for the County Development Plan which has emerged from the planning/SEA process is Scenario 3. This Scenario contributes towards protection of the environment while conforming in spirit and word with high level planning objectives.

By complying with appropriate mitigation measures - including those which have been integrated into the Plan - potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing this scenario would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

Alternative Scenario 3 has been developed by the Planning Team as the Draft Plan and placed on public display, amended and adopted by the Elected Members having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects which were identified by the SEA and are detailed above; and
2. Planning - including social and economic - effects which also considered by the Council.

Section 9 of this report details how the Plan was informed by environmental sensitivities.

The Core Strategy Map from the Plan is provided on Figure 7.1 overleaf.



Figure 7.1 Core Strategy Map from the Plan
 Source: Longford County Council (2013)

Section 8 Evaluation of Plan Provisions

8.1 Methodology

This section evaluates the provisions of the Plan. The description of the environmental baseline together with the maps provided in Section 4 of this report (including the Environmental Sensitivity Overlay Mapping) is used for this purpose. Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) identified in Section 5 and overleaf are also used.

The provisions of the Plan are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 8.1 below) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the provisions of the Plan are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species'³⁸.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects³⁹;

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 environmental component to which the SEO relates.
2. Interactions that would probably conflict with the status of an SEO and would be unlikely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a significant negative effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates.
3. Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in potential significant negative effects however these effects would be likely to be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

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. Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects posed by the Plan are identified in Section 9 - these have been integrated into the Plan, through both the Land Use Zoning Maps and the text of the written statement.

Table 8.1 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives & Plan provisions on SEOs

Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
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³⁸ 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

³⁹ These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 8.2 Strategic Environmental Objectives⁴¹

SEO Code	SEO
B1	To ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species ⁴⁰
B2	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
B3	To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
B4	To sustain 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
PHH1	To protect populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
S1	To avoid damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource in County Longford
W1	To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters
W2	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
W3	To comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)
M1	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
M2	To serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
M3	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse.
C1	To reduce travel related emissions to air and to encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
CH1	To protect archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
CH2	To protect architectural heritage including entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
L1	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands

8.2 Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) have both been undertaken alongside the preparation and adoption of the Plan.

The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC). The requirement for SFRA is provided under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DEHLG, 2009).

⁴⁰ 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

⁴¹ See Section 5.1 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

The AA concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network⁴². All recommendations made by the SFRA were integrated into the Plan. The preparation of the Plan, SEA, AA and SFRA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA and SFRA have informed both the Plan and the SEA.

8.3 Determination of Potential Impacts

Environmental impacts which occur, if any, will be determined by the nature and extent of multiple or individual projects and site specific environmental factors.

Avoidance of conflict with SEOs and the environment is dependent upon compliance with the mitigation measures which have emerged through both the AA and SEA processes and which have been integrated into the Plan.

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 will not affect the interrelationships between these components. The presence of significant interrelationships between environmental components is identified on Table 8.4.

8.5 Cumulative Effects

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

There are 2 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; and,
- Potential *inter-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans or developments.

A variety of potential *intra-Plan* cumulative environmental effects occur when considering the implementation of the Plan. The interrelationships between environmental components that determine these potential effects are identified on Table 8.4 e.g. interrelationships between: human health and water quality; human health and air quality; and human health and flood risk.

With regard to potential *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects, these occur as a result of the combination of: potential environmental effects which are identified by the assessment as arising from Plan measures; and the effects arising from other plans or developments. Other Plans and developments which have been considered by the assessment of environmental effects include those which are detailed under Section 2.5 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes and those which are detailed throughout Section 4 and Section 5.

⁴² Except as provided for in Section 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.

The assessment of the likely *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects requires knowledge of the likely effects of all plans/developments under consideration. The assessment is limited in this instance as there has been limited assessment of the likely types of developments provided for by other policies, plans and programmes that could occur in combination with the implementation of the County Development Plan. Taking into account available information, the key potential *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects that are considered in the assessment relate to effects upon the status of surface and ground waters and associated interactions (in combination with Regional Planning Guidelines, Development Plans and River Basin Management Plans), such as those related to ecology and drinking water resources, and potential effects upon the landscape. Other potential *inter-Plan* cumulative environmental effects include those occurring on various environmental components within the Longford Town where lower-tier Longford Town Development Plan is in force and the potential cumulative visual impact of development in county boundary areas. Examples of effects include those which may arise from multiple wind energy / renewable energy developments - note the landscape designations in adjacent counties provided at Section 4.11.4. Cumulative effects would have to be taken into account during the preparation of a renewable energy strategy and associated assessments.

Effects that may arise as a result of implementing the Plan have been mitigated to the extent that the only residual effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Plan are those which are identified under Section 8.6.

8.6 Residual Adverse Effects

Section 9 outlines the measures that will mitigate the potential effects that are detailed under the subsections below. Residual adverse effects likely to occur - considering the extent of detail provided by the Plan and assuming that all mitigation measures are complied with by development - are identified for each of the environmental components below:

Table 8.3 Residual Adverse Effects

Environmental Component	Residual Adverse Effects
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces
Population and Human Health	None
Soil	Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces
Water	Fluvial and pluvial flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events
Air and Climatic Factors	None
Material Assets	Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher level waste management policies
Architectural Heritage	Potential alteration to the context and setting of architectural heritage (Protected Structures) however these will occur in compliance with legislation
Archaeological Heritage	Potential alteration to the context and setting of archaeological heritage (Recorded Monuments) however this will occur in compliance with legislation Potential loss of unknown archaeology however this loss will be mitigated by measures integrated into the Plan
Landscape Designations ⁴³	None

⁴³ The Plan contributes towards the protection of landscape designations. The county's landscapes will change overtime as a result of natural changes in vegetation cover combined with new developments.

Table 8.4 Presence of Interrelationships between Environmental Components

Component	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air and Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape
Biodiversity, flora and fauna		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Population and human health			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Soil				Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Water					No	Yes	No	No
Air and Climatic factors						Yes	No	No
Material assets							Yes	Yes
Cultural heritage								Yes
Landscape								

8.7 Detailed Evaluation of Plan Provisions

8.7.1 Overall Findings

The overall findings (in addition to those detailed in preceding sections) are that:

- The Council have integrated all recommendations arising from the SEA, AA and SFRA into the Plan (see Section 9);
- Some Plan provisions would be likely to result in significant positive effects upon all of the environmental components (see Section 9); and
- Some provisions would have the potential to result in significant negative environmental effects (these are described below) however these effects will be mitigated by the mitigation measures which have been integrated into the Plan (see Section 9).

8.7.2 Potentially Significant Adverse Effects

Potentially significant adverse environmental effects (which will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan) are described on the Table below:

Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from the Plan
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites ○ Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity ○ Loss of biodiversity with regard to Wildlife Sites and species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976 ○ Loss of population of the county involved in land management
Population and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies ○ Increase in the risk of flooding
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment ○ Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean ○ Increases in waste levels
Air and Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Failure to contribute towards sustainable transport and associated impacts
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Effects on entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and other archaeological heritage ○ Effects on entries to the Records of Protected Structures and other architectural heritage
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Occurrence of adverse visual impacts

Table 8.5 Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects

8.7.3 Chapter 2: Development Plan Strategy

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Core Strategy Aims				
<p>Aim 1 To provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County over the plan period.</p> <p>Aim 2 To provide alignment and integration between strategic planning and settlement policy and the prioritisation of physical infrastructure investment.</p> <p>Aim 3 To build on the unprecedented growth which has occurred over recent years and maximise the economic and social benefits that can be achieved from this in a manner which is compatible with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>Aim 4 To secure the future vitality and viability of County Longford through optimising the County's economic, social and physical development.</p> <p>Aim 5 To demonstrate that the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021 is consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region and other national guidelines and policies.</p> <p>Aim 6 To facilitate the closer alliance of County and sub-county level plans with regional policy.</p> <p>Aim 7 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 the National Spatial Strategy and Midland Regional Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>Aim 8 To develop this quantum of land in a manner that supports public transport and existing services.</p> <p>Aim 9 To provide a framework supported by evidence based settlement strategy, for deciding on the scale, phasing and location of new development, having regard to existing services and planned investment over the coming years.</p> <p>Aim 10 To provide a framework within which the provision of sustainable infrastructure, amenities, economic investment and development can take place to maximize the use of resources in the plan area.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
Core Strategy Policies				
<p>CS 1: The Council shall continue to support the strengthening of the urban and village network throughout the County in accordance with the hierarchy outlined in the following sections and supported by the Regional Planning Guidelines, Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, issued by the DoEHLG. Development priority will be accorded to Longford Town in order to fulfil its role as a Principal Town within the five town polycentric model for the region and targeted growth directed to other urban settlements supporting the expansion of linkages with the Border and West Regions.</p> <p>CS 2: Functional roles of the larger towns shall be maintained and supported by the promotion of appropriate development in these areas and through the Development Management process.</p> <p>CS 3: The Settlement Strategy aims to create vibrant and thriving urban and rural communities, firmly rooted in the concepts of sustainability and maintaining a high quality of life. The extensive village network shall be used to support rural communities through the provision of neighbourhood level facilities, community services and social functions, and transport initiatives will be promoted in order to enhance links between settlements and their rural hinterland in order to ensure that</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<p>rural areas benefit from a strengthened town and village structure. Development shall be commensurate with the level of infrastructural provision anticipated over the lifetime of the plan (see infrastructural section – programme of works). Following the adaptation of the plan the Planning Authority shall undertake a study to draw up a strategic context map for the towns and villages of County Longford in order to integrate such locations with sustainable travel and the strategic framework for transport in the county.</p> <p>CS 4: The physical and social environment of the urban and village network is an important element in the promotion and strengthening of the settlement hierarchy. The Council aims, through the development management process and periodic initiatives at national and regional level, to create attractive urban and village environments with unique identities and an appropriate mix of uses to attract and retain population within the County.</p> <p>CS 5: Key Service Town, Service Town, Local Service Towns: Proposals for residential development in the settlements defined above and as shown on the maps contained at Appendix 1 will be determined in accordance with the requirements of the settlement hierarchy defined, the Core Strategy Table with regard to population return, the ability of the proposal to enhance the character of the settlement, the demand/need for the proposed level and type of residential development in the settlement and compliance with technical, legislative, environmental, design policy and/or criteria contained within the Development Plan or any other relevant plan, the functional area of which the settlement forms part.</p> <p>CS 6: Serviced Settlements: Serviced Settlements have been defined in accordance with the fact that infrastructure provision exists within these settlements and represents a tier of the settlement hierarchy that has most diversity amongst the settlements contained within it. Having regard to the above, proposals for residential development in service settlements, as shown on maps contained at Appendix 1, will be determined in accordance with the population allocations of the Core Strategy, the character and nature of the existing settlement and the ability of the proposal to enhance this, the ability of the settlement to absorb further development, the demand/need for the proposed level and type of residential development in the settlement and compliance with technical, legislative, environmental, design policy and/or criteria contained within the Development Plan or any other relevant plan, the functional area of which the settlement forms part. Residential development will also be considered on lands identified as Site Resolution Objective in accordance with the relevant zoning provision standards. Any residential development in these settlements will also be determined in accordance with the population allocations of the Core Strategy, the character and nature of the existing settlement and compliance with technical, legislative, environmental, design policy and/or criteria contained within the Development Plan or any other relevant plan, the functional area of which the settlement forms part.</p> <p>CS 7: Rural Service Settlements: Proposals for residential development in settlements defined as ‘Rural Service Settlements’ and as shown on the maps contained in Appendix 1 will be determined in accordance with the requirements of the Core Strategy Table with regard to population return, the sequential test, the creation and maintenance of a sense of identity, recognition of the local character, the availability of appropriate infrastructure and sustainable community services and compliance with technical, legislative, environmental, design policy and/or criteria contained within the Development Plan or any other relevant plan, the functional area of which the settlement forms part. Proposals for one-off dwellings may also be considered on these lands and proposals in this regard will be determined in accordance with rural policy contained at 3.2.2.</p> <p>CS 8: It is an objective of the Development Plan that Village Policy Statements may be prepared and may contain zonings and will also contain policy statements which will provide a basic framework for the development of each settlement.</p> <p>CS 9: Applications for development in Rural Service Settlements will be subject to assessment in terms of the size of development considered appropriate to the location, their visual impact and other normal planning criteria, including their ability to consolidate and enhance existing village character, and create or strengthen a sense of identity and distinctiveness for the settlement. Small scale residential clusters and limited local level services such as post offices, neighbourhood shops, schools etc. only will be considered in these settlements.</p> <p>CS 10: All developments are to provide normal facilities appropriate to the location such as roads, footpaths, street lights, services and any other such requirements considered appropriate.</p> <p>CS 11: Areas other than those defined as part of the settlement hierarchy and lands zoned as part of this plan, shall be designated as rural for the purposes of the plan.</p> <p>CS 12: a) The following categories of applicant shall be considered for the development of housing in the rural area with a view towards sustaining rural communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Members of farm families, seeking to build on the family farm. o Landowners with reasonably sized farm holdings who wish to live on their land. 				
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Members of the rural community in the immediate area, this includes returning emigrants or their children with remaining substantial family or community ties, who wish to permanently settle in the area. o Persons whose primary full or part-time employment is locally based or who are providing a service to the local community. <p>b) Speculative and unsustainable urban-generated housing development will be discouraged in the rural area.</p> <p>c) Occupancy Conditions may be attached in accordance with Ministerial Guidelines to protect the policy application and integrity.</p> <p>CS 13: In accordance with the policies outlined in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Longford County Council shall strictly apply policy CS 12 in the vicinity of Designated Settlements in order to prevent over-proliferation of urban-generated one-off housing in the rural area. Further ribbon development on all approaches to Longford Town, regional routes R194 and R198 in particular, shall be discouraged.</p>				
Implementation and Monitoring				
<p>IMP-CS 1: The Planning Authority shall promote and facilitate the development of the County in accordance with the provisions of the Core Strategy, including directing development in line with the settlement hierarchy and promoting development at an appropriate scale that is reflective of the terms of the Core Strategy Table and zoning maps.</p> <p>IMP-CS 2: a) It is an objective of the Council to review the following Local Area Plans, in order to ensure that the population targets, future housing land requirement, zoning maps and policies contained as part of this Core Strategy can effectively be realised;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballymahon • Carriglass • Lanesboro • Newtownforbes • Drumlish • Kenagh • Ardagh • Granard • Ballinalee • Edgeworthstown <p>b) The Northern and Southern Environs LAPs shall be reviewed to ensure consistency with the provisions of the Core Strategies.</p> <p>c) Having regard to points a) and b) and where any ambiguity arises between the content of any existing Land Use Plan and this Plan, this Plan will take precedence during any transitional period.</p> <p>IMP-CS 3: The Planning Authority shall monitor and maintain a record of residential development permitted in settlements designated under the Settlement Hierarchy in order to ensure compliance with the population allocations defined by the Core Strategy Table.</p> <p>IMP-CS 4: The Planning Authority shall apply the Settlement Hierarchy to determine the scale, rate and location of proposed developments and apply appropriate development management measures to ensure compliance with the Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy, including the population targets for the County as prescribed in the Core Strategy Table.</p> <p>IMP-CS 5: It is policy of the council that all activated and committed planning permissions, including those located on lands identified as 'Strategic Land Reserve', will be prioritised where it is determined that they support the completion of an unfinished housing estate.</p> <p>IMP-CS 6: It is policy of the council that all activated and committed planning permissions, including those located on lands identified as 'Strategic Land Reserve' shall be assessed in accordance with the requirements of Section 42 of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2011. In assessing applications for the extension of duration of planning permissions, in Strategic Land Reserve areas the Planning Authority shall consider the compatibility of the proposal in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy and the role and function of the settlement within same.</p> <p>IMP-CS 7: The Planning Authority shall monitor and maintain a record of the quantum of residential development permitted by way of extension of duration on lands zoned 'Strategic Land Reserve' in order to ensure general compliance with the terms of the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

Commentary:

The evaluation of the Development Plan Strategy is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7. References in certain provisions to sustainable development, character and other Plan provisions would contribute towards the protection of cultural heritage (CH1 CH2).

8.7.4 Chapter 3: Housing

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Housing Policy				
<p>HS-1: It is the policy of the Council to plan positively for future housing requirements in the County in accordance with the population targets and distributions set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region. In doing so the Council will provide provide such housing within existing defined settlements in order to realise the economics of providing infrastructure and services in towns and villages, and to facilitate the expansion of existing settlements in a planned and orderly fashion with the benefit of a broad range of services and infrastructure.</p> <p>HS-2: Without prejudice to the above, housing shall be provided in rural areas where it promotes the role of these areas, and combats isolation of the farming community, and promotes social inclusion.</p> <p>HS-3: The Council will promote and encourage the provision of a broad mix of housing types in towns and villages in order to cater for the changing demographic outline of the County. This will include the provision of housing for the elderly, persons with disability, lone parents and travelling families. To facilitate this, the Council will require larger schemes to include a mix of house types and sizes, having regard to the prevailing nature of household formation and change, demographic change and related considerations in the County.</p> <p>HS-4: It is Council policy to expect a high quality of design in all housing development having due regard to Government policy relating to sustainable development, which aims to reduce the demand for travel within existing settlements, and the need to respect and reflect the established character of rural areas. The Council will give due consideration to DoEHLG's publications of "Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities - Policy Statement" (2007) and "Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities- Design Guidelines" (2007).</p> <p>HS-5: It is the policy of the Planning Authority to facilitate the provision of housing units to sufficiently cater for social and specialist housing needs over the Plan period as established in the County Housing Strategy.</p> <p>HS-6: Provision of social and specialist housing shall be progressed through partnership working with voluntary and co-operative housing organisations, the Health Service Executive, as well as through agreements with private developers as well as the Local Authority's own house building programme.</p> <p>HS-7: Housing developments will be located in areas appropriately zoned under the Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Additional residential developments where the required infrastructure is present (or readily available) and areas close to social and community facilities, and that are in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, may also be considered.</p> <p>HS-8: The specifics of these requirements shall be dealt with by the planning authority in pre-planning consultations and by condition and agreement as part of a planning permission for residential development.</p> <p>HS-9: It will be necessary for the planning authority to reserve 14% of applications for private housing developments to provide an element of social and specialist housing, in order to provide an even spread of housing of all types and encourage social integration, for the purpose of addressing the requirement for social housing under Part V.</p> <p>HS-10: Percentage division between social and specialist housing shall be decided on the basis of each individual site. Criteria to be taken into account will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The type and location of the housing units required by the planning authority at a given time, as defined by the priority housing list by the Housing Section; o The existing mix of housing classes in the area - as a general rule, in areas with an existing high level of social housing present, a lower reservation of lands will be required for social housing purposes. <p>HS-11: In the interest of counteracting undue social segregation, the Council will ensure that an appropriate balance between incomes, social, specialist and private (including private rented) housing is provided within communities. Decisions</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<p>on leasing take up, RAS and on Part V percentage ratios on specific sites will be based on the existing housing profile and needs of the area.</p> <p>HS-12: Longford County Council will continue to maximise the potential of the various social housing options, including voluntary housing, affordable housing, shared ownership, improvement of existing housing stock in lieu of Local Authority Housing and extensions to Local Authority Houses.</p> <p>HS-13: It is the policy of the Council to promote and support the development of housing for older people and those with disabilities, including the concept of independent living and the development of 'lifecycle housing' i.e. housing that is adaptable for people's needs as they change over their lifetime. New developments will be required to be in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations Amendment, 2000 (Access for People with Disabilities) Where time constraints permit, in the case of housing provision for the disabled, direct and on-going consultations will be entered into with the prospective tenants in order to assess individual requirements.</p> <p>HS-14: Open spaces, entrances, pathways and parking areas in new residential developments shall be designed with reference to "Buildings for Everyone – Inclusion, Access and Use" (National Disability Authority, 2002). The planning authority will have cognisance of the needs of the elderly with regard to accessibility, security and social interaction.</p> <p>HS-15: Regard shall be had in the assessment of new developments to the social inclusion of all sectors of society, including the needs of the travelling community and ethnic minorities. Traveller accommodation shall be provided in accordance with the current, and any future, traveller accommodation plan.</p> <p>HS-16: It is the policy of the planning authority to continue to assist Voluntary Housing Organisations insofar as is possible in line with government objectives on increasing output from Voluntary Housing Organisations.</p> <p>HS-17: Any application for planning permission relating to a residential development under this Strategy 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 the DoEHLG, shall be referred to the Heritage and Planning Division of the DoEHLG for observations/comment prior to a grant of permission/approval being obtained.</p>				
<p>Commentary: The evaluation of the Housing Policy is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7. HS-17 would contribute towards the protection of cultural heritage (CH1 CH2).</p>				
<p>Designated Settlements</p>				
<p>HOU DS 1: In residentially zoned areas, planning permission will normally be granted for developments appropriate to the zoning, subject to compliance with technical, legislative, environmental, design policy and/or criteria contained within the Development Plan, local area plan or village policy statement, the functional area of which the settlement forms a part.</p> <p>HOU DS 2: The Council will continue to utilise relevant national and regional initiatives in order to facilitate the improvement and enhancement of the County's settlements. This programme is required to be administered on a priority basis and in accordance with a phased plan.</p> <p>HOU DS 3: A principal consideration in the assessment of proposed new development in a particular settlement shall be the enhancement of a unique and distinctive identity through encouraging appropriate design guidance, rejuvenation of derelict sites and the use of protected structure/Architectural Conservation Area mechanisms.</p> <p>a) Existing features that form integral elements of village character shall be protected from inappropriate development. These features include existing recreational spaces, both active and passive, located in many settlements but particularly in the smaller villages (e.g. Newtowncashel and Abbeyshrule). Proposals that aim to remove, develop or otherwise interfere with these spaces will be considered contrary to this Policy and unlikely to be considered favourably.</p> <p>b) Developments should reflect existing development patterns in terms of density, scale, layout, design and material finishes. Where appropriate, village/town houses shall be required to be built up to the footpath in order to maintain existing or establish new building lines in the interest of the settlement structure and character.</p> <p>c) High quality designs and finishes will be required in connection with new development which may include the provision of street furniture, lighting and pavement treatment to the satisfaction of the Council.</p> <p>d) New residential developments in towns and villages will generally be required to provide open space at a minimum rate of 15% of the total site area. The space provided shall be in a useable form in terms of layout, size and shape and reserved for public open space for the life of the development. Development will not be permitted on lands reserved for public open space save where it can be demonstrated that such development would clearly benefit the users of the space.</p> <p>e) Individual sites will generally be required to provide minimum back garden lengths of 11 metres. These standards will apply unless otherwise specified in individual Local Area Plans/Village Policy Statements or where residential density</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B4</p>

<p>guidelines are applied with alternative requirements particularly in relation to the quality of the completed development and/or specific use criteria (e.g. sheltered housing provision).</p> <p>f) Development will be prioritised in settlements where infrastructural facilities, utilities and community services are available and/or can be provided within a reasonable timeframe. In other settlements, development may be conditioned on a phased basis pending the provision of the above requirements, either by the Council where included as an objective of the relevant statutory plan, or by the developer as appropriate in each individual circumstance.</p> <p>g) It is policy of the Council to provide for parking in Local Area Plans and Village Policy Statements, where appropriate. This provision shall have cognisance of the existing character of the town or village and shall be concentrated in areas where strong pedestrian links are possible between the parking area and core commercial area. Town and village character shall also be considered in terms of proposed road widening or traffic calming.</p> <p>h) Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, and permeability through towns and villages shall be a consideration in the design of new developments, particularly where these have the potential to create new non-vehicular connections to main thoroughfares and/or social, community and amenity facilities.</p> <p>i) Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) shall be put in place as appropriate by developers in association with new developments. The Council shall promote and encourage the reuse, refurbishment, rebuilding and stabilisation, as appropriate, in terms of heritage and safety considerations, of derelict sites and dangerous buildings within the County.</p> <p>HOU DS 4: The Council may promote and encourage development in existing settlements by private, voluntary and co-operative groups where practical and appropriate through the following measures :</p> <p>a) Opening up of appropriately zoned previously inaccessible land banks and making this land available to the relevant parties.</p> <p>b) Reduction in development charges in order to promote the re-use and/or refurbishment of derelict or run-down properties.</p> <p>c) The acquisition of derelict property where it can provide infill and/or reduce negative visual impact, particularly in or adjoining areas designated as being of high amenity or of high scenic value.</p> <p>HOU DS 5:</p> <p>a) Generally, house design should be of a high standard, yet simple, with a minimum of different materials, finishes and detailing.</p> <p>b) Houses should be energy efficient in their siting and design, and utilise local materials where present and practicable. The use of renewable resources and alternative energy will be encouraged (see Section 2.2.2).</p> <p>c) Design solutions should be employed to minimise overlooking/overshadowing and to preserve and enhance the residential amenity of the entire development.</p> <p>d) A variety of house types, sizes and designs (compatible with the overall scheme) will be encouraged in new developments. Developers should refer to "Social Housing- Design Guidelines" (DoELG, 1999- or subsequent update), Section B2 as a guide to minimum room sizes in proposed residential development.</p> <p>e) Where appropriate, developers will be required to provide a variety of house types, sizes and designs as part of an overall scheme. In this regard proposals for development shall take account of the need/demand for a particular house type and the requirements of the settlement. In this regard applicants are advised to consult the planning authority prior to submitting an application. Developers should refer to the Longford Housing Strategy and the "Social Housing- Design Guidelines" (DoELG, 1999- or subsequent update), Section B2 as a guide to minimum room sizes in proposed residential development.</p> <p>f) Private open space to the rear of dwellings shall be provided at a minimum of 11metres in length, extending for at least the width of the dwelling unit. In the case of detached and semi-detached dwellings, this space should be accessible by pedestrians other than through the house. This private open space requirement may, in exceptional circumstances, be reduced in town and village centres and areas of higher residential densities where a satisfactory public open space/recreational, congregational area is provided.</p> <p>g) All boundary walls shall be capped and plastered, except in the case of fencing or stone walling. Some layouts may be required to omit front boundaries in order to preserve the character of the area. Generally the following standards apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Front Walls: 0.5-1.2m high - Side/Rear Walls: 1.8-2m high - Estate boundary/dividing walls between houses: 2m <p>h) Alternatives including fencing with backplanting of shrubs and/or trees may be considered where privacy and/or security</p>				
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<p>is preserved or where the character of the development requires it.</p> <p>i) Substantial developments may require prior consultation with relevant service providers, e.g. ESB</p> <p>HOU DS 6:</p> <p>a) Road layout in housing areas shall be designed in accordance with “Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas” (DoELG, 1998) or any subsequent update, and parking shall be provided in accordance with development plan standards.</p> <p>b) Generally, density should reflect the existing and traditional character of the settlement. In line with the “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DoEHLG, 2008) or any subsequent update, higher densities shall be permitted in urban and town centres, particularly in areas with close proximity to rail lines and other modes of public transport. In all other cases, the density of developments will be assessed on a site by site basis. In this regard pre-planning discussions are actively encouraged.</p> <p>c) Layouts should reflect the existing town or village character. In the case of proposed developments that have a street frontage, the developer may be required to build houses in accordance with the existing building line in order to retain the built fabric of the settlement and reinforce its physical structure. Similarly, where the structure of the settlement requires it, courtyard type developments may be appropriate. In addition to this, where appropriate the applicant may be requested to abide by the following set back distances;</p> <p>Road Classification Required Set-back County 18 metres Regional 21 metres National Roads* 30 metres</p> <p>*In accordance with national policy, planning permission will not normally be granted to new developments on national routes unless in exceptional circumstances. The following criteria shall be used in determining whether an application constitutes “Exceptional Circumstances”:</p> <p>i. The compatibility of the proposal with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines</p> <p>ii. The relevance and appropriateness of the proposed development in supporting the aims and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines</p> <p>iii. The nature of the proposed development and its impacts on the national road, including the volume of traffic generated by the proposal, implications for the safe and efficient operation of the national road, its capacity and service life and, where appropriate, the cumulative impacts including the existing level of development in the area and the precedent that could be set by a grant of permission in that particular instance.</p> <p>iv. Compatibility with DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines (2012).</p> <p>v. Plan led development in consultation with the NRA; development will only be permitted, in accordance with the above criteria, where it is specifically provided for in the Development Plan in accordance with Section 2.6 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012).</p> <p>d) In the design of proposed developments, consideration shall be given to the provision of access to adjacent lands and the overall traffic layout of the area.</p> <p>e) Developers will normally be required to install cycle lanes in conjunction with footpaths throughout the proposed development.</p> <p>f) Cul-de-sac layouts are generally preferred in smaller villages and towns, however, consideration shall be given to alternative layouts where access is provided to rear lands and where the layout is favourable towards safe and efficient traffic circulation.</p> <p>g) A Traffic Projections Form shall be submitted as part of the application for development, and where the development falls within the defined thresholds, a Transport Impact Assessment, Traffic and Transport Statement and/or a Road Safety Audit shall be submitted (or the required form that forms part of any subsequent update).</p> <p>HOU DS 7:</p> <p>a) The developer will normally be required to reserve 15% public open space in association with new developments (this requirement may be relaxed in conjunction with areas of higher density as outlined above) and/or may be required to contribute (either financially or with land) towards the assembly of a larger public park for the benefit of the settlement as a whole.</p> <p>b) In exceptional cases in smaller developments (eight houses or less), hard or soft landscaped play lots of a minimum size of 0.1 ha may be provided in lieu of public open space.</p>				
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<p>c) On sites that abut important recreational areas such as playing pitches, riverbanks, walking routes etc., the developer may be required to provide pedestrian links and/or wildlife corridors to connect the proposed development with its surroundings and potentially extend/enhance existing recreational facilities within the settlement and pedestrian routes toward the town/village centre. Pedestrian links should be secure, overlooked and well lit, or alternatively, be able to be locked at night.</p> <p>d) Areas of public open space should be designed, located and managed to encourage biodiversity and provide wildlife corridors where possible</p> <p>e) Incidental open space, such as grass margins, leftover spaces or unusable areas shall not be calculated as part of the open space provision for a development.</p> <p>f) Public open space should be provided in an area where it is useable, accessible and secure. It shall be provided as an area of passive recreation and/or children's informal play area. This generally excludes areas to the rear or sides of houses which are not overlooked, poorly lit and encourage anti-social behaviour and the accumulation of litter.</p> <p>g) Where open space is provided adjacent to a main public road, this shall be fenced with an appropriate boundary material.</p> <p>h) The above requirements may be relaxed in certain instances, for example in developments consisting of Sheltered Housing or OPDs.</p> <p>i) The Council shall facilitate and promote the provision of a network of green infrastructure serving the settlement hierarchy and its environs in accordance with the aims of Section 6.1 Conservation and Preservation of the Environment.</p> <p>HOU DS 8:</p> <p>a) Landscaping plans will be required in conjunction with all new residential developments and should include hard as well as soft landscaping elements.</p> <p>b) Stands of mature trees on sites shall be preserved and protected in developments including their root systems. During construction the trees and their root systems shall be fenced off for protection.</p> <p>c) Soft landscaping should be carried out utilising native/semi-native species, and exclude the use of exotic and/or invasive species, particularly in areas adjacent to riverbanks and wildlife areas.</p> <p>d) Public open space areas should be suitably landscaped, including mounding, informal play areas/kick about areas, provision of street furniture including benches etc. Landscaping should be provided in a manner which suits potential users e.g. where OPDs are provided, children's play areas may not be appropriate.</p> <p>e) Surfacing should be of high quality and designed to support the level of traffic which it is proposed to carry. Where several paving types are to be used, they should be utilised to emphasise congregation areas, crossings and pinch point, or to emphasise and enhance children's play areas or promote sensory experience, or provide access for those with disabilities.</p> <p>f) Lighting standards, litter bins, signage, seating, bollards etc. should be provided in accordance with an overall scheme. Public lighting shall be installed above all footways within the development to the following standards or similar suitable alternative;</p> <p>i. Ornamental type public lighting, such as Urbis lighting, 8m high Chatsworth decorative columns with 1 metre cascade brackets and albany lanterns with 250W SON lamps or similar approved equals.</p> <p>ii. Any proposed lighting shall meet the requirements of the Department of Environment publication "Recommendations for site development works for Housing Areas," (1998) and ESB standards.</p> <p>iii. For the roads network in and around an immediate housing area or along a public walkway, public lighting shall be provided to the following standards such as, Tubular Columns with Urbis K-lux lanterns with height of columns and wattage requirement to that of ESB standards.</p> <p>g) Generally, developers shall be required to retain hedgerows and mature trees on-site. If this is not possible, the developer will be required in most instances to replace trees removed and/or strengthen existing hedgerows.</p> <p>HOU DS 9:</p> <p>a) The developer will be required to submit a bond ensuring the completion of the development to the satisfaction of the planning authority. This bond shall represent the size and extent of the development and shall be submitted to the planning authority prior to the commencement of the development.</p> <p>b) Where applicable, a phasing programme shall be submitted as part of an application for planning permission and shall clearly indicate each phase on the drawings. Roads, footpaths, drainage, public lighting and boundaries shall be completed prior to the first occupation of any houses in each phase of the development and prior to the commencement of</p>				
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<p>subsequent phases.</p> <p>c) Housing estates shall be named and numbered in accordance with a logical and sequential scheme to be agreed with the planning authority prior to the commencement of the development.</p> <p>d) Housing estate names shall be in Irish or in Irish and English and shall reflect local personages, landscape, heritage, historical and cultural features. Names shall be submitted in advance to the Planning Authority for approval by an established place names committee of the Heritage Forum or the Planning Authority.</p> <p>HOU DS 10:</p> <p>a) Infill Residential development will be promoted in order to retain continuity of the built fabric and enhance the vitality and viability of village centres.</p> <p>b) Design, height and materials should be compatible with adjacent properties.</p> <p>c) The existing building line should be maintained or, where changed, should be carried out in a manner which enhances the built fabric of the settlement.</p> <p>d) Design should incorporate measures to reduce or eliminate overlooking of adjacent properties, including additional screening measures if necessary.</p> <p>e) Private open space should be provided to the extent that storage of bins, fuel and clothes lines may be facilitated out of public view. Car parking should be provided to development plan standards or a contribution may be accepted by the planning authority in lieu of such parking provision</p> <p>HOU DS 11:</p> <p>a) The sub-division of existing dwellings into multiple dwelling units will not normally be permitted in estates where single unit dwellings predominate.</p> <p>b) Public open space shall be provided at the rate of 60m² per unit or suitable alternative to be agreed with the planning authority.</p> <p>c) A high standard of architectural design and material finish will be required in all proposed multiple occupancy developments.</p> <p>d) Proposals for the on-going management of the development shall be submitted at application stage.</p> <p>HOU DS 12:</p> <p>a) It will be the policy of the Council to facilitate the provision of waste water and effluent treatment services by private developers in order to promote development in identified settlements where significant deficiencies exist and where it is not proposed to provide such services within the life of the Development Plan. Their preference is for single houses with their own treatment system in the smaller settlements.</p> <p>b) Proposed treatment plants shall be purpose designed to the required County Council standards, appropriate in capacity and scale, and have a suitable outfall and method of disposal. As part of any application, the applicant should indicate the type and design capacity of the proposed treatment plant.</p> <p>c) All applications for residential developments in areas where public sewerage mains are not present shall be accompanied by the documentation as required by the relevant EPA Treatment Manual (or subsequent update), certified by a fully indemnified professional, indicating the suitability of the site for the disposal of effluent.</p> <p>d) These treatment plants shall be subject to legally binding maintenance and management agreements, indicating the day-to-day caretaking and maintenance contract for the plant, and the developer shall lodge a bond with the Planning Authority in order to secure the continuing operation, management and maintenance of the plant in accordance with the relevant guidelines.</p> <p>e) Where it is proposed to dispose of treated effluent direct to a watercourse, the applicant shall submit an Assimilative Capacity Report on the receiving water, prepared by an experienced hydrologist and containing the following information;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Assessing the chemical, biological (Q rating) and bacterial condition of the receiving water. ii. Assessing the flow data of receiving waters, indicating 95 percentile flow and Dry Weather Flow. iii. Provide an assessment of the associated impacts of the proposed discharge on the chemical, biological and bacteriological quality of the receiving waters with regard to the relevant legislation. <p>f) Where it is proposed to dispose of treated effluent by percolation, a detailed site assessment and characterisation should be submitted in accordance with EPA standards. The Council may require an experienced hydro-geologist report to be submitted on the likely impact of the discharge on ground water quality.</p>				
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Commentary:

The evaluation of these provisions related to Designated Settlements is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7. References to consideration of architecture and archaeology noted (CH1 CH2). It is noted that the provision of housing within the designated settlements would not be likely to improve or conflict with the sustenance of sustainable rural management practices (SEO B4).

Rural Areas- General Policy and Objectives

HOU RUR 1: Assessment of residential development in rural areas shall be guided by the suitability of the area in terms of its sensitivity, its ability to accommodate development in a sustainable manner and compliance with the relevant technical criteria.

HOU RUR 2: In terms of rural housing, Longford County Council recognises the need of applicants defined within policy CS 12 to locate in their own rural areas. These cases shall be assessed on their merits, with regard being had to ability of the applicant and/or proposed resident to provide, at their own expense, the services required to sustain the proposed development without detrimental impact on road safety, water quality, public health or environmental and landscape integrity.

HOU RUR 3: Outside designated settlements and development envelopes, there shall be a presumption against extensive urban generated commuter development, ribbon development, development by persons who do not intend to use the dwelling as their primary residence and unsustainable, speculator driven residential units. In this respect, applicants for permission for residential development in non-designated areas shall be required to submit a statement indicating the sustainability of the proposal, which shall form part of the assessment of the application for planning permission and in which shall be outlined :

- a) The reason for the location of the proposed dwelling in a particular locality.
- b) The connection or close relationship between the applicant and/or proposed resident and the locality in which the proposed dwelling is to be situated and the criteria outlined in CS 12.
- c) The place of employment of the applicant and/or proposed resident where relevant.
- d) A demonstration of the ability of the applicant and/or proposed resident to provide, at their own expense, the services required to sustain the proposed development without detrimental impact on road safety, water quality, public health, views and prospects, landscape, environmental integrity and amenity.

HOU RUR 4: Applicants for planning permission for residential development in rural areas under strong urban influence may be required to agree to an occupancy condition, applied in accordance with ministerial guidelines, restricting the occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant and/or the applicant's immediate family for a specified period, as part of any grant of planning permission.

HOU RUR 5: Ribbon development of one-off housing extending out along routes from settlements shall be actively discouraged.

HOU RUR 6: The Council shall establish, implement and maintain a Rural Housing Application GIS database to monitor Countywide pattern and feed into long-term policy making, subject to staff resources.

HOU RUR 7: It is policy of the Council to have regard to the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2005. The principles set out in the guidelines require that new houses in rural areas be sited and designed to integrate well with their physical surroundings and be generally compatible with:

- i. The protection of water quality in the arrangements made for on site waste water disposal facilities;
- ii. The provision of a safe means of access in relation to road and public safety;
- iii. The conservation of sensitive areas such as natural habitats, the environs of protected structures and other aspects of heritage.

In regard to septic tanks, the Planning Authority will be positively disposed towards the use of septic tanks and/or with additional package treatment systems, where necessary, with Irish Agreement Board Certification. In order to protect groundwater, all site suitability tests shall be carried out in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency Waste Water Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Single Houses, or any subsequent update.

HOU RUR 8:

- a) The minimum acceptable site size for a dwelling using an individual treatment system (septic tank and percolation area or equivalent) is 0.2ha. Where there are existing treatment systems adjacent, and/or where percolation tests are borderline (in the upper or lower 20% of permitted limits) this figure shall be increased and/or the applicant may be required to install an additional treatment system.
- b) The applicant shall submit details of the proposed effluent treatment system in accordance with the relevant wastewater

B4 B1 B2 B3
PHH1 S1 W1 W2
W3 M1 M2 C1
CH1 CH2 L1

B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1
W1 W2 W3 M1 M2
M3 C1 CH1 CH2
L1

<p>treatment manual (or any update) by the EPA.</p> <p>c) Where a treatment system is to be installed, the applicant shall submit full site specific details of the proposed system certified by a suitably qualified and indemnified individual, and shall include Irish Agrément Board certification and manufacturer's certification of site suitability. Maintenance agreements for a minimum period of five years shall be in place prior to the first occupancy of the dwelling.</p> <p>d) In order to safeguard ground and surface water resources, Longford County Council shall investigate the establishment of a panel of assessors for the submission of site assessments for effluent treatment systems in accordance with the relevant EPA guidelines. The purpose of this panel is to ensure an acceptable and consistent level of quality in the reports submitted. On the establishment of this panel, site assessments will only be accepted from approved assessors.</p> <p>e) Details of proposed methods of surface water disposal shall be provided, including location of soakpits and the means of prevention of surface water accessing the public roadway.</p> <p>f) Where residential development is proposed within reasonable distance of an appropriate mains water supply, the developer will generally be required to connect to the mains system in favour of using bored wells on-site for domestic water supply purposes.</p> <p>HOU RUR 9:</p> <p>a) Any site proposed for the development of a dwelling will generally be required to provide a minimum of 30 metres road frontage</p> <p>b) Sight lines shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the NRA Design Manual for Roads & Bridges (DMRB) or suitable alternative to be agreed with the Roads Department on a site by site basis. The applicant shall demonstrate that adequate sightlines are achievable in each direction along the public road from the proposed access to the new development. Where the achievement of these sightlines requires the maintenance/removal of hedgerows/ditches/boundaries that are not in the ownership of the applicant, a signed letter of agreement allowing such maintenance/removal should be obtained from the relevant landowner and submitted as part of the application for planning permission.</p> <p>c) Minimum set back distances shall be adhered to in the case of frontage developments along public roads unless in instances where it is considered that building lines should be maintained. Measured from the nearest edge of road surface to the front wall of the proposed dwelling, the following set back distances should be adhered to:</p> <p>Road Classification Required Set-back</p> <p>County 18 metres</p> <p>Regional 21 metres</p> <p>National Roads* 30 metres</p> <p>*In accordance with national policy, planning permission will not normally be granted to new developments on national routes unless in exceptional circumstances (See policy HOU DS 6(c) for criteria).</p> <p>d) Where a new front boundary is constructed, applicants will be required to relocate all existing utility poles from the set back area, to be in line with the new boundary or alternatively placed underground. Set back areas shall be appropriately surfaced in keeping with the adjoining road, with sufficient drainage provision provided in order to prevent surface water entering the public road.</p> <p>e) Adequate provision shall be made for drainage to ensure that surface water arising from the proposed development does not enter the public road and that water from the public road does not enter the site.</p> <p>f) A Traffic Projections Form shall be submitted as part of the application for development, and where the development falls within the defined thresholds, a Transport Impact Assessment, Traffic and Transport Statement and/or a Road Safety Audit shall be submitted (or the required form that forms part of any subsequent update).</p> <p>HOU RUR 10: Site specific design solutions should be employed for individual one-off dwelling proposals. Dwelling houses should respect their location in terms of siting, design, materials, finishes and landscaping. Designs should be site specific and integrated into the landscape in accordance with the design principles contained in Annex 3 – Rural Design Guide. Hedgerows should only be removed where necessary to achieve the required sightlines and should be replaced with a stone wall, backplanted with native species and maintained at the required level in order to provide an unobtrusive replacement for the hedgerow, which allows sight lines to be achieved. Post and rail fences should only be used in exceptional circumstances. The use of concrete walls along the entire site frontage is not encouraged as it has a substantial detrimental impact on the local character of the area.</p>				
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Commentary:

By facilitating rural housing in the countryside this provision would contribute towards the sustenance of sustainable rural management practices (SEO B4) however the development of rural housing would be likely to conflict with:

- the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna (SEOs B1 B2 B3);
- the protection of human health (SEO PHH1);
- the protection of soil function and the status of water bodies (SEOs S1 W1 W2);
- minimising increases in flood risk (SEO W3);
- maximising sustainable mobility (SEO C1);
- minimising impacts upon archaeological and architectural heritage (SEOs CH1 CH2);
- minimising visual impacts (SEO L1);
- the provision of adequate and appropriate water services (SEO M1 M2); and,
- minimising waste levels (SEO M3).

These conflicts would be mitigated by the measures which have been integrated into the Plan and are identified in Section 9 of this report.

Note that:

- HOU RUR 2, HOU RUR 3 and HOU RUR 7 would be likely to contribute towards the protection of various environmental components;
- HOU RUR 8 would be likely to contribute towards the provision of appropriate water services;
- HOU RUR 6 would be likely to contribute towards efforts to achieve sustainable mobility; and
- HOU RUR 10 would be likely to contribute towards the protection of the landscape.

8.7.5 Chapter 4: Economic Development

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Industry, Commercial and Business Development				
<p>ECON 1: The Planning Authority will encourage the development of industrial, commercial and business developments at appropriate scales and locations having regard to the settlement strategy of the County. Generally, where the proposed development is considered to be a large scale employer or considered intensive in nature, such developments shall preferably locate within Longford Town or Core Strategy settlements as defined in the settlement hierarchy or on lands zoned for these purposes, as part of this plan. In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for particular industries, businesses (non-retail), tourism and recreational projects and other land uses tied to a fixed resource and/or requiring extensive sites or specific locations to locate in rural locations subject to normal planning criteria and the requirements of environmental legislation including the Habitats Directive and Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>ECON 2: It is the policy of the Council to assist, insofar as it is empowered, anyone who wishes to establish or expand industrial, commercial or other undertakings providing increased employment opportunities in the county, subject to normal development management requirements and technical criteria.</p> <p>ECON 3: The council shall promote the use of appropriate lands within Longford Town for the development of employment generating, industrial and mixed uses in order to enhance and contribute to the economy of Longford and promote the town as the northern driver for the Midland Region. In this regard lands to the north of the town, in proximity to existing IDA lands, are considered appropriate in this regard. Lands shall be defined in accordance with the review of the Northern Environs Local Area Plan, or other relevant statutory process, and shall be considered for the purposes as outlined in this policy. Supporting services such as restaurants, small scale convenience, and office shall also be provided in association with any scheme.</p> <p>ECON 4: It is the policy of the Council to zone sufficient and appropriate land for the facilitation of business, commercial and industrial purposes that stimulates the economic growth, viability and vibrancy of the county, without compromising the environmental, residential or amenity potential of the area. Zoning will be carried out as part of this Development Plan,</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<p>any future Local Area Plan or where required in consultation with Longford Town Council.</p> <p>ECON 5: It is policy that where a need is established, land may be zoned for industrial and commercial purposes to facilitate appropriate development in the medium to long term. It is further policy that, should the need arise, and where resources permit, the Council will acquire and develop suitable sites and actively encourage industry to locate at such selected centres through the provision of serviced land banks for the development of industrial/business parks.</p> <p>ECON 6: Where an area of land is outside a settlement (i.e. an area not identified as part of the Core Strategy, as listed in this document), and is not otherwise zoned as part of this Development Plan or other statutory document, the use of such land shall be deemed to be primarily agricultural. This provides for agricultural and ancillary uses, including residential, recreational and tourism. Other uses may be permitted subject to assessment on a site-by-site basis against relevant development management standards and technical criteria, including the other policies and objectives contained within this plan.</p> <p>ECON 7: Proposals for specialised high-tech business industrial and associated office development with significant employment potential will be favourably considered, subject to the provisions of National Policy and in accordance with a sequential approach. This approach will include considerations of the availability of adequate transport networks, sufficient services and utilities, compliance with Development Management and technical Standards and other policies contained within this Development Plan.</p> <p>ECON 8: The establishment of suitable small-scale industrial/commercial/tourism developments on family owned land relating to and promoting rural diversification will be encouraged subject to the satisfaction of normal planning and environmentally sustainable technical criteria.</p> <p>ECON 9: Sites to be developed for industrial and commercial purposes shall be designed to the highest architectural standards to provide quality environments with adequate provision for landscaping, car and truck parking and circulation and the disposal of foul and surface water following appropriate treatment.</p> <p>ECON 10: To ensure the protection of the environment in the installation of new developments through promoting the application of the Best Available Technology (BAT) principle in terms of control of emissions/potential pollutants.</p> <p>ECON 11: It is policy of the Council to encourage and assist the provision of education, training and upskilling of the County's workforces as a key element in attracting and retaining employment opportunities.</p> <p>ECON 12: The reuse of sites and/or existing building stock shall be encouraged where possible. Older commercial and light industrial structures shall be protected as appropriate.</p> <p>ECON 13: Development Standards</p> <p>1. The following information should be submitted as part of any application for industrial/commercial/business development:</p> <p>Details of the nature and scale of the proposed operation, to include opening hours and anticipated traffic levels</p> <p>a) Availability of adequate services to serve the development or the ability of the applicant to provide these services in a manner which does not adversely impact on surrounding properties or the broader environment</p> <p>b) Proposals for the safe storage and disposal of waste in a manner which is visually and environmentally acceptable</p> <p>c) Storage should generally be confined to the rear of the premises – height should be such that the materials stored are adequately screened either by the building unit or alternative screening method. Landscaping measures shall be detailed at application stage and should utilise native, non-invasive plant species.</p> <p>d) Compatibility of existing adjacent land uses with the proposed development and mitigation measures to preserve and protect the amenity of the adjacent uses, should this be necessary.</p> <p>e) Availability of adequate sight lines (or ability of applicant to provide same) as per the relevant NRA Standards and safe road access for anticipated levels of traffic to be generated by the proposed development. Generally, only one vehicular access point will be permitted.</p> <p>f) Adequate parking (as per Section 5.1.2) and circulation areas should be provided by the applicant within the curtilage of the proposed development unless otherwise agreed with the planning authority</p> <p>g) Substantial developments may require prior consultation with relevant service providers, e.g. ESB</p> <p>2. Building layout and design</p> <p>a) Building design should be compatible with its surroundings. Buildings in existing industrial estates/commercial areas may be required to conform to an overall architectural and landscaping theme. Screening may be required in order to break up a large expanse of façade and additional landscaping required to large expanses of hard surface area such as parking provision.</p>				
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<p>b) Building finishes should be of the highest quality and exterior colours should be sedate and unobtrusive.</p> <p>c) Building height should be restricted to that required for the normal operation of the premises. Buildings of excessive height will not be permitted</p> <p>d) Detailed landscaping proposals will be required as part of any application, with particular attention to landscaping and screening on greenfield sites proposed for development.</p> <p>e) Advertising signage shall be detailed at planning application stage and shall be sympathetic in size, scale, design, materials and colour with the surrounding landscape/streetscape.</p> <p>f) Where a development forms part of an industrial estate, the proposal may be required to co-locate signage in association with the remainder of the buildings within the estate, e.g. locational signage restricted to one sign at estate entrance.</p> <p>g) Lighting shall be unobtrusive and shall not adversely affect traffic safety on adjacent roads. Specific lighting standards may be required in particular instances.</p> <p>ECON 14: The Council shall prepare a Macro-economic assessment that will identify future potential development trends and job creation opportunities, linking this to the short medium and longer term asset requirements of the County including housing, infrastructure and educational facilities, subject to resources. This assessment shall expand on the existing proposals and actions as set out in the Economic and Tourism Section of this plan.</p> <p>ECON 15: To support the Local Enterprise Office and engage with them at critical stages of plan making processes in order to optimise the economic development potential of the County and provide a robust planning framework for sustainable job creation opportunities and economic growth.</p>				
<p>Commentary: The evaluation of these provisions relating to Industry, Commercial and Business Development, which either directly or indirectly facilitate new development, is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7. It is noted that ECON 4 ("without compromising the environmental...potential of the area"), ECON 6 (by limiting greenfield development and associated environmental effects outside of settlements), ECON 10 (BAT with regard to the control of emissions/potential pollutants) and ECON 13 (which provides various Development Standards) would be likely to contribute towards the protection of various environmental components (see SEO codes above).</p>				
<p>Retail Strategic, General, Specific and Framework for the Assessment of Future Retail Developments Provisions</p>				
<p>Strategic Policy 1: Principal Town/County Town (Longford Town) It is the policy of the Council to promote and encourage major enhancement of town centre activities within Longford to enable it to maintain its strategic role as defined in the Midlands RPGs. In order to achieve this it will be necessary to build upon the strong services function of the town and encourage an increase in high-end high street comparison retailing in the core shopping area.</p> <p>Strategic Policy 2: Key Service Town and Service Town (Granard and Edgeworthstown) It is Council policy to encourage the growth and development of retail floorspace and other town centre services/functions in Granard and Edgeworthstown in order to support their transition into more self-sustaining centres within the county's settlement and retail hierarchies. The Council will encourage the consolidation and increase of the retail functions of these centres to enable them to fulfil their important retail/services function within the county settlement/retail hierarchy; to realise their role as 'key service town' and 'service town' under the provisions of the Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines; and help them to maintain their position within the hierarchy outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>Strategic Policy 3: Local Service Towns (Ballymahon and Lanesboro) It is the policy of the Council to consolidate, promote and encourage the provision of local scale retail development in these towns with a view to strengthening their position as local service towns. These centres provide important local service functions which will be actively encouraged.</p> <p>Strategic Policy 4: (Other Villages) It is Council policy to assist and encourage small scale retail development throughout the villages of the county in recognition of their important role as defined in the county retail hierarchy. Local level retail development in towns and villages will be supported where this is consistent with their organic growth patterns and subject to the directions of the sequential approach.</p> <p>General Policy 1: It will be Council policy to ensure that all retail development permitted accords with the relevant requirements and criteria as established within the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 and the Longford County Retail Strategy 2015-2021.</p> <p>General Policy 2: It will be Council policy to permit retail development of a size and scale which is appropriate to the level of the town/settlement area, including its population, as defined within the County retail hierarchy. This policy will aim</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<p>to consolidate and reinforce all existing retail enterprises within the County, and permit the development of additional retail floorspace where such development is deemed to be appropriate by Longford County Council.</p> <p>General Policy 3: Proposals for the creation of new retail floorspace, will require applicants to undertake an assessment of the quality and suitability of existing and available floorspace in the County relative to the circumstances of their proposals.</p> <p>General Policy 4: It will be Council policy to discourage new retail development if they would either by themselves or cumulatively in conjunction with other developments seriously damage the vitality and viability of existing retail centres within the County.</p> <p>General Policy 5: When assessing retail planning applications, it will be Council policy to have regard to the findings of the capacity assessment contained in the Longford County Retail Strategy 2015-2021, including the ability to counteract expenditure leakage. The onus will be on any applicant to demonstrate in a Retail Impact Assessment that the proposed floorspace is appropriate having regard to the quantum of floorspace required within that specific urban centre or settlement, in addition to evidencing all other relevant variables, as specified within the Retail Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>General Policy 6: It will be Council policy to encourage, in the first instance, developments which promote and protect the Longford Town Core Shopping Area as the primary location for high order comparison and large scale convenience retail development in the County, subject to the criteria of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012. In principle, this will not preclude the consideration of proposals in locations where mitigating and robustly justified special circumstances apply.</p> <p>General Policy 7: It will be Council policy to promote the reuse of vacant retail floorspace. Where no viable retail use can be sustained, alternative uses will be assessed on their own merits against the requirements of the proper planning and sustainable development of the areas within which they are located. This policy will be used to ensure that all proposals for the reuse of existing retail floorspace can be evaluated and the proportion of vacancy can be reduced. In addition the identification and introduction of alternative uses for vacant retail floorspace will reduce the possibility of such floorspace falling derelict.</p> <p>General Policy 8: It will be Council policy to look to encourage the consolidation of other non retail based services within the town centres of the County utilising existing vacant retail floorspace where necessary. This policy will aid in enhancing the vitality of town centres, encouraging them to maintain their role as employment locations in addition to reducing the proportion of vacant retail floorspace and recognising the value which non retail uses can contribute to the local economy through the provision of employment and general economic benefit.</p> <p>General Policy 9: It will be Council policy to continue to improve the public realm of urban centres through the encouragement of high quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street furniture, lighting and effective street cleaning. In addition, the introduction of business improvement district type initiatives to the principal settlements of County Longford will be evaluated to establish the contribution that such proposals could make to the viability and vitality of town centres within the County. To facilitate this Longford Local Authority will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare clear design guidelines for retail development in urban centres subject to resources, in accordance with the provisions of the Retail Design Manual- A Good Practice Guide (2012) • Assess the potential of new retail developments with regards to existing traffic congestion problems • Promote and facilitate improvements in the public realm • To promote the targeted funding sourced from the Development Contribution Scheme to the regeneration and renewal of urban centres, in accordance with the 'Development Contributions- Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the DECLG. <p>General Policy 10: It will be Council policy to undertake measures to improve the accessibility of town centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment, which improves safety and limits traffic congestion where possible. A particular focus of this policy will be the development of additional pedestrian crossings, where necessary, within Longford Town centre, as well as other settlements within the County where high volumes of vehicular traffic can be seen to inhibit pedestrian movement.</p> <p>General Policy 11: It will be Council policy to encourage and facilitate retail innovation, where appropriate, to help diversify the County's retail profile and offer. Where possible, this retail innovation should be directed towards existing urban centres and settlements in the first instance, but will not preclude the development of retail enterprises in other locations, where the retail innovation in question cannot be sustained within any alternative location. Such development proposals will be assessed on their own merits, and must satisfy the assessment criteria of the Retail Planning Guidelines. In promoting innovation in the county's retail offer and attraction the Council shall seek to;</p>				
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<p>• Exploit the strategic inter-regional position of Longford Town and its role within the midlands region to encourage a wider range of high-end high street comparison retail functions to regenerate and reinvigorate the town core.</p> <p>• Monitor emerging trends and innovations in the EU and US retail sectors. Seek the transposition of appropriate new retail operating methods and retailing types into the county.</p> <p>General Policy 12: It will be Council policy to require a Retail Impact Assessment to be carried out for development proposals in the following general circumstances:</p> <p>a) Proposals featuring greater than 1000sqm of net floorspace for both convenience and comparison type developments in the four main towns;</p> <p>b) Proposals featuring greater than 500sqm of net retail floorspace for both convenience and comparison type developments in district towns and other settlements;</p> <p>c) Or where the Planning Authority considers the development may impact on the vitality and viability of a town centre.</p> <p>The Retail Impact Assessment shall include, at minimum, the criteria set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.</p> <p>General Policy 13: It will be Council policy to ensure that all proposed retailing projects and any associated improvement works or associated infrastructure such as parking facilities, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to Appropriate Assessment to ensure there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites in the County.</p> <p>General Policy 14: It is Council policy to build upon, promote and facilitate the expansion of retailing within the tourism and leisure sectors. The Council will provide guidance and assistance where possible to appropriate tourist retail developments. The location of such developments will be subject to meeting the tests of the sequential approach and all other relevant planning criteria.</p> <p>General Policy 15: It is the policy of the Council to actively encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of appropriately located derelict land and buildings for retail use, including the promotion of appropriate uses for upper floors of commercial buildings within town centres. In line with the sequential approach, the council will where possible encourage and facilitate the regeneration and re-use of derelict buildings and/or brownfield sites in appropriate areas. Only when suitable, available and viable brownfield land and/or derelict buildings cannot be found should alternative new build options be considered.</p> <p>Specific Policy 1: Improving comparison offer of Longford Town It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the expansion of high-end high street comparison retailing in Longford Town. The County Council and Town Council will encourage high-end high street comparison retail operators to locate in Longford Town.</p> <p>Specific Policy 2: Resolving congestion in Longford Town It is the policy of the Council to improve the retailing environment of Longford Town by facilitating a resolution to the centre's current traffic congestion problems. In line with the provisions of the sequential approach, it is recognised that not all core shopping areas possess sites that are suitable in terms of size, parking, traffic generation or servicing arrangements for large-scale developments in the town centre itself. In order to minimise the potential for adverse impact on the public realm, only new retail development which is of an appropriate size, scale and type to a town centre location will be permitted in Longford Town's core shopping area.</p> <p>RET 1: This section deals with specific retail and leisure development proposals, which may influence the emphasis that is given to each of the criteria outlined in the assessment of new development.</p> <p>(a) Regional Shopping Centres Due to Longford's location at a strategic point on national infrastructure, Longford has traditionally acted as an inter-regional centre for the surrounding Counties. In order to maintain the role of Longford Town as a driver of development in the North Midlands and to maintain its position within the national retailing hierarchy, the potential for Regional Shopping Facilities will be considered subject to the relevant planning criteria contained within this plan.</p> <p>(b) District Shopping Centres District shopping centres will be considered in the context of their location. Applicants will be required to illustrate the compatibility of their proposal with the County Development Plan and provide a comprehensive report outlining and addressing these issues, including a demonstration of a deficiency in the provision of particular floorspace types and an indication of the demand for the proposed additional floorspace. In accordance with the provisions of the Core Strategy, District Centres shall be restricted to Longford Town including, but not restricted to, the Northern Environs area.</p> <p>(c) Large Convenience outlets</p>				
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The RPG's have set a 3000m² upper floorspace limit on food store development outside of the Greater Dublin area. This retail strategy will uphold this limit on applications for permission for individual developments in Longford Town and its environs, in terms of new development or extensions to existing schemes that will result in an aggregate increase in sales floorspace. This description covers supermarkets, superstores, discount food stores and hypermarkets. An accepted component of the retail industry throughout the country, large convenience outlets are generally accompanied by substantial car-parking provisions due to the space requirements because of the weekly nature of many of the shopping trips they generate. Large convenience outlets will be primarily encourage, where possible, to locate within the town centre where this can be demonstrated as recognisably beneficial to the town core area, in order to provide universal accessibility and alleviate traffic congestion. Vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation provisions shall be dealt with as a matter of priority, in addition to the other criteria contained in the previous section.

(d) Retail Parks and Retail Warehouses

Retail warehouses, due to their large retail floorspace requirements, the bulky nature of their goods and the consequent heavy requirement for car parking are generally located on the edge or outside of the built-up urban area. Due to the specialist nature of these parks, it is not considered that their location outside of the commercial core will adversely impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Consideration will be given to retail parks where goods sold are predominantly bulky goods that are difficult to accommodate within the town centre. Applications will be subject to the criteria as outlined in this section. Grouping of units into retail park situations to facilitate sustainable transport patterns and reduce congestion in the town centre will be encouraged. Individual retail warehousing units in out-of-centre locations will generally be subject to a minimum gross retail floorspace in the region of 700m². This is to prevent potential adverse impact on the vitality of the town centre. Maximum gross floorspace of individual units in such locations will be in the region of 6,000m² (this includes external display area, for example, ancillary garden centres). These minimum and maximum floorspace criteria apply to proposed new developments and extensions to or sub-divisions of existing developments or those previously granted planning permission.

(e) Local Shops

Local shops located in neighbourhood centres are an important element of the retailing industry in the urban area. Primarily convenience outlets, local shops because of their proximity to large residential areas, provide a readily accessible service for basic goods, especially for the less mobile sectors of the community such as the elderly and disabled. Where appropriate, local shops shall be recognised in the relevant Development Plan and provision made for the establishment of neighbourhood shops and services in the zoning of additional land for residential development.

RET 2:

(a) Shops in Rural Areas

The emphasis is on the need to build up the retailing core of settlements, accordingly there will be a general presumption against shops in rural areas i.e. outside town and villages. Exceptions to this include:-

- i. Small scale shops attached to a permitted tourist or recreational development.
- ii. Retail outlets associated with other rural activities where the retail aspect is secondary to the operation - shops selling agricultural produce, crafts etc.
- iii. The development of a small shop in association with an existing post office or petrol station will generally be allowed.

(b) Take- Away Food Premises

All applications for take-away premises need planning permission whether it involves a change of use of an existing building or an entirely new building. The following Planning considerations will apply to any assessment of a planning application for a take-away premises:

- i. The likely impact of the development upon the amenities of the area, including noise pollution, litter, odour, and general disturbance.
- ii. Car parking is of critical importance and the premises will not be permitted at locations where adequate car-parking is not available.
- iii. Developments will not be permitted where they have the potential to detrimentally impact on traffic circulation and safety in an area.
- iv. Details should be supplied at application stage on opening times and traffic.
- v. Applications for such development may be more favourably considered in mixed use locations such as town centres.
- vi. Proximity to residential development will be an important planning consideration in assessing applications for take-away premises.

<p>vii. Litter bins shall be provided inside the premises.</p> <p>viii. Where take-away premises are permitted, noise and disturbance levels will be controlled by imposing strict closing times on the premises.</p> <p>ix. Facade design will be carefully controlled and, in particular, the amount and type of advertising signage and lighting. The design shall respect and enhance the existing street character. Corporate logos will be permitted, only where they meet Local Authority design criteria.</p> <p>(c) Petrol Stations</p> <p>The Council recognises the more intensive role of petrol stations in recent times, the expansion from merely fuel depots to the provision of a wide range of convenience and other goods and service. Applications for planning permission for such development should contain the following elements:</p> <p>i. High quality design and material content. Advertising material should be restricted to a minimum and no lighting shall be installed so as to cause glare or interference to any user of an adjacent public road.</p> <p>ii. Standard petrol station canopies are not acceptable and should be replaced with more sympathetic canopies of light steel and glass or slated roofs with no attached advertising</p> <p>iii. Detailed proposals for the service station including method of disposal of waste water from car-wash areas, surface water outlet and oil interceptors etc. The development shall be designed and operated in such a manner that it does not adversely affect existing road drainage in the area.</p> <p>iv. Developments of this type should be located within the 50kph speed limit, usually acceptable within the edges of the designated settlements. Proposed sites should be a minimum depth of 22 metres</p> <p>v. Retail uses not associated with the motor industry shall be considered in the context of the existing retail outlets in the vicinity. Only uses which contribute to the vibrancy and service level of the settlement shall be considered</p> <p>vi. Proposed developments which have the potential to restrict traffic flow and/or create traffic hazard will not be permitted. Generally two access points with a minimum width of 7.3 metres and a maximum width of 9.1 metres will be required with appropriate turning curve based on road design speed and the relevant standards.</p> <p>vii. The frontage of the site shall be defined by a boundary wall, not exceeding 0.5 metres in height. Footpaths and lighting to ESB standards shall be provided to the roadside boundary</p> <p>viii. No pumps shall be located within 7metres of the roadside boundary and no other structures other than pumps shall be located within 15 metres of the roadside boundary. In any case, no structure shall be erected, either on a permanent or a temporary basis that interferes with the sightlines of any road user, whether pedestrian or vehicular.</p> <p>Applications for such development should be accompanied by detailed landscaping proposals in order to effectively integrate the proposed development into its surroundings.</p>				
<p>Commentary: The evaluation of the Plan's Retail provisions is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7.</p>				
<p>Agriculture and Specialised and Intensive Developments</p>				
<p>AGR 1: Where an area of land is outside a settlement (i.e. an area not indicated as part of the Core Strategy, as listed in this document), and is not otherwise zoned as part of this Development Plan or The Longford Town Development Plan, the use of such land shall be deemed to be primarily agricultural. Primarily agricultural zoning provides for the agricultural use of the land and any ancillary uses, including residential. Other uses may be permitted, subject to assessment on a site-by-site basis and compliance with the development control standards and other policies and objectives contained within this plan. The Establishment of suitably small-scale industrial/commercial developments in rural areas on family owned land and developments which would promote rural diversification, subject to relevant planning criteria, will also be encouraged.</p> <p>AGR 2: It is the policy of the Council to promote the agricultural industry and appropriate rural development and diversification, balanced with the natural, architectural and archaeological heritage and landscape character of the County. In this regard, proposed development should consider potential heritage and landscape impacts and identify mitigating measures where required to ameliorate negative impacts.</p> <p>AGR 3: To investigate the potential for farm diversification within the County, including an examination of forestry potential, the feasibility of small scale craft industries, tourism based activities, educational facilities and alternative uses of cut-over boglands. Larger industries, offices, warehousing and other forms of non-retail service industry will generally be directed toward the larger settlements.</p> <p>AGR 4: It is the policy of the Council, in accordance with the relevant Government agencies, to investigate the development of suitable areas of underutilised land, such as cutaway/cutover bog for the growing of biomass/biofuels for</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 PHH1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1</p>	

the renewable energy industry. The use of cutaway/cutover bog shall be considered for the development of renewable energies. This shall be carried out in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in order to ensure the protection of areas with a high heritage value. The Council shall support the preparation of a holistic plan for the development of industrial peatlands at a regional scale that promotes economic development, tourism, rural diversification, environmental protection and natural and cultural heritage awareness.

AGR 5: It is the policy of the Council, through its veterinary section, to inspect abattoirs, dairy producers and other industrial installations dealing in animal foodstuffs at regular intervals in order to assess and maintain animal health, environmental quality and food safety in such installations.

AGR 6: To control, through the development management process and the relevant environmental legislation, the application of effluent spreading on land in order to protect ground and surface water sources in the County. This will limit spreading to certain times of the year and/ or prohibit spreading in certain areas.

AGR 7: The Planning Authority will require adequate provision for the collection, storage and disposal of effluent produced from agricultural developments. Developers are required to comply with relevant Department of Agriculture Guidelines and the Nitrates Regulations in this regard.

AGR 8: Sites to be developed for agriculture purposes shall be designed to the highest standards to provide quality environments with adequate provision where necessary for landscaping, car and truck parking and circulation and the appropriate disposal of foul and surface water.

AGR 9:

a) The Planning Authority accepts the need for agricultural buildings and associated works (walls, fences, gates, entrances, yards etc.) to be functional, but they will be required to be sympathetic to their surroundings - in scale, materials and finishes. Buildings should relate to the landscape and not the sky-scape. Traditionally this was achieved by having the roof darker than the walls. Appropriate roof colours are dark grey, dark reddish brown or a very dark green. The grouping of agricultural buildings will be encouraged in order to reduce their overall impact in the interests of visual amenity.

b) A landscaping plan is required as part of applications for agricultural developments. In general, the removal of hedges to accommodate agricultural developments will only be considered as a last resort.

AGR 10: In assessing an application for intensive pig or poultry units, the Planning Authority will have regard to the Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters Regulations (as amended) and require information on the following:-

a) Depending on the size of the unit, an E.I.S. and/or Appropriate Assessment may be required. In addition an Integrated Pollution Control licence may be required from the Environmental Protection Agency.

b) It will be Council policy to ensure that all proposed agricultural projects and any associated improvement works or associated infrastructure, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to Appropriate Assessment to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

c) The Council will 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 planning applications would need to be supported by an Appropriate Assessment where relevant.

d) The character of farm settlements should be retained and enhanced where possible. In this regard, landscaping plans will be required as part of applications for new developments and extensions to existing farmyards and structures. The removal of hedgerows to accommodate agricultural developments will only be considered as a last resort and provision shall be made for the maintenance and enhancement of existing hedgerows in accordance with best practice.

e) Scale and intensity of operations including the cumulative impact of similar type developments within close proximity.

f) Waste management including frequency and location of disposal relative to pig and poultry units. The control of odour is another important consideration.

g) Air pollution arising from housing units and effluent storage, transportation and spreading.

h) Proximity of development to aquifers and water courses.

i) Population density in vicinity - units should not be developed at a distance of less than 200metres from a dwelling other than with the owner's consent. In the case of villages and towns intensive poultry and particularly pig units will be required to be located a much greater distance away from the settlement because of the impacts on residential amenities.

j) Animal housing units in terms of design, and associated activities such as cleaning, ventilation and heating.

Landscaping of site - a comprehensive landscaping plan should be submitted as part of the planning application.

Commentary:

Agriculture is essential to the sustenance of rural populations and associated existing sustainable rural management practices (**SEO B4**). The development of agriculture has the potential to adversely affect various environmental components including biodiversity and flora and fauna (**SEOs B1 B2 B3**), water and human health (**SEOs W1 W2 PHH1**) and the provision of appropriate water services (**SEOs M1 M2**). Associated developments could interact with cultural heritage, the landscape, waste management and sustainable mobility patterns (**SEOs CH1 CH2 L1 M3 C1**).

In addition to providing for agricultural development, these policies and objectives provide for adherence to various environmental legislation as well as specific protection of Natura 2000 sites through reference to Appropriate Assessment. These aspects of the provisions would be likely to benefit environmental protection relating to all of the environmental components (**SEOs B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1**).

Strategic and Specific Tourism Policies and Objectives

TOU 1: Applications for tourism development will be considered in line with usual planning criteria and will be subject to high standards of design and materials particularly given their sensitive locations.

TOU 2: The Council recognises the potential of all peatland bogs in the County, including industrial peatlands, in terms of providing opportunities for recreation and tourism thus creating new features of local distinction. Where appropriate the Council will cooperate with Bord na Móna, adjoining local authorities including Roscommon and Westmeath County Council to facilitate, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, this potential in both Longford bogs and areas where bogs straddle the County boundary. The development of the bogs for amenity purposes will not exclude them for other purposes such as the generation of renewable energy. It is envisaged that these types of activities can be mutually inclusive and developed in an integrated way.

TOU 3: The Council will seek to facilitate and promote, where appropriate the development of the North Shannon Wilderness Park and Corlea Archaeological and Biodiversity Project.

TOU 4: The Council will promote the growth of the County's indoor and outdoor tourism sector and the necessary supportive facilities, providing an array of activities in order to diversify the range of tourist experiences available in Longford and extend the tourist season.

TOU 5: The Council will promote the development and strengthening of the overall value of Longford as a destination, through mirroring the quality of the natural environment with improving the appeal of the built environment of settlements and providing opportunities to establish niche destination facilities throughout the County.

TOU 6: The Council will promote and facilitate the sustainable utilisation of the County's existing natural, historical, cultural, geographic, aesthetic and aquatic assets for tourism purposes that will act as key economic drivers capable of stimulating further growth and development opportunities. It is envisioned that this will benefit the tourism assets themselves through increasing knowledge and potential financial assistance for conservation and enhancement initiatives. In settlements this can positively contribute to urban regeneration and in rural areas can provide avenues of broader rural diversification, creating employment opportunities and enhancing social inclusion and well being, thus reducing isolation and poverty.

TOU 7: The Council shall protect the natural resources upon which tourism is based through the application proper planning and sustainable development standards as promoted by this plan. In particular tourism projects shall be developed in a sympathetic manner in regard to the environment, heritage and amenities of Longford.

TOU 8:

The Council will support the development of angling tourism initiatives throughout the County, building on the amenity and recreational potential of the angling sector. In this regard the Council shall facilitate the development and upgrading of angler access, stands, car parks and their associated facilities, in accordance and consultation with relevant management strategies, key stakeholders and bodies including Inland Fisheries Ireland. Where appropriate the Council shall promote an interregional approach in this regard, in association with Leitrim, Roscommon, Westmeath and Offaly in order to enhance the mid and north Shannon tourism area.

TOU 9: The Council will promote and facilitate the delivery of key accommodation facilities in both urban and rural locations. In order to attract new visitors and to improve occupancy levels, the Council will encourage;

- a) Improving the quality of existing accommodation and,
- b) The development of new accommodation facilities from quality hostels and budget hotels to high end luxury hotels and resorts. Rental cottages also need to be encouraged.

As part of this the Council will;

- support and prioritise the development of key accommodation facilities in the Longford Town area which will support the leisure and business tourism sectors, maximising on Longford's central location nationally,

**B1 B2 B3 B4
PHH1 S1 W1 W2
W3 M1 M2 M3 C1
CH1 CH2 L1**

**B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1
S1 W1 W2 W3 M1
M2 M3 C1 CH1
CH2 L1**

<p>- support and prioritise the development of accommodation facilities in other settlement centres and rural areas including Country House Hotels and niche developments,</p> <p>- support accommodation facilities that will bridge the gap in rural areas which currently acts as a constraint in realising the potential of outdoor experiences and other niche markets which rely on the rural product.</p> <p>The Council will also encourage the development of accommodation facilities that have capacity to draw tourists to County Longford, including those which have potential to do this over a wider area for instance through sharing a common brand, and encouraging the development of recognised and successful tourism concepts such as resort development including the European forest tourism resort model.</p> <p>TOU 10: The Council will seek to facilitate, where appropriate, the provision of high quality tourism products and services within the County in order to increase the level of activity and the sustainability of the tourism market. In particular the provision of quality hotels and visitor accommodation facilities, and the development of tourism projects, facilities, activities and attractions shall be a priority. The promotion of events, festivals and the development of linked tourist trails that showcase the wealth of natural, historical and cultural heritage of the County and contribute towards its unique identity and quality of life shall be encouraged. In particular the expansion of Newcastle House Hotel and Woods for tourism, accommodation and educational purposes shall be promoted.</p> <p>TOU 11: The Council shall promote appropriate innovation and entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, subject to other policies of this plan, including those relating to Settlement, Amenities, Environment, Heritage and technical design standards. In particular, the Council shall support the development and enhancement of linked tourism trails throughout the County in accordance with the Strategic Spatial Tourism Plan.</p> <p>TOU 12: The Council will promote the local food, drinks and artisans market, through encouraging the development of key establishments and premises, promoting festivals and events such as farmers markets and ensuring the creation of an attractive environment, public realm and provision of the right setting to enhance the quality of the food and drink experience, thus improving overall experiences and contributing to the social and economic well being for locals also. As part of this Longford County Council will promote the development of 'cultural quarters', recognising the opportunity that Connolly Barracks in Longford Town presents and the area adjoining Ballymahon Library.</p> <p>TOU 13: The Council will promote growth in the events (including sports, music, agriculture, tourism and aqua-tourism, arts and cultural events) and festivals sector to facilitate the development of Longford as an events destination. Developments of this nature, including the necessary supporting infrastructure, will be encouraged in order to improve tourism and local businesses, to enhance the profile, image and identity of the County, offer environmental, social and cultural benefits, extend the tourist season and promote interest in particular locations.</p> <p>TOU 14: Subject to normal planning criteria, including environmental and landscape provisions, the Council shall support appropriate Agri-tourism initiatives in the form of on-farm visitor accommodation and associated and spin-off activities such as health farms, heritage and nature trails, pony trekking and water-based activities.</p> <p>TOU 15: The Council shall encourage and support increased coordination, cohesion and linkages between its own departments and agencies such as Fáilte Ireland (East and Midlands), Waterways Ireland, the Regional Fisheries Board, National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Regional Assembly, in the promotion and assessment of tourism related developments.</p> <p>TOU 16: In accordance with specific policies outlined below, the Council shall encourage clustering of tourism related developments in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise benefit to the local economy through the establishment of synergistic operational links, e.g. links between accommodation providers and outdoor activity pursuits • Ensure maximum return from infrastructural investment. <p>TOU 17: The Council shall promote and encourage initiatives in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of a signage committee to develop an integrated signage theme for tourist attractions, which shall include strict specifications in terms of appearance, materials and location. • Public transport and potential alternatives to the use of private cars to access visitor attractions. • Development of best-practice guidelines on energy efficiency, waste management, and recycling in tourism facilities and enterprises. • Support of rural diversification and eco-tourism. • The use of the Principles of Ecotourism. • Support and promote the development of a medium to large scale visitor and tourism facility with associated 				
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<p>accommodation in the County in accordance with the strategic tourism objectives of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midlands Region 2010-2022.</p> <p>TOU 18: The Council shall promote and develop opportunities to enable the designation of Lough Ree as a National Park, recognising the untapped wealth of cultural, historical, natural, aesthetic and economic values that Lough Ree, its Islands and environs presents. As part of this, the Council will facilitate the establishment of a supporting Visitor's Centre at Lanesboro and promote and require a coordinated and targeted approach to the provision of mooring facilities, harbours and supportive onshore facilities, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, at key locations including Lanesboro, Inchcleraun, Barley Harbour, Saints Island, Derry and the Red Bridge (see Appendix 20). The Council will seek to optimise the delivery of this through greater collaboration with key stakeholders and funding organisations. 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>TOU 19: The Council supports the restoration and development of Connolly Barracks and encourages the potential of locating the County Museum within the Barracks, enhancing the destination pulling power of Longford Town. As part of this, it is policy of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide for the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings and grounds. - Encourage existing and develop further uses including community facilities. - Encourage the establishment of a County Museum and traditional music archive at Connolly Barracks, to collect, conserve and interpret the County's history and heritage. - Encourage multifunctional uses and develop a focal square as part of the cultural quarter of Longford Town. <p>TOU 20: a) The Council shall promote and encourage the development of "Honeypot" tourism developments at the locations indicated below. These settlements have been chosen due to their proximity to particular features and the possibility that these settlements may act as a base from which these features may be enjoyed and utilised in a managed way without detrimental impact to the features themselves, while bringing benefits to the towns in which they are located.</p> <p>North Shannon Wilderness Park Villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbeysrule – River Inny, Abbey, Airfield, Royal Canal • Ballymahon – River Inny, Red bridge, Barnacor, Derrynagallia, Lough Ree, Royal Canal, Newcastle, Lough Drum, Ballymahon Festival • Newtowncashel – Scultor Park, Lough Ree and Barley Harbor. • Lanesboro – River Shannon, Lough Ree, Coomons North. In particular with a view to developing the amenity area to the south of the town adjoining Lough Ree for visitor and tourism development and a lake side walking/cycling route to Newtowncashel and Ballymahon. Also the possible bridging point for a walking cycling route to Roscommon and the west. • Keenagh –Royal Canal, harbour, CorleaTrackway Centre • Kilashee – Royal Canal Village • Clondra – Royal Canal, River Camlin, River Shannon <p>Mid County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ardagh – Heritage Village • Legan – Summer Schools, fishing <p>North County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aughnaccliffe – Lough Gowna • Ballinamuck – 1798 associations, Lough Sallagh, coarse fishing • Granard – Granardkille, Lough Kinale, Derragh Lough, Lough Gowna, Black Pigs Dyke, Ballywillin Rail Station. • Ballinalee – General McKeon and War of Independence. • Drumlish – Rural North County Town. <p>Mid Shannon Wilderness Park Villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Mid Shannon Tourist Trail (See Map Insert 5). Any development of tourism infrastructure along the route of the Mid Shannon Tourist Trail will be subject to Appropriate Assessment, in compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. <p>Mid and South County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Longford Literary Theme and Tourist Trail (see Map Insert 4)• Development of a 'Rebel Longford' theme 				
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<p>and tourist trail for the north of the County (see Map Insert 3).</p> <p>b) Specific opportunities for tourism projects will be particularly encouraged at Longford Town, Carriglass, Newcastle House, Corlea, Lanesboro, Clondra and Ballybranigan Harbour as indicated in Appendix 3. This section should be read in conjunction with the zoning explanations contained as part of this appendix. These areas have been identified on the basis of the potential for existing tourism to be strengthened, and a recognition that high quality and advantageous tourism projects in these areas could be realised over the life span of the plan, counteracting the current 'tourism vacuum' that exists within the County. It is also considered that tourism developments in these areas could be easily linked into the main fabric of the adjacent settlements, thus creating potential benefits not only for the immediate site but the adjoining settlements also.</p> <p>i) Clondra; Clondra is the terminus on the entire stretch of the Royal Canal. Facilitating the development of tourism within this settlement would create a strategic tourism asset within the County. Clondra provides a link from the Royal Canal via the Camlin River and/or the Cloondara Canal to the Shannon River. The Shannon from this point is navigable until Athlone and also provides a potential link into the Erne waterway. Given the strategic nature of Clondra on these stretches of water infrastructure, it is considered that this provides an excellent opportunity to develop tourism within the County.</p> <p>ii) Ballybranigan Harbour, Ballymahon; Ballybranigan Harbour on the Royal Canal provides an excellent opportunity to build on an existing tourism asset and develop this in a manner that improves the attractiveness of the area for tourism development. As identified in the 'Waterways Corridor Study 2004- Shannon River and Royal Canal' (The Heritage Council), Ballybranigan Harbour previously functioned as the Harbour for the nearby town of Ballymahon. It is identified within the aforementioned study that the settlement of Ballymahon currently has little integration with the Royal Canal and that improvements to Ballybranigan Harbour, including the refurbishment of old canal related structures will potentially generate increased use of the Canal as an amenity. It is considered that such development could be linked into the fabric of the existing settlement of Ballymahon, providing potential tourism revenue for the settlement and supporting the local and wider economy. This will in turn support the status of Ballymahon in the County and Region's settlement hierarchy as defined in Section 2.3.3 of this plan. The development of existing tourism infrastructure on the Royal Canal is an essential component in improving inland cruising which is vital to the Midlands Economy.</p> <p>iii) Newcastle Woods provides a unique opportunity to develop part of the woodland for a medium to large scale tourism and visitor facility with related accommodation. A walkway along the Inny River on both sides shall be developed with and possibly a bridge across the River on the eastern end of the wood to provide a looped walk. The northern section of Newcastle Wood should be improved to facilitate public access and a better visitor experience. The selective replanting with a larger percentage of hardwood on appropriate land shall be encouraged.</p> <p>TOU 21: The Council will support and facilitate the development of Blueways throughout the County, in order to enhance the recreational and tourism potential of the County's Inland Waterways as illustrated at Appendix 19. This includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals that facilitate the development of the existing Shannon Blueway [Carrick on Shannon- Drumshanbo open/Carrick on Shannon- Rooskey (concept stage)/ Camlin Loop] • The Camlin Blueway • The Royal Canal Blueway • The Inny Blueway • The Lough Gowna/Erne Blueway • Shannon/ Lough Ree Canoe Blueway (from River Inny to Lanesborough) <p>TOU 22:</p> <p>a) Holiday and second home development shall be predominantly directed towards designated settlements to prevent over development of areas of sensitive natural resources and to protect affordability of housing for permanent rural communities.</p> <p>b) Redevelopment of brownfield sites and/or appropriate renovation of traditional buildings (including protected structures where appropriate) will be considered for the provision of such accommodation.</p> <p>c) The renovation of existing ancillary structures associated with a permanent residence may also be considered subject to normal planning criteria.</p> <p>d) In smaller towns and villages, particularly those identified as honeypot locations in the plan, care shall be taken to ensure that holiday home development is not of a nature or scale that threatens the viability or undermines the unique identity of the settlement.</p>				
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<p>TOU 23: The Council shall continue to engage with the following agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways Ireland, particularly in relation to the development of the Royal Canal Spur into Longford Town and the upgrading of its associated infrastructure. • Inland Fisheries Ireland with regard to the enhancement of the angling tourism product and the development of associated infrastructure. • National Parks and Wildlife Service, Coillte, ESB/Bord Na Mona with regard to the potential for tourism related uses of cutaway bogland <p>Tourism Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To encourage the development of more opportunities for visitors to enjoy and learn more about the natural beauty, biodiversity, culture and heritage of the area. 2. To maximise the potential of tourism as a pillar of economic growth that will contribute to the balanced economic development of the County and the Tourism Industry in the Region. 3. To facilitate the delivery of the Tourism Strategy as illustrated by Diagram 4.1: Illustrative graphic of Longford's Tourism Strategy for the purposes of the Development Plan, prioritising the development of flagship attractions and tourism product within the County. 4. To encourage and support tourism developments that have the ability to extend the tourist season including through enhancing visitor interest and developing growth in the visitor economy. 5. To encourage and support tourism development that has capacity to draw tourists to County Longford, including those which have potential to do this over a wider area for instance through sharing a common brand, and encouraging the development of recognised and successful tourism concepts such as resort development including the forest tourism resort model. 6. To maximise benefits for the Tourism sector and improve the visitor experience and tourism product, the Council promotes the need to seek inter-authority and inter-agency co-operation and collaboration, providing an integrated approach involving local authorities, the private sector and Government agencies, exploring a wider regional and national perspective and identifying and prioritising key initiatives. 7. To build on existing activities and services and develop new businesses and services to produce and bring a comprehensive set of active locations and holiday products. 8. Improve the function of settlements throughout Longford as tourism destinations from land or water. 9. To develop master plans to improve the function, capacity and sustainability of Longford's settlements to service tourism including accommodation facilities such as Newcastle House Hotel. 10. To develop a comprehensive and integrated system of Longford visitor trails for walking, cycling, riding and canoeing including the provision of supporting infrastructure. 11. To develop and promote products featuring the natural beauty, culture and heritage of the area 12. To enhance the areas reputation and visibility and capacity to provide active holiday packages and increase the number of visitor bed spaces in Longford including at Newcastle House Hotel. 13. To increase the opportunities for visitors to engage in activities on land or water. 14. To promote the utilisation of the cultural, historical, natural, aesthetic and economic assets presented by Lough Ree, its islands and environs, through the designation of the area as a National Park and identification of Lanesboro as a base for a Visitors' Centre for the park subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive. 15. To develop themed opportunities to access, enjoy and understand the area's significant archaeological, early Christian Heritage, natural and historical locations. 16. To attract more visitors touring Ireland to spend time in Longford. 17. To consider and bring forward programmes both to protect and raise the profile nationally and internationally of the Lough Ree, Lough Gowna, Royal Canal and the proposed Mid Shannon Wilderness Park areas. 				
<p>Commentary:</p>				
<p>The evaluation of these provisions relating to Tourism, which either directly or indirectly facilitate new development, is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7.</p>				
<p>TOU 7 provides an undertaking to "protect the natural resources upon which tourism is based" thereby contributing towards the protection of biodiversity an flora and fauna, soil, water resources, air and (indirectly) human beings (SEOs B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 C1).</p>				

TOU 6 and TOU 4 would contribute towards efforts to achieve sustainable mobility (**SEO C1**) as well as contributing towards sustainable waste management (**SEO M3**).

TOU 2 would contribute towards compliance with environmental legislation thereby contributing towards the protection of various environmental components.

The development of trails such as the Mid Shannon Tourist Trail would have the potential to contribute towards a better management of tourism in this sensitive area thereby contributing towards the protection of sensitive habitats at certain locations. Emerging findings from the examination of areas within the County Clare Geopark show that managing tourists at sites would contribute towards the meeting of requirements under the Habitats Directive. Nonetheless, the development of trails (upon environmental components including soil, water, landscape, cultural heritage, emissions to air and waste) presents a variety of potentially adverse effects that would be likely to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. Taking into account the measures which have been already integrated into the Plan which provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is determined that potential significant effects arising from the development of trails will be mitigated.

The Tourism Strategy is a high level provision which has the potential to both contribute towards a better management of tourism in sensitive areas and present potential adverse environmental effects on all environmental components. Taking into account the measures which have been already integrated into the Plan which provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is determined that potential effects arising will be mitigated so as not to be significant.

Mining and Aggregates

<p>MA 1: Consideration shall be given to the need for the development in terms of local and national importance and the impact of the development on the local economy in determining an application of this nature (whether for a new quarry or an extension to an existing quarry).</p> <p>MA 2: In assessing an application for a quarry/quarry extension the following shall be taken into consideration and where necessary the required information submitted as part of any application:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Nature and quantity of material to be extracted Location of where materials are to be transported to and used Location - relative to residential areas, areas of geological interest, aquifers and groundwater, environmentally sensitive areas, special amenity areas and areas of archaeological potential in particular. Proposed working life of quarry and the nature and extent of operations including ancillary operations. The nature of the full development works such as buildings, site offices, stockpiles, service roads, storage of soil and waste materials and settling ponds. Working methods and hours of operation - frequency of blasting etc. Noise and dust generation and control. Waste disposal - waste rock, contaminated soil etc. Water supply and discharge requirements and impact on water table. Transportation and potential impact on the road network in the area. Effects on amenity of the area and in particular residential and visual amenity. Reinstatement proposals - a financial bond is also required by the Planning Authority to safeguard against non-reinstatement; It should be noted that the record of past restoration by the developer will be taken into account. Retention of existing screening and installation of additional screening of site, either by natural or alternative means. <p>MA 3: Any proposed development which may impact on areas identified for potential mineral extraction shall be referred to the relevant section of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources for observations/comment prior to a grant of permission/approval being obtained. In particular, the zinc/lead deposit at Keel is recognised.</p>	<p>B4 B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M3 C1</p>
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Commentary:

While facilitating economic development and potentially supporting rural populations (**SEO B4**), extractive industries have the potential to impact upon various environmental components including biodiversity (**SEOs B1 B2 B3**), human health (**SEO PHH1**), water resources (**SEOs W1 W2**), soil functions (**SEO S1**), the landscape (**SEO L1**) and cultural heritage (**SEOs CH1 CH2**). Impacts upon flood risk and water services would also have to be considered (**SEOs W3 M1 M2**). Consideration of the information required under MA 2 has the potential to contribute towards environmental protection.

Rural Enterprise and Home Based Economic Activity

<p>RUE 1: Consideration shall be given to the establishment, or suitable expansion of, small scale enterprise in rural areas subject to compliance with normal development management requirements and technical criteria.</p> <p>RUE 2: Proposals for the development or expansion of small scale rural enterprises will be determined in accordance with the policies and requirements of this plan, including the Core Strategy, and where it is demonstrated that the proposed location is suitable and that the proposal would not be viable at an alternative location.</p> <p>RUE 3: In assessing an application for the establishment or expansion of small scale rural enterprises, the following shall</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 L1</p>	
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<p>be taken into consideration and where necessary the required information submitted as part of any application:-</p> <p>a) The contribution that the proposed development will make to the rural economy.</p> <p>b) The nature and scale of the proposal.</p> <p>c) That the locational requirements of the proposal can be more readily accommodated at the proposed location than an urban setting.</p> <p>d) Potential impact on public health, environment and amenity considerations.</p> <p>e) Transportation and potential impact on the road network in the area.</p> <p>HE 1: Consideration shall be given to the establishment, or suitable expansion of, small scale home based economic activity where the main use of the dwelling remains as residential and subject to compliance with normal development management requirements and technical criteria. Potential applicants are advised to consult the Planning Authority regarding any proposed home based economic activity at pre-planning stage.</p>				
<p>Commentary: The evaluation of these provisions is consistent with the evaluation of the chosen strategy for the Plan (Scenario 3) as detailed in full in Section 7. Compliance with normal development management requirements and technical criteria would contribute towards environmental protection.</p>				

8.7.6 Chapter 5: Infrastructure

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p>Roads and Parking</p> <p>ROADS 1: To provide the highest quality road access and capacity on routes of economic importance to the County, thereby capitalising on the central location of Longford in a national context, increasing its attractiveness as a destination in itself and a location for settlement and industrial, commercial and business development.</p> <p>ROADS 2: To provide a road network which is safe and efficient for all road users, cognisant of the requirements of all traffic, including motorised vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>ROADS 3: Promote sustainability in road use and the reduction of negative impacts on the natural environment including carbon emissions where possible through good design practice.</p> <p>ROADS 4: To maintain and improve the capacity of existing arterial routes of national importance within the County in the context of the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines, including the relief of bottlenecks at strategic locations.</p> <p>ROADS 5: To maintain and improve the capacity of routes of strategic regional and local importance within the County and promote improved access between the major settlements of the County and to important centres in the Midlands region, particularly those identified in the Regional Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>ROADS 6: To provide, where possible, for the establishment of integrated transport nodes.</p> <p>ROADS 7: To ensure that infrastructural policies and investments assist and enhance the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the physical attractiveness of the County and minimise negative impacts on its background environment.</p> <p>ROADS 8: It is the policy of the Council to require a license prior to each proposed instance of road opening. Works shall only be carried out in accordance with the terms of the licence granted.</p> <p>ROADS 9: It is the policy of the Council to request the provision of specific information on the potential impact of proposed developments on the roads network of the County. All applications will be required to submit the required roads form as outlined within the Longford County Council Planning Pack, or any subsequent update. For specific roads requirements in relation to individual development types, please refer to the design standards section associated with that type.</p> <p>ROADS 10: It is the policy of the Council to reserve lands in appropriate areas for the improvement, maintenance and management of road traffic systems throughout the County.</p> <p>Lands shall be reserved on proposed route corridors for the following schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N5 Longford – Scramogue Scheme 	<p>B4 B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 L1 CH1 CH2</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N4 – N63 – N5 By-Pass to the South of Longford. • N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) • N55 Granard By-Pass • N63 Killashee By-Pass • N55 Edgeworthstown By-Pass • N55 Ballymahon By-Pass • N55 Tonywardan-Ardagullion Improvement • N63 Barnacor Road Re-alignment • N55 Ballymahon to Kilcurry Re-alignment <p>Where these corridors have been identified they will be protected from further development prior to the establishment of a final route. Where corridors have not yet been developed the Council shall pursue the development of these corridors and shall protect corridors from development once established. Where route selection corridors exist, it is the policy of Longford County Council, in consultation with the NRA, to ensure that the final route is identified within a reasonable timeframe.</p> <p>ROADS 11: Routes of strategic importance within the County, as outlined below, shall be protected from further access creation and intensification of existing accesses and development on national routes shall be actively discouraged. Development on the Regional Routes outlined below shall be carefully considered to preserve their strategic role and safeguard the strategic function of the national road network, in accordance with the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N4 to Dublin and Sligo& N5 to Castlebar • N55 to Cavan and Athlone & N63 to Galway • R194 Longford to Virginia • R198 Longford/Arvagh • R392 Lanesboro/Mullingar, • R393 Longford to Ballynacarrigy/Mullingar • R395 Edgeworthstown to Castlepollard/Delvin • R396 Granard to Castlepollard • R397 Longford/Ballymahon • R398 Derraghan to Brickeens • R399 Ratharney to Kilcurry <p>Works to accesses along these routes shall be assessed according to the relevant technical criteria, including the NRA Design Manual for Roads & Bridges (DMRB).</p> <p>The corridor for the Mullingar to Roosky Road Scheme shall be safeguarded from development in accordance with Policy Roads 10 of the County Development Plan and the requirements of Section 2.9 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines. See Appendix 1A Lands Bounding Longford Town Environs and Appendix ... N4 Preferred Route Corridor (Map 1, 2 and 3).</p> <p>ROADS 12: The Council shall undertake a strategic review of the road network throughout the County in order to identify further routes of strategic economic, social or other importance throughout the County. Once identified, these strategic routes shall be protected from inappropriate development.</p> <p>ROADS 13: Applications for planning permission for developments proposed within any NRA study areas or along national roads shall be forwarded to the NRA for evaluation and comment, which shall be taken into consideration in the assessment of the application. Where route selection corridors exist, it is the policy of Longford County Council, in consultation with the NRA, to ensure that the final route is identified within a reasonable timeframe.</p> <p>ROADS 14: Where appropriate, proposals for development shall be accompanied by traffic and transport assessments and/or road safety audits and, where relevant, should address the proposal and any potential cumulative impact in association with neighbouring developments on the road network.</p> <p>ROADS 15: Proposals for development in the vicinity of interchanges and junctions on National Road Infrastructure shall, where appropriate, submit a transport study clearly assessing the implications of the proposal on the operation and performance of the relevant junctions/interchanges.</p> <p>ROADS 16: It is an objective of the Council to prepare access strategies for any lands that adjoin national roads in areas subject to 60 kph speed limits or 100 kph speed limits in relation to settlements that are covered by Zoning Strategies as set out under Appendix 1.</p>				
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<p>ROADS 17: It is the policy of the Council, as a consequence of the revised Department of the Environment "Traffic Signs Manual", the requirements of the Health and Safety Authority, the County Council's Traffic Management Policy and the Major Emergency Plan, to improve existing local (Regional and Local Primary) roads in order to create effective routes for the diversion of traffic to facilitate emergencies and road improvement works on National and Regional Routes in the County. In accordance with this policy the following roads have been identified and lands along these roads may be reserved for their improvement:</p> <p>LP – 1016 From Monaduff 3 roads to Derawley 4 roads LP – 1019 From Kiltycreevagh 3 roads (East) to Kiltycreevagh 4 roads LP – 1020 From Kiltycreevagh 3 roads (East) to Cloonelly 3 roads LP – 1022 From Gaique Bridge to Monaduff 3 roads LP – 1024 From Cloonelly 3 roads to Legga 4 roads (North, Main Road) LP – 1025 From Gaique 4 roads to Gaique Bridge (at School) R398 Derraghan to Brickeens</p> <p>This policy shall not preclude the creation of new accesses or the widening or intensification of existing accesses along these roads but such developments shall be subject to assessment in accordance with the relevant technical criteria.</p> <p>ROADS 18: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate essential safety improvements on regional and local roads in order to enhance the efficiency and capacity of the regional and local road network. In accordance with this policy the following roads have been identified and lands along these roads may be reserved for their improvement:</p> <p>R198 - Gaique to Camagh R392 - Forgney R397 - Terlicken to Kenagh via Corryena L-1040 - Esker to Killeenatruan via Ennybegs L1023 & L1024 - Leggagh L-1077 & L-1085 - Killasonna</p> <p>This policy shall not preclude the creation of new accesses or the widening or intensification of existing accesses along these roads but such developments shall be subject to assessment in accordance with the relevant technical criteria.</p> <p>ROADS 19: It is policy of the Council to refuse permission for the parking of vehicles, trailers etc that use the road network within the County (including on National, Regional and Local Roads) for commercial purposes, whether for provision of services, advertising for the sale of individual vehicles. Such development is considered to constitute a traffic hazard to road users and therefore will not be considered favourably.</p> <p>ROADS 20: The Council shall consider the provision of a suitably designed and privately developed commercial vehicle rest stop/park outside of the urban area, subject to the provision of safe access and circulation, suitable public facilities, adequate screening and the compatibility of adjacent land uses.</p> <p>ROADS 21: It is the policy of the council to restrict the use of National, Regional and Local roads for advertising purposes in line with the Planning and Development Act and to implement the provisions of the NRA policy document "Policy on the provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads" and the document "Longford County Council Policy on Advertising Signs."</p> <p>PKG 1: Where settlements are covered by a Local Area Plan or Village Policy Statement, provision for parking shall be included in these documents.</p> <p>PKG 2: The provision of adequate parking facilities shall form part of the assessment of any application for development. Where it is not possible to provide parking for the proposed development within the site, charges will be levied for parking provided on street or by the Local Authority in accordance with an approved schedule of charges.</p> <p>PKG 3: In the cases of certain activities where it can be demonstrated to the Planning Authority that there is a clear time demarcation between uses, dual use of parking spaces may be permitted. Such assessments shall be determined on a site by site basis and according to their merits.</p> <p>PKG 4: Town and village character shall also be considered in terms of proposed road widening or traffic calming.</p> <p>PKG 5: Adequate space shall be made for the servicing of the facility, including loading and unloading of vehicles, which should be provided for within the site curtilage and should not interfere with the operation of adjacent public thoroughfares.</p> <p>PKG 6: Parking for people with disabilities shall normally be required at the following rates in conjunction with proposed new developments:</p>				
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<p>• Buildings not normally visited by the public: Minimum of one space of appropriate dimensions in every 25 standard spaces, up to the first 100 spaces, thereafter, one space per 100 standard spaces or part thereof.</p> <p>• Shops and buildings with public access: Minimum one space of appropriate dimensions in the first 25 standard spaces, minimum 3 in 25-50 standard spaces, five in 50-100 standard spaces and additional three per every 100 standard spaces in excess thereof.</p> <p>• Spaces shall be a minimum of 3m wide and clearly marked with a highly visible symbol. Spaces should be located at the nearest point possible to the entrance to the facility served.</p> <p>PKG 7: Cycle Parking will normally be required in development schemes and the Council shall promote and encourage the provision of cycle spaces in public car-parks and appropriate locations in towns and villages throughout the County. Where appropriate, cycle spaces shall be provided in prominent and secure locations convenient to building entrances.</p> <p>PKG 8: The provision of coach and bus parking shall be investigated in appropriate areas of the towns and villages of the County.</p> <p>PKG 9: It is the policy of the Council to discourage unauthorised parking of commercial vehicles on public roads.</p> <p>PKG 10: Parking provision shall normally be provided in accordance with the standards outlined in the table entitled 'Parking Standards'.</p> <p>PKG 11: In general, parking/loading facilities shall be provided to the following required dimensions (or any future update that may be issued);</p> <p>Car Parking Bay: 5mx2.5m (end on) 6mx2.5m (parallel to kerb) Loading Bays: 15mx3m (HGV) 6mx3m (Small Van) Circulation Aisle: 6m in width</p> <p>PKG 12: It is the policy of the council to support the Government's Electric Transport Programme by facilitating the roll-out of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. The provision of Electrical Vehicle parking spaces shall be investigated in appropriate areas of the towns and villages of the County.</p>				
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Commentary:

The Plan's Roads provisions would contribute towards sustaining rural populations (SEO B4).

Arising both directly from the development and operation of roads and parking and indirectly from facilitating non-transport development these provisions would potentially conflict with:

- protecting biodiversity and flora and fauna (SEOs B1 B2 B3)
- protecting human health (SEO PHH1)
- protecting soil function and the status of water bodies (SEOs S1 W1 W2)
- minimising increases in flood risk (SEO W3)
- maximising sustainable mobility (SEO C1)
- minimising impacts upon archaeological and architectural heritage, including context (SEOs CH1 CH2);
- minimising visual impacts (SEO L1)
- the provision of adequate and appropriate water services (SEO M1 M2)
- minimising waste levels (SEO M3)

Potential conflicts would be mitigated by the measures which have been integrated into the Plan and are identified in Section 9 of this report.

Policy ROADS 3 would contribute towards the protection of various environmental components and a number of policies could facilitate contributions towards efforts to maximise sustainable mobility (e.g. ROADS 2 and ROADS 6).

Pedestrians and Cyclists

<p>PED 1: The Planning Authority aims to improve the attractiveness and usability of the pedestrian environment of the County, particularly in residential areas, designated settlements and in areas of high amenity.</p> <p>PED 2: The Council shall promote the use of alternative transport to the private car through encouraging enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>PED 3: Facilitate the provision of cycleways and footpaths, particularly in conjunction with new housing developments. The Council shall also promote the potential development of long distance walking routes, particularly those with historical and cultural associations and links to other routes in adjacent Counties.</p> <p>PED 4: The Council shall promote the organisation of traffic in towns and villages in order to separate motor vehicular,</p>	<p>B4 PHH1 C1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
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<p>bicycles and pedestrian traffic. This is to be carried out in accordance with the 'National Manual for the provision of Cycle Facilities in Urban Areas', 'The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' and 'The National Cycle Manual'.</p> <p>PED 5: The Council shall investigate the provision of dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes along routes of high amenity.</p> <p>PED 6: The Council shall support the appropriate provision of cycle strategies for settlements throughout the County and where necessary and appropriate, reserve lands for the provision of off road cycling tracks and cycling/pedestrian infrastructure as identified as part of any such cycling strategy prepared.</p> <p>PED 7: The Council shall support the appropriate provision of cycle strategies for settlements throughout the County and where necessary and appropriate, reserve lands for the provision of off road cycling tracks and cycling/pedestrian infrastructure as identified as part of any such cycling strategy prepared.</p> <p>PED 8: It is policy of the Council to pursue the redevelopment of the towpath of the Royal Canal for pedestrian/cycle use, providing linkages with Longford Town to the River Shannon in Clondra and to the towns of Kenagh, Ballymahon and Abbeysrule and to link with the National Cycle Network at Mullingar via established cycle routes in Westmeath.</p>				
<p>Commentary: These provisions would both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute towards: maximising sustainable mobility (SEO C1), protecting human health (SEO PHH1) and sustaining rural populations (SEO B4); and Arising both directly from the development of infrastructure and indirectly from facilitating non-transport development, potentially conflict with various environmental components. <p>Potential conflicts would be mitigated by the measures which have been integrated into the Plan and are identified in Section 9 of this report.</p>				
<p>Public Transport – Rail and Bus</p>				
<p>PT 1: The Council shall promote the facilitation of a public transport system and development patterns that works towards the integration of spatial planning and transport.</p> <p>PT 2: The Council shall support the provision of transport initiatives that promote the development of Rural Transport Networks that enhance social inclusion of rural communities.</p> <p>RL 1: To facilitate and promote the provision of a fast, efficient and user-friendly rail service which maximises the economic and social potential of County Longford and recognises its strategic location within the Country.</p> <p>RL 2: To facilitate the expansion and development of existing and any future proposed rail facilities and supporting infrastructure within the County.</p> <p>RL 3: To support the development of intra-regional rail linkages in accordance with Regional policy.</p> <p>RL 4: To utilise the existing rail service and promote its use as an alternative mode of transport in line with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>RL 5: To concentrate development which may be aimed at those commuting to and from Dublin within close proximity of existing rail links and to facilitate, where practical, improved access for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>RL 6: To facilitate and promote greater integration of public and private transport modes.</p> <p>RL 7: To promote the use of the rail system in relation to the industrial and commercial development of the County.</p> <p>RL 8: The heritage value of the entire rail network is acknowledged and, as such, the retention, conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of this valuable resource is promoted.</p> <p>RL 9: The amenity value of the disused rail network is acknowledged and, as such, the development of these networks, as appropriate, to support walking and cycling in the County is encouraged.</p> <p>BUS 1: To facilitate and promote the provision of an efficient and user-friendly bus service which maximises the economic and social potential of County Longford and recognises its strategic location within the Country.</p> <p>BUS 2: To promote the improvement of bus services to further the principles of social inclusion and sustainable development, including the national rural transport initiatives and potential medical transport initiatives connecting local, regional and national facilities.</p> <p>BUS 3: To facilitate the provision of an integrated transport system for the Town and its environs and the County as a whole, with specific investigation into the potential provision of a dedicated bus terminus at Longford and an Urban shuttle service.</p> <p>BUS 4: To provide, subject to consultation with Bus Eireann and local groups, bus stop facilities in towns and villages. This may include, where feasible and appropriate, bus parking facilities in suitable locations, particularly in town centres and areas of high amenity.</p> <p>BUS 5: To provide, subject to consultation with Bus Eireann and representatives of schools and local groups, school bus stop facilities in the vicinity of local schools.</p>	<p>B4 PHH1 C1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

Commentary:

These provisions would contribute towards: maximising sustainable mobility (**SEO C1**), protecting human health (**SEO PHH1**) and sustaining rural populations (**SEO B4**).

Arising both directly from the development infrastructure and indirectly from facilitating non-transport development the objectives would potentially conflict with:

- protecting biodiversity and flora and fauna (**SEOs B1 B2 B3**)
- protecting human health (**SEO PHH1**)
- protecting soil function and the status of water bodies (**SEOs S1 W1 W2**)
- minimising increases in flood risk (**SEO W3**)
- minimising impacts upon archaeological and architectural heritage, including context (**SEOs CH1 CH2**);
- minimising visual impacts (**SEO L1**)
- the provision of adequate and appropriate water services (**SEO M1 M2**)
- minimising waste levels (**SEO M3**)

Potential conflicts would be mitigated by the measures which have been integrated into the Plan and are identified in Section 9 of this report.

Public Transport – Air

AIR 1: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate and promote the development of Abbeyshrule airfield as a Midlands Regional Airport, subject to the relevant development management standards.

AIR 2: The potential expansion of Air Facilities at Abbeyshrule shall be considered in the context of the surrounding heritage features including the architectural and amenity value of the village and the Royal Canal.

**B4 B1 B2 B3
PHH1 S1 W1 W2
M1 CH1 CH2 L1**

**B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1
W1 W2 W3 M1 M2
M3 C1 CH1 CH2
L1**

Commentary:

The development of Abbeyshrule airfield may have to be accompanied by significant amounts of public and private transport infrastructure and services and water services (**M1 M2**). Development of greenfield lands to support this upgrade would have the potential to significantly affect water, soil, ecology and landscape resources. An increase in flights could generate additional amounts of greenhouse gas emissions and noise emissions which could interact with human health. Lower tier assessments would have to give consideration to flight paths utilised by flights to and from other existing airports.

AIR 2 requires any potential expansion to be considered in the context of the surrounding heritage features – this provision would contribute towards the protection of various environmental components.

Potential conflicts would be mitigated by the measures which have been integrated into the Plan and are identified in Section 9 of this report.

Water Supply and Waste Water Services

WS 1: To consolidate the provision of basic environmental services in accordance with appropriate programmes outlined, providing an integrated infrastructural base for the physical, economic and social development of the towns and villages in County Longford.

WS 2: Development shall only be permitted once adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided. Where required, public wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure - which fully complies with requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) including the need to provide secondary treatment and other treatment as required - shall be operational and with adequate capacity to accommodate waste water arising from development, prior to developments being occupied. Discharges arising from this collection and treatment shall also comply with the requirements of the Directive.

WS2(a) It is the policy of Longford County Council to investigate and promote the preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council. Such a Plan may be prepared jointly with other Water Services Authorities.

WS 3: It is the policy of Longford County Council to support the establishment of additional projects in terms of improving existing water supply, establishing new supplies, sewerage mains provision (including the connection of unsewered areas, including individual properties/premises, serviced by septic tanks to the existing and planned sewer network) and improvement of existing treatment plants in the medium and long-term and for their extension to include adjoining residential dwellings.

WS 4: It is the policy of the council to support the establishment and implementation of a small water and sewerage scheme programme for Longford County as part of the Rural Water Programme, established for the construction and upgrade of Group Water Schemes, small public water and sewerage schemes, and the taking in charge of Group Water

**B1 B2 B3 B4
PHH1 S1 W1 W2
M1 M2**

**B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1
W1 W2 W3 M2 M3
CH1 CH2 L1**

C1

<p>Schemes.</p> <p>WS 5: Longford County Council shall promote the extension of existing water supply and wastewater services where required and where resources permit.</p> <p>WS 6: The Council shall support the preparation, establishment and implementation of the following documents insofar as they relate to the Water Services Section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sludge Management Strategy • The Water Conservation Plan, including the promotion of water conservation measures in new and existing developments • The Rural Water Plan <p>WS 7: It is the policy of the Council to support the designation and mapping of wayleaves for the installation and maintenance of water services infrastructure. These wayleaves, once identified, shall be protected from inappropriate development.</p> <p>WS 8: It is the policy of the Council to restrict or prohibit the large-scale development of unserved land where existing serviced land of an appropriate size and nature to meet the reasonable needs of the proposed development exists in the vicinity.</p> <p>WS 9: To ensure that the public drinking water supply of the County complies with relevant EU drinking water standards and to support the extension of supply, where necessary and where resources permit, to meet demand.</p> <p>WS 10: To protect existing sources of municipal water supplies through restricting potentially pollutant development within a specified distance from the proposed source. In this regard, buffer areas are identified in Appendix 4. In these areas it must be demonstrated that development proposals will not have an adverse impact on the proposed water source.</p> <p>WS 11: To protect, within its powers, valuable groundwater sources and important surface water bodies from pollution through infiltration by domestic, agricultural or other sources effluent/pollutant material.</p> <p>WS 12: Where potential municipal water supplies are identified, it shall be the policy of the Council to restrict potentially pollutant development within a specified distance from the proposed source.</p> <p>WS 13: To facilitate where appropriate and where resources permit, the connection of private water supply schemes into the public water supply network of the County.</p> <p>WS 14: The Council shall support the upgrading of Longford Town effluent treatment plant and phased sewerage system improvements shall continue on an on-going basis.</p> <p>WS 15: The Council shall consult the European Drinking Water Framework Directive and the following EPA publications;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbook on the Implementation of the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 278 of 2007) (the Regulations for Water Services Authorities for Public Water Supplies”. • Handbook on the Implementation of the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 278 of 2007) (the Regulations for Water Services Authorities for Private Water Supplies”. <p>The Council shall also consult in parallel with the corresponding and referenced EPA Guidance and Advice Notes in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the County.</p> <p>WS 16: The Council shall consult the relevant European Directives relating to wastewater collection, treatment and discharge along with EPA Guidance and Advice Notes in the provision, maintenance and expansion of water treatment systems in the County.</p> <p>WS 17: The following conditions apply to the takeover of any group water scheme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Permission from group scheme members must be obtained, (i.e. application form to be fully completed and signed by at least two-thirds of the members of the Group Scheme). 2. Wayleave agreements and Right of Ways and as built maps for every location that the watermain traverse private lands must be obtained by the group scheme and registered on the property folios. 3. Ownership of pumphouses, reservoirs etc. must be established in the Group's name. 4. All outstanding liabilities of the Group Water Scheme shall be cleared in full. <p>WS 18: The Council shall implement the relevant recommendations set out in the EPA publication (and any subsequent update) Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland (EPA Office of Environment Enforcement, 2012).</p> <p>WS 19: The Council shall consult the EPA publication “The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland” (and any subsequent update) in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the County.</p>				
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Commentary:

The provision of waste water infrastructure (SEO M1) would benefit the protection of water resources, human health, ecology and soil (SEOs W1 W2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 S1) and support rural populations (SEO B4) as well as providing outflow that would potentially conflict with various components (SEOs W1 W2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 S1 M2). Construction works arising from the provision of waste water infrastructure would potentially impact upon various environmental components including cultural heritage (SEO CH1 CH2) and landscape (SEO L1). Flood risk issues (SEO W3) would have to be addressed. Potential conflicts would be mitigated by measures contained in the Plan (see Section 9 of this report) while some would be mitigated by measures arising out of separate consent procedures.

The provision of drinking water infrastructure (SEO M2) would support rural populations (SEO B4) as well as abstracting water in that would potentially conflict with various components (SEOs W1 W2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 S1). Construction works arising from the provision of waste and drinking water infrastructure would potentially impact upon various environmental components including cultural heritage (SEO CH1 CH2) and landscape (SEO L1). Flood risk issues (SEO W3) would have to be addressed. Potential conflicts would be mitigated by measures contained in the Plan (see Section 9 of this report) while some would be mitigated by measures arising out of separate consent procedures. Maintaining safe drinking water supply would contribute towards the protection of human health (PHH1).

Surface Water, Drainage and Flooding

<p>SW 1: The discharge of surface water run-off and rainwater into foul sewage systems shall be strictly prohibited.</p> <p>SW 2: Surface water storage measures shall be provided 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 Standards (SUDS), “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>SW 3: Surface water and drainage measures shall be provided in a manner that is appropriate to the site and cognisant of potential effects on public health, safety, the environment and the amenity of the area.</p> <p>SFRA 1: It is the policy of the Council to 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 Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). The Council will also take account of the North Western and Shannon International Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies.</p> <p>SFRA 2: The Council will actively work with the CFRAM Programme and catchment based Flood Planning Groups, especially in the east of the County 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. Such strategies would be most important in areas where significant changes in the levels of development are likely to occur and may be informed by monitoring changes in upstream hydrology including those relating to land cover.</p> <p>SFRA 3: 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. Promote the sustainable management and uses of water bodies and avoid, where possible, culverting or realignment of these features.</p> <p>SFRA 4: Where resources are available, the Council will contribute towards the improvement and/or restoration of the natural flood risk management functions of flood plains. Where possible these functions should be aligned with other functions including those relating to recreation and amenity, habitat protection and management of water quality.</p> <p>SFRA 5: Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing surface water drainage system in the County, ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in all new developments. Surface water runoff from development sites will be limited to pre-development levels and planning applications for new developments will be required to provide details of surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems proposals.</p> <p>SFRA 6: The Council shall implement the key principles of flood risk management set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines as follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid development that will be at risk of flooding or that will increase the flooding risk elsewhere, where possible; • Substitute less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible; and • Mitigate and manage the risk, where avoidance and substitution are not possible. <p>Development will not be permitted in flood risk areas, particularly floodplains, except where there are no alternative and appropriate sites available in lower risk areas that are consistent with the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development. Development in areas which have the highest flood risk should be avoided and/or only considered in exceptional circumstances (through a prescribed Justification Test) if adequate land or sites are not available in areas which have lower flood risk. Most types of development would be considered inappropriate in areas which have the highest</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>C1</p>
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<p>flood risk. Only water-compatible development such as docks and marinas, dockside activities that require a waterside location, amenity open space, outdoor sports and recreation and essential transport infrastructure that cannot be located elsewhere would be considered appropriate in these areas.</p> <p>SFRA 7: Lower tier plans shall undertake SFRA in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and in consultation with the OPW. As part of a Stage 1 SFRA (flood risk identification), the flood risk indicators identified in the SFRA for the County Development Plan as well as any newly available information should be examined in order to determine whether further investigation and Stage 2 SFRA (initial flood risk assessment) is required. This examination should use the Council's GIS database of flood risk indicators which will be kept up to date and will add, as appropriate, new information made available through the CFRAM Programme. Stage 2 SFRA for lower tier plans will, at a minimum, undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A confirmation of the sources of flooding; • An appraisal of the adequacy of the available flood risk indicator information for the settlement; • Consultation with area engineer/local foreman and local knowledge, where available; • Ground truthing of flood risk indicators and site walkovers facilitating the identification of, inter alia, vegetation associated with frequent inundation and micro-topography; • The identification of flood risk zones. <p>The Council shall take into account the findings of the assessments undertaken (including that which may be provided as part of any Stage 3 SFRA, detailed flood risk assessment) during the preparation of the lower tier plans, including those provisions relating to land use zoning.</p> <p>SFRA 8: Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all planning applications in areas at risk of flooding, 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. Further details with regard to the requirements for site-specific FRAs are provided in the Technical Appendices of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.</p> <p>SFRA 9: SFRA and site-specific FRAs shall 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) shall be consulted with to this effect.</p> <p>SFRA 10: A detailed site-specific FRA may be requested for projects specified in the County Development Plan. Such projects could include waste water treatment plants, collection networks, drinking water treatment plants, transport infrastructure and water-compatible developments that have the potential to affect the movement of flood waters.</p> <p>SFRA 11: Flood risk may constitute a significant environmental effect of a development proposal that in certain circumstances may trigger a sub-threshold EIS. FRA should therefore be an integral part of any EIA undertaken for projects within the County.</p> <p>FLO 1: In areas susceptible to flooding, development may be restricted and where necessary developers will be required to submit a Flood Risk/Impact Assessment and proposals for a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS). This shall also apply in areas where it is considered that the proposed development will impact on flooding elsewhere</p> <p>FLO 2: It is the policy of the Council to 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 Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any superseding document). 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 FRA in accordance with the criteria set out under the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.</p> <p>FLO 3: The Council shall implement the recommendations and provisions of the DEHLG/OPW publication Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any updated/superseding document) in relation to flood risk management within the County. This will include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated on Flood Zones A and B, 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. b) Development proposals in areas where there is an identified or potential risk of flooding (including pluvial and/or groundwater flooding) or that could give rise to a risk of flooding elsewhere may be required to carry out a site-specific FRA, and Justification Test where appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Any FRA should include an assessment of the potential impacts of climate change, such as an 				
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<p>increase in the extent or probability of flooding, and any associated measures necessary to address these impacts.</p> <p>c) 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.</p> <p>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 Habitats Directive Assessment, as appropriate.</p> <p>FLO 4: The Council, in tandem with the OPW, will support the preparation, establishment and implementation of any future Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies prepared for catchments within the County area.</p> <p>FLO 5: Where the probability of flooding from rivers is low (less than 0.1% flood zone C) the developer should satisfy him or herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed. Among other things, mapping including the OPW's Pluvial and Groundwater Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment mapping should be considered for this purpose.</p> <p>FLO 6: Planning applications on lands identified within groundwater and pluvial PFRA areas shall be accompanied by a site-specific FRA that corresponds with that outlined under Chapter 5 'Flooding and Development Management' of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Such assessments shall be prepared by suitably qualified experts with hydrological experience and shall quantify the risks and the effects of any necessary mitigation, together with the measures needed or proposed to manage residual risks.</p> <p>FLO 7: In the case of lands transected by the outer boundary of Flood Zone A or B, where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority (by more detailed local topographic survey information) that the outer boundary does not reflect local topographical and /or flood path conditions, the Planning Authority may consider the extension of uses allowed in an adjacent land use zone into the Flood Zone area. The proposal will also be subject to the submission of a site-specific FRA and Justification Test as appropriate and the developer satisfying the Planning Authority and him/herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p>FLO 8: Where Flood Zones have been zoned according to the information contained in a site-specific FRA provided by the land owner this should be noted on the relevant zoning map.</p> <p>FLO 9: Where the probability of flooding from rivers is low (less than 0.1%, flood zone C) the developer should satisfy him or herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed. Among other things, mapping including the OPW's Pluvial and Groundwater Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment mapping should be considered for this purpose.</p>				
<p>Commentary: These provisions would be likely to minimise increases in flood risk and by doing this would be likely to contribute towards the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of human health (SEO PHH1); • The provision of various services and the sustainable management of water (SEO M1 M2 M3); • Protection and management of biodiversity and water quality (SEOs B1 B2 B3 W1 W2); • Protection of cultural heritage and landscape sensitivities; and • The sustenance of rural populations (SEO B4). <p>Certain developments arising from, for example, catchment based strategies, have the potential to conflict with environmental components however these conflicts would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan including those identified in Section 9 of this report.</p>				
<p>Climate Change</p>				
<p>CLI 1: The Council recognise European and national objectives for climate adaptation and will work with the EPA, the Regional Assembly and neighbouring planning authorities in implementing future Guidance for climate change proofing of land use plan provisions as is flagged in the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (DECLG, 2012). The Council will integrate as appropriate, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and any related Guidelines which may arise during its implementation.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>Commentary: Climate change adaptation has the potential to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute towards increases in sustainable mobility and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (SEO C1); • Minimise increases in flood risk (SEO W3) and protect human health (SEO HH1); 				

- Contribute towards the provision of various services and the sustainable management of water (SEO M1 M2 M3);
- Protect and manage biodiversity and water quality (SEOs B1 B2 B3 W1 W2);
- Protect cultural heritage and landscape sensitivities (SEOs CH1 CH2 L1); and
- Allow for synergies with rural populations (SEO B4).

Certain actions, including those taken in relation to climate adaptation would have the potential to impact upon all environmental components however these conflicts would be likely to be mitigated by the measures which have been integrated into the Plan, including those which have emerged from the SEA process.

Waste Recovery and Disposal

<p>WAS 1: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate and promote the implementation of the Midlands Waste Management Plan within its functional area.</p> <p>WAS 2: It is the policy of the Council to 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 control criteria</p> <p>WAS 3: The Council shall have regard to the Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region in the implementation, operation and management of schemes and services for the disposal of waste within the County.</p> <p>WAS 4: To 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>WAS 5: Where considered necessary, the Planning Authority will require 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>M3 B4 C1 B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 M2</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M1</p>
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Commentary:
The implementation of the Midlands Waste Management Plan, including the construction and operation of waste management infrastructure, would facilitate the reduction of waste levels (SEO M3) at the same time as presenting potential conflicts with various environmental components (SEOs B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 L1). These conflicts would be mitigated by, inter alia, measures which have been integrated into the Plan and the aforementioned documents.

The provision of waste management facilities (SEO M3) in certain locations would support rural populations (SEOs B4) and could reduce transport related emissions (SEOs C1 PHH1).

WAS 4 would contribute towards the protection of various environmental components.

Litter and Animal Control

<p>LIT 1: The Council shall continue its education and awareness programmes in local schools and shall promote schemes and initiatives which aim to reduce litter pollution in the County.</p> <p>LIT 2: The Council shall enforce the provisions of the 1997 Litter Pollution Act where appropriate and necessary. This states that “no person shall deposit any substance or object so as to create litter in a public place or in any place that is visible to any extent from a public place”.</p> <p>LIT 3: It is the policy of the Council to promote and encourage the preparation, establishment and implementation of a litter management plan for Longford County.</p> <p>LIT 4: The Council shall continue to pursue its programme of stray/nuisance dog and horse control within the County.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 W1 W2</p>			<p>B4 PHH1 S1 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 C1</p>
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Commentary:
The control of litter could contribute towards maintaining the status of waters and protecting biodiversity and flora and fauna.

Electricity

<p>EC 1: To facilitate the provision, upgrading and maintenance of future electricity infrastructure within the County shall be subject to meeting the relevant development management standards and subject to demonstration of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The proposed development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure. o The route proposed has been identified with due consideration for the social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts. o Where impacts as a result of the proposed development are inevitable mitigation features have been included subject to Appropriate Assessment. o Where it can be shown that the proposed development is consistent with international best practice.. 	<p>B4</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 M1 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>C1</p>
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Commentary:

In addition to contribute towards achieving various government objectives relating to the amount of energy to be consumed from renewable sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the provision, upgrading and maintenance of electricity infrastructure could both contribute towards the sustenance of rural populations (**SEO B4**) and potentially conflict with most environmental components including biodiversity and flora and fauna, soil, water resources, cultural heritage, landscape and human health (arising from construction noise and environmental vectors). These conflicts would be mitigated by, inter alia, measures which have been integrated into the Plan and the aforementioned documents.

Renewable Energy Sources

<p>RE 1: The Council shall prepare, where resources permit, a Renewable Energy Strategy for the County which will support the development of renewable energy production and ancillary facilities in order to enhance the sustainability of the County, promoting a low carbon economy and lifestyle. The Strategy shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment as relevant.</p> <p>RE 2: The following criteria shall be used in the assessment of potential sites for the development of alternative energy sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant wind energy potential • Accessibility to the national grid • Suitability of the site having regard to land uses • Measures to minimise impact on other development <p>RE 3: The Council will consider the promotion of renewable energy and low energy/passive houses to be a high priority to help reduce global warming. The Council will support initiatives that encourage energy conservation and reduce reliance upon non-renewable sources of energy, including schemes for wind energy, biomass, photovoltaics, solar thermal installations, heat exchange, geothermal etc.</p> <p>RE 4: The Council shall investigate the potential use of biomass as an alternative to peat.</p> <p>RE 5: The following documents and guidelines shall form part of the assessment process for potential alternative energy developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Climate Change Strategy, 2007-2012 (DoEHLG) • Strategy for Intensifying Wind Energy Deployment (DCMNR) • Wind Energy – Guidelines for Planning Authorities(DoEHLG) • Renewable Energy Strategy • National Development Plan • BMW Region Development Strategy • Sustainable Development- a Strategy for Ireland • Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies <p>RE 6: It will be Council policy to ensure that all proposed renewable energy projects, such as those related to wind or hydroelectric energy, and any associated improvement works or associated infrastructure, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to Appropriate Assessment to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>RE 7: Upon adoption, the Council shall implement the relevant recommendations contained within the National Peatland Strategy, Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas, National Raised Bog cSAC Management Plan and Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.</p> <p>WD 1: Developments for wind farms will be encouraged to locate in those areas identified as having wind potential within the County, as defined on the Map contained in Appendix 5.</p> <p>WD 2: Proposals for large scale industrial wind farm developments shall be directed to areas of cutaway bogs subject to the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on the completion of an investigation demonstrating suitability of the areas, • The preparation of revised Wind Energy Guidelines and • Compliance with the necessary environmental assessments <p>WD 3: Micro wind turbines producing below 20 kilowatts for domestic purposes shall be considered favourably. The following criteria shall apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Not either individually or cumulatively, adversely affect the health or amenity of nearby communities; b) Be visually and environmentally acceptable c) Require minimum further construction to link readily into existing transmission lines 	<p>B4 B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 M1 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>C1</p>
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<p>WD 4: In assessing an application for a wind farm the following shall be taken into consideration:-</p> <p>a) Visual impact - both on site and over extensive areas. Applications may be required to include photo or video montages - taken from a variety of locations after discussion with the Planning Authority. Site cross sections showing existing and proposed ground levels in relation to all structures on site are required. Ideally they should be sited against a backdrop of a hill or elevated area. Non linear type layouts are favourable. Windfarms should not be intervisible from one another.</p> <p>b) Predicted Noise Levels - developments must ensure that noise levels will not be intrusive in relation to background noise at the nearest dwelling. Blades, of single speed must rotate in the same direction. Monitoring noise levels at selected locations generally for the first year of operation of the wind farm will be a condition of planning permission. Manufacturer's certification of noise emissions will be required at application stage.</p> <p>c) Design - Solid towers should be used throughout the windfarm, which should be of the same height and colour. Advertising material including the manufacturer's name or logo will not be permitted on the wind turbine.</p> <p>d) Impact of associated site works - including access roads, substations, grid connections, fencing etc. Details of proposed grid connections are required at application stage. Consideration should be given to the potential landscape impacts in the context of grid connections taking into account technical feasibility and economic viability, particularly in environmentally sensitive locations. Access roads shall be un-surfaced and follow natural contours of the site. Fencing will not be permitted on any part of the site except normal livestock fencing when the land is part of an operating agricultural holding.</p> <p>e) Construction - a detailed phased programme for the construction together with estimates of traffic generation is required at application stage. Consideration will be given to the potential damage to roads during the construction phase. In some cases access routes may be restricted by planning condition.</p> <p>f) Proximity to Dwellings - Wind turbines should generally not be located within 500m of any dwelling but this may vary from site to site.</p> <p>g) Interference with navigation, television and communication signals - A communications booster may also be required or some other technical solution. Air and sea navigation authorities may be consulted for their comments on proposed wind farm developments.</p> <p>h) Impact on environmental designations - Amenity areas, Sensitive landscapes, views and prospects, Designated Tourist Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Archaeological site, biodiversity, protected structures, national monuments etc. Wind farm developments should not be located within 100 metres of ancient monuments. The impact on migratory birds, in particular, will be assessed in consultation with the Irish Wildbird Conservancy (BirdWatch Ireland).</p> <p>i) Decommissioning - proposals for restoration of the site after removal of the turbines should be included with an application. Adequate financial security will be required by planning condition.</p> <p>j) Sensitivity of locations of folklore, mythology and religious significance to these developments. Evidence of consultation with local community groups is an important element of planning for such a project. Developers will also be required to assess their proposals for the impact of shadow flicker on dwellings and this information should accompany the planning application.</p> <p>k) Location relative to water bodies. Wind farm developments should not be located within 150m of lakes or rivers.</p> <p>l) Applicants are advised to outline future extension proposals if known. It should be noted that temporary permissions for an anemometer is without prejudice to any subsequent application for a wind farm. Where appropriate, the Planning Authority may request additional information in determining an application for a wind farm development, including detailed information similar to that required as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).</p> <p>HS 1: In assessing an application for a hydro scheme the following shall be taken into consideration:-</p> <p>a) Impact on environmental designations - Amenity Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas, Archaeological sites, areas with significant amenity use etc.</p> <p>b) Visual impact arising from turbine houses, embankments, structures, roads, power lines, poles etc.</p> <p>c) Prior to the submission of a planning application the views of the local Regional Fisheries Board will be sought. Any such development shall be in accordance with any such Fisheries Guidelines as deemed relevant by Inland Fisheries Ireland. Projects should incorporate a fish pass to ensure the free and safe passage of fish.</p> <p>d) Likely erosion arising from the development and potential negative impacts on protected flora and fauna.</p> <p>e) Turbines should be sited at sufficient distance from dwelling houses to ensure that noise emissions are not a nuisance.</p> <p>f) Impact of construction stage and associated site works including water retaining structures, access routes, turbine housing, and grid connections etc. The timing of construction should avoid the breeding season of susceptible wildlife.</p>				
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- g) Consultation between the developer and local interest groups such as fishermen, water sport enthusiasts etc. prior to submitting planning application.
- h) Water monitoring - the developer may by condition be required to submit water monitoring data to the Planning Authority.
- i) It should be noted that in the event of permission being granted for a water level recorder, this is not an indicator that permission will be granted for a hydro energy development.

Commentary:

In addition to contribute towards achieving various government objectives relating to the amount of energy to be consumed from renewable sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the development of renewable energy sources and associated infrastructure could contribute towards the sustenance of rural populations (SEO B4).

Such development has, however, the potential to impact upon various environmental components.

Further general commentary on the types of potential effects arising from different renewable energies is provided below. All potential effects would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

It is noted that a number of the above provisions (including RE 5, RE 6, WD1, WD 4 and HS 1) would contribute towards mitigating potential effects and towards the protection of the environment.

Wind Energy

Positive Effects: Contribution towards renewable energy and minimisation of greenhouse gases targets

Potential Negative Effects, if unmitigated:

- Potential impacts include those associated with construction and operation of the turbines and ancillary facilities and infrastructure (including roads and electrical infrastructure)
- Potential human health impact: shadow flicker, noise, and impacts arising from bog bursts and landslides
- Potential impact upon designated and non-designated biodiversity and flora and fauna including birdlife
- Potential interactions leading to change in structure of soil and geology and changes to drainage
- Potential impacts on water status during construction - this could interact with drinking water sources and biodiversity
- Potential impacts upon the context of protected archaeological and architectural heritage - including the context of this heritage - as well as unknown archaeological heritage
- Potential impacts upon traffic during construction due to transportation of turbine components
- Changes to the character of areas would be likely to occur however visual impacts would depend on various factors including the size, number and spacing of the turbines, perception of the relevant areas and any cumulative effect arising from multiple wind farms

Hydropower

Positive Effects: Contribution towards renewable energy and minimisation of greenhouse gases targets

Potential Negative Effects, if unmitigated:

- Depending on the scale and location of the development there is potential for impacts to occur on biodiversity, in particular aquatic biodiversity
- Potential to impact upon the morphological, biological and chemical status of waters - this could interact with drinking water sources and biodiversity
- Potential interactions leading to change in structure of soil and geology
- Operation could impact upon flood risk elsewhere
- Potential impacts upon archaeological heritage or nearby architectural heritage, including context
- Changes to the character of locations would be likely to occur however visual impacts would depend upon, inter alia, the size of the installation and the perception of the relevant area

Bio-Energy

Positive Effects: Contribution towards renewable energy and minimisation of greenhouse gases targets. Can provide for the use of agricultural and other wastes.

Potential Negative Effects, if unmitigated:

- Potential impact upon designated and non-designated biodiversity and flora and fauna arising from changes in vegetation. Soil structure may also be impacted upon.
- Changes in farming practices may lead to changes in drainage and runoff which could impact upon biological and chemical status of waters - - this could interact with drinking water sources and biodiversity
- Potential human health impact: odour and noise from operation of plants
- Potential impacts upon traffic during operation due to transportation of fuel to plants
- Fuels derived from bio-mass still produce emissions however these are less than those derived from fossil fuels

- Changes to the land cover of areas could occur however visual impacts would depend on perception of the relevant area;
- Biomass plants may have visual impacts - these would depend on perception of the relevant area

Solar Energy and Solar Thermal Energy

Positive Effects: Contribution towards renewable energy targets

Potential Negative Effects, if unmitigated:

- Potential impacts on architectural heritage - including the context of this heritage - at micro scale
- Potential impacts on habitats and species and micro scale
- Large scale installations may have visual impacts - these would depend on perception of the relevant area -, however these are unlikely to be provided for

Geothermal Energy

Positive Effects: Contribution towards renewable energy targets

Potential Negative Effects, if unmitigated:

- Potential impacts upon the status of waters and ecology contained within, especially arising from changes in the temperature of groundwater which can impact upon the structure and ecology of the aquifer and any dependent surface waters - this could interact with drinking water sources
- Potential interactions leading to change in structure of soil and geology
- Potential impacts upon archaeology, including unknown underground archaeology
- Potential impacts upon on site water services
- Potential impacts upon context of archaeological and architectural heritage arising from surface installations
- Large scale installations may have visual impacts - these would depend on perception of the relevant area

Telecommunications Structures and Broadband

TEL 1: Applications for Telecommunications and antennae support structures and associated equipment will be considered having regard to the guidelines for “Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures” and any updated documents issued by the DoEHLG or relevant authority.

TEL 2: Applications for Telecommunications structures shall be considered having regard to location, proximity of existing dwellings, childcare and educational facilities in the area, landscape characteristics, including existing screening available and the ability of the landscape to support additional screening measures and the density of existing, similar structures in the area.

TEL 3: Regard shall be had to the policy of the National Development Plan with regard to telecommunications structures.

TEL 4: The facilitation of telecommunications infrastructure, including broadband, shall be encouraged in line with the Settlement Strategy and land use proposals.

TEL 5: Developer's may be required to provide telecommunications structures with environmentally acceptable designs, including camouflaging/disguising techniques to integrate the structure into the surrounding landscape.

TEL 6: Proposals for telecommunication masts and antennae support structures shall be accompanied by supporting evidence demonstrating compliance with the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Guidelines or the equivalent European pre-standard 500166-2 conditioned in licensing agreements with the DCENR.

TEL 7: Longford County Council shall seek the establishment of an appropriate body at a regional or national level to monitor the installation of mobile communications infrastructure with regard to proliferation, co-location, emissions, and the use of best available technology to prevent negative health and environmental impacts.

TEL 8: It is the policy of the Council to promote and encourage the provision of a sufficient level of broad-band communications, internet, cable and broadcasting technology while protecting the landscape character and amenities of the County.

TEL 9: The possibility of establishing a regional ring of high-speed broad band communications, connecting Longford, Mullingar and Athlone, shall be investigated and promoted by the Council.

TEL 10: In general, there will be a requirement to provide the necessary infrastructure in new developments that will facilitate future telecommunications access, including MAN broadband services.

B4 B1 B2 B3
PHH1 S1 W1 W2
M2 CH1 CH2 L1

B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1
W1 W2 W3 M2 M3
CH1 CH2 L1

C1 M1

Commentary: The development of telecommunications infrastructure could contribute towards the sustenance of rural populations (SEO B4). Such development has, however, the potential to impact upon various environmental components. References to the prevention of environmental impacts and the protection of the landscape improve the status of various SEOs.				
Major Accidents				
MA 1: It is policy of the Council to have regard to the following in assessing applications for new developments (including extensions): • The Major Accidents Directive (Seveso II- 96/082/EEC). • The potential effects on public health and safety. • The need to ensure adequate distances between such developments and residential areas, areas of public use and any areas of sensitivity.	PHH1 B1 B2 B3 S1 W1 W2			B4 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1
MA 2: 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.				
Commentary: These provisions would benefit the protection of human health and various environmental vectors (PHH1).				

8.7.7 Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage and Amenities

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Landscape				
LCA 1: It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the County's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and, where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the existing local landscape. Proposed developments, where located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes (as defined in the assessment), may be required to provide a landscape report detailing how the proposal will impact on the landscape and mitigation measures to be taken where necessary to address negative impacts. Proposed developments which have a detrimental impact on the landscape will not normally be permitted.	B1 B2 B3 B4 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1			M3 C1 PHH1 S1 W3 M1 M2
LCA 2: Longford County Council recognises the diverse and unique landscape character of the County, and as such, landscape conservation areas may be designated in order to achieve its objective of protecting and enhancing the County's landscape. Physical development shall not adversely impact on areas designated as visually important/sensitive under this section.				
LCA 3: It is the policy of the Council to preserve views and prospects as illustrated on the accompanying map as part of Appendix 6 and as listed in the following tables. Views are divided into full and intermittent in order to differentiate areas where scenic views may be partial or absent along a particular route. The following table lists the routes (as numbered on the map) and lists the townlands through which they pass for identification purposes.				
Commentary: These provisions would directly and indirectly contribute towards the protection of various environmental components.				
Prevention of Pollution				
ENV 1: To encourage and promote environmental awareness and environmentally friendly practices, particularly in industry, agriculture and all other activities.	B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1			C1
ENV 2: Any application for planning permission for new development, extension to existing development or intensification or change of use shall be assessed in terms of its potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. 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.				
ENV 3: The Council will seek to reduce the impacts of existing pollutant activities through the following measures:				

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Relocation to a more appropriate location where adjacent land uses are more compatible • Imposition of conditions restricting emissions/activity • Use of enforcement action against unauthorised developments/uses <p>ENV 4: The Council shall pursue the preparation, establishment and implementation of/compliance with the following documents/regulations, and any future updates, through its Infrastructure Section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region • The National Hazardous Waste Plan • EU and National legislation on the prevention of Air and Noise Pollution <p>ENV 5: The Council shall encourage energy efficient design solutions, such as optimising solar gain, in order to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and increase environmental quality.</p>				
<p>Commentary: These provisions would directly and indirectly contribute towards the protection of various environmental components.</p>				
<p>Water Quality</p>				
<p>ENV 6: The Council shall seek to protect ground and surface water resources from pollution. To this end, any identified major catchment areas of surface water bodies, capable of use as a potable water resource or other beneficial use and areas of aquifer vulnerability shall be protected. Development of a potentially pollutant nature in these areas and any future areas identified shall be prohibited.</p> <p>ENV 7: It is the policy of Longford County Council to encourage and promote compliance with the recommendations contained in the Shannon International and North Western International River Basin Management Plans.</p> <p>ENV 8: The Council, where possible, in tandem with the Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) will support the development and implementation of a Groundwater Protection Scheme.</p> <p>ENV 9: The Council shall implement the relevant recommendations contained within the River Basin Management Plans for the Shannon International River Basin District and the North Western International River Basin District, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>ENV 10: The Council, where appropriate, shall 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>ENV 11: Development proposals that involve the physical modification of water bodies, including abstraction of water, shall be considered having regard to the potential effect on habitats and plant and animal species, with particular consideration given to Natura 2000 sites and specific actions proposed where negative impacts are anticipated. Where appropriate, proposals shall be screened for Appropriate Assessment in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other appropriate interest groups.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>C1</p>
<p>Commentary: Protection of the County's water resources would beneficially affect the protection of water resources, human health, ecology and soil (SEOs W1 W2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 S1 M2) and would contribute towards the sustenance of sustainable rural management practices. Certain recommendations contained within the River Basin Management Plans would have the potential to adversely impact upon the environment however these impacts would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Management Plans as well as measures which have been integrated into the Plan.</p>				
<p>Air Quality</p>				
<p>ENV 12: The Council, in tandem with the EPA, will seek to ensure that all developments are operated in a manner that does not contribute to deterioration in air quality.</p> <p>ENV 13: The Council will promote the retention of trees, hedgerows and other vegetation where possible, and encourage afforestation and tree planting as a means of air purification and filtering.</p> <p>ENV 14: The Council, in accordance with the recommendations of any future Land Use and Transportation Study, shall promote alternative and sustainable transport methods in order to maintain good air quality.</p>	<p>PHH1 B2 C1</p>			<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>Commentary: These provisions would contribute towards the protection of human health and ecology and would contribute towards efforts to maximise sustainable mobility.</p>				

Soil Quality			
<p>ENV 15: The Council shall protect soils identified as agriculturally important in the Landscape Assessment through the prevention of inappropriate use through the development management process.</p> <p>ENV 16: The Council shall aim to 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>ENV 17: The Council shall investigate the potential uses of cutaway bogs in the County and shall particularly consider the development of sustainable and renewable energy projects.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>C1</p>
<p>Commentary: These provisions would be likely to benefit the protection of soil, water, biodiversity and flora and fauna and human health. The development of cutaway bogs would give rise to potential adverse effects however these would be mitigated by complying with other measures which have been integrated into the Plan, including those which are detailed under Section 9 and including those relating to the Habitats Directive.</p>			
General Heritage			
<p>HER 1: The Planning Authority shall promote the protection and conservation of heritage sites, artifacts and monuments and the integrity of their setting, as listed and illustrated in the Record of Monuments and Places (see Appendix 7)</p> <p>HER 2: It is the policy of the Council to update the Heritage Plan over the lifetime of the Development Plan. The Landscape Character Assessment shall be reviewed on an on-going basis and updated where necessary.</p> <p>HER 3: 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>HER 4: The Planning Authority shall endeavour to identify important landscapes and habitats and the importance of local character, identity and distinctiveness, in both the natural and built heritage of the County. This shall include an investigation of the Heritage Plan for the County into locally important and small scale heritage sites. Where these have been identified as important under the Heritage Plan, they shall be afforded the relevant protection.</p> <p>HER 5: 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 Environment, Heritage and Local Government, shall be referred to the relevant section of the DoEHLG for observations/comment prior to a grant of permission/approval being obtained. In particular, the unique historical, mythological and cultural significance of Ardagh Mountain shall be recognised. Developments which materially impinge on the character of the mountain will not be permitted.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 M2</p>		<p>C1 M1 M3 W3</p>
<p>Commentary: These provisions would be likely to benefit the protection of various environmental components.</p>			
Archaeological Heritage			
<p>ARC 1: It is an Objective of the Council to protect known and unknown archaeological areas, sites, structures, monuments and objects in the County. In this regard, development in the vicinity of recorded monuments shall be referred to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Development Applications Unit for comment and these considered in the assessment of any application for development. In general, development within a 20m radius of a recorded monument will not be permitted and proposed development within 75 metres discouraged (subject to other policies contained within this Plan).</p> <p>ARC 2: It is an objective of the Council to protect the integrity of the settings of archaeological areas, sites, structures, monuments and objects in the County.</p> <p>ARC 3: It is an objective of the Council to encourage and promote appropriate management and enhancement of the County's rich archaeological heritage.</p> <p>ARC 4: It is an objective of the Council to encourage and promote access to and understanding of the archaeological heritage of the County.</p> <p>ARC 5: It is the policy of the Council to 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. The approach will be favoured in these circumstances as the most appropriate means of protecting the heritage of the County, in accordance with government policy.</p> <p>ARC 6: It is the policy of the Council to strictly control development proposals on unzoned lands which may be detrimental to, any area, site, structure, monument or object of archaeological significance, or detract from, its interpretation and setting. In this regard, the Planning Authority shall seek an assessment - to be carried out by a licensed archaeologist - of</p>	<p>CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B4</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 M3 W3</p>

<p>developments which may impact on a national or recorded monument, the designated zone of archaeological importance surrounding any monument or other site of archaeological significance within the County. Development will only be permitted where the Council, in consultation with the DoEHLG, considers it acceptable as per the assessment and subject to any necessary mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse impact on the monument and/or its settings.</p> <p>ARC 7: It is the policy of the Council to 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>ARC 8: It is the policy of the Council to investigate and promote the provision of improved access to important archaeological sites such as those National Monuments in State ownership or guardianship listed below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Nat. Mon. No.</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Inchcleraun</td> <td>Early monastery</td> <td>91</td> <td>State Ownership</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Larkfield</td> <td>Ringfort</td> <td>640</td> <td>State Ownership</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sonnagh</td> <td>Ringfort</td> <td>598</td> <td>State Ownership</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aghaward</td> <td>Ringfort</td> <td>630</td> <td>State Ownership</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Granard</td> <td>Motte</td> <td>263</td> <td>State Guardianship</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Corlea</td> <td>Bog Trackway</td> <td>677</td> <td>State Ownership</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>ARC 9: In securing the preservation of the archaeological heritage, the Planning Authority will have regard to the recommendations of the DoEHLG, both in respect of whether or not to grant Planning Permission and in respect of the condition to which permission would, if granted, be subject.</p> <p>ARC 10: Where necessary, the Planning Authority may impose, through the Development Management Process, conditions to safeguard that adequate measures are taken to identify and mitigate the archaeological impacts of any development, including where required the completion of a licensed excavation.</p> <p>ARC 11: It is policy of the Council to protect the National Monuments as outlined in the table entitled 'Monuments protected under Preservation Orders' (see table overleaf)</p> <p>ARC 12: It is policy of the Council to protect the monuments of Archaeological, Historical and Cultural Interest as outlined in the table of the same name (see overleaf), and illustrated on the Map included as part of Appendix 7.</p>	Site	Description	Nat. Mon. No.	Status	Inchcleraun	Early monastery	91	State Ownership	Larkfield	Ringfort	640	State Ownership	Sonnagh	Ringfort	598	State Ownership	Aghaward	Ringfort	630	State Ownership	Granard	Motte	263	State Guardianship	Corlea	Bog Trackway	677	State Ownership				
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<p>Commentary: 1 potential conflict due to a level of restriction on development in sensitive areas.</p>																																
<p>Natural Heritage and Biodiversity and Geological Sites</p>																																
<p>NHB 1: It is an objective of the Council to protect, conserve and enhance the County's biodiversity and natural heritage. This includes wildlife (flora and fauna), habitats, landscapes and/or landscape features of importance to wildlife or which play a key role in the conservation and management of natural resources such as water.</p> <p>NHB 2: It is an objective of the Council to encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the County's biodiversity and natural heritage.</p> <p>NHB 3: It is an objective of the Council to encourage and promote access to and understanding of the natural heritage of the County.</p> <p>NHB 4: It is the policy of the Council to protect important geological or geomorphological sites in the County, including any sites proposed to be designated or designated as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs).</p> <p>NHB 5: The Council, in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, shall pursue the preparation, establishment and implementation of Habitat mapping and a Wetland Survey for the County</p> <p>NHB 6: It is the policy of the Council to protect sites designated in National and European legislation, and in other relevant International Conventions, Agreements and Processes. This includes sites proposed to be designated or designated as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive¹ (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) • Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds) <p>Both the Birds and Habitats Directives have been transposed in Irish law by Ministerial Regulation. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 are the most important of these because they provide for the protection measures and management regime that apply to SPAs and SACs.</p> <p>No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 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</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 L1 CH1 CH2</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2</p>	<p>M3 C1</p>																												

<p>basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects (Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:</p> <p>a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Nature Reserves, and Refuges for Flora or Fauna under the the Wildlife Act, 1976 as amended by Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000. <p>NHB 7: The Council shall seek to identify, protect and conserve, in co-operation with the relevant statutory authorities, vulnerable, rare and threatened species of wild fauna and flora and their habitats with particular reference to those species identified in National and European legislation, and in other International Conventions, Agreements and Processes.</p> <p>NHB 8: The Council shall seek to 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. In addition, it is Council policy to protect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramsar sites under the The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (especially as Waterfowl Habitat). <p>NHB 9: The Council will enhance and sustain landscapes and features within the County in order to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard, sustain and improve the quality and character of landscapes which are important and valued or, • Promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of local landscapes or, • Promote important settings for outdoor recreation and tourism development. <p>NHB 10: 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;</p> <p>a) they 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,</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>b) they 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).</p> <p>NHB 11: It is the policy of the Council to protect the following important stands of trees identified in Appendix 9 from inappropriate development and unmanaged tree felling not part of an overall plan to ensure their sustainability;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avenue at Smithfield, Legan 2. Woods at Carriglass, Castleforbes and and Cashel. The perimeter deciduous woodland of Newcastle Woods but not the interior areas of commercial forestry 3. Portanure Pine Woods 4. Derrycassan Woods 5. Culnagore Wood 6. Rathcline Wood 7. Trees along Regional Road R393 at Knockahaw 8. Woodlands at Erne Head, Woodville and Golaroe 9. Lime trees at Mosstown, Keenagh 10. Trees at Rathsallagh 11. Wood at Farragh, Killoe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>NHB 12: Generally, it is the policy of the Council to protect all substantial areas of deciduous or mixed forest within the County, other than areas of commercial forestry. Any person considering altering such a stand of trees for any purpose other than normal maintenance should contact the planning section of the Local Authority for advice. 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>				
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<p>NHB 13: The Council will promote a careful, deliberate and methodical approach for sustaining forested areas throughout the County, particularly given that a lot of these areas are living man-made landscapes that have evolved over time and need to continue evolving to sustain their future. The Council, in co-operation with The Forest Service (Coillte) and the Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources, shall encourage and promote 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.</p> <p>NHB 14: It is the policy of the Council to address the findings of the national biodiversity plan where applicable and relevant within the County Development Plan.</p> <p>NHB 15: The Council shall facilitate the provision of any biodiversity plan prepared for County Longford and shall have regard to the provisions outlined within any such plan.</p> <p>NHB 16: The Council shall facilitate increased awareness of the County's biodiversity and natural heritage through the provision of information to landowners and the community generally, in co-operation with statutory and other partners.</p> <p>NHB 17: The Council shall pursue a programme of public awareness on the spread of invasive species and noxious weeds. The Council shall encourage measures to control the spread of such species in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources as appropriate.</p> <p>NHB 18: It is the policy of the council to design, develop and maintain areas of the public realm within its control with regard to enhancing biodiversity value, through the adoption of appropriate landscaping methods, maintenance regimes and planting schemes utilising native and/or semi-native species.</p> <p>NHB 19: It is the policy of the Council to encourage investigation into the establishment of wildlife areas and corridors, particularly in the context of educational, recreational and amenity facilities.</p> <p>NHB 20: The Council will seek to enhance the County's biodiversity and natural heritage, including its landscape, by promoting appropriate recreational and amenity schemes.</p> <p>NHB 21 (A): Proposed large-scale developments, particularly on greenfield sites and in environmentally sensitive areas, shall be assessed in terms of their impact on the biodiversity of the area.</p> <p>NHB 21 (B): All projects and plans arising from this plan will be screened 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>NHB 22: The Planning Authority may 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>NHB 23: The National Parks and Wildlife Service will be invited to prioritise the preparation of Management Plans for Natura 2000 Sites which are located in the vicinity of the County. This is in order to examine how the Conservation Objectives of the sites can be achieved in the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the Plan area.</p> <p>GEO 1: It is policy of the Council to protect sites of geological importance within the County, as listed in the above table, from inappropriate development that may result in the deterioration of the geological feature.</p>				
<p>Commentary: Although these provisions generally contribute towards the protection of various environmental components, development arising from an Indicative Forestry Strategy would have the potential to impact upon the environment. Such impacts would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan, including those identified in Section 9 of this report.</p>				
<p>Inland Lakes and Waterways</p>				
<p>ILW 1: The Royal Canal, Rivers Shannon, Inny and Camlin and Lough Ree, Lough Gowna and the County's other rivers and lakes are recognised as important amenity and recreational resources and, as such, it is the policy of the Council to preserve, protect and enhance these important resources.</p> <p>ILW 2: 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>ILW 3: The Council shall encourage and promote the enhancement, management, protection and the promotion of access to and understanding of the inland waterways of the County. Walkway development will be promoted, particularly in the</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<p>vicinity of the inland waterways such as the Canal and Commons North adjacent to Lough Ree.</p> <p>ILW 4: Longford County Council shall, within its powers, protect Lough Ree from unsustainable, large-scale and high volume abstraction of water resources for use in areas external to Longford County. All abstractions of water from Lough Ree will be subject to assessment for compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, in accordance with policy NHB 6 and NHB 22.</p> <p>ILW 5: The Council shall, where possible and where resources permit, provide additional accesses to lake shores, river and canal banks, through the acquisition of land for public rights of way and parking and lay-by facilities, where appropriate. In areas adjacent to inland waterways, lakes, canals and rivers where planning permission is sought, conditions may be attached to any consequent grant of permission 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>ILW 6: It is the policy of the Council to protect, enhance and improve existing public rights of way where appropriate and where resources permit. The Council will also investigate the provision of additional rights of way, where appropriate through agreement with existing landowners and through the development management process.</p> <p>ILW 7: It is the policy of the council to require that land adjacent to river and canal banks and lakeshores in the County be reserved for public access provision.</p> <p>ILW 8: Development will be strictly controlled in the vicinity of the inland waterways of the County and will not normally be permitted. Application for such development shall be assessed, in addition to normal planning criteria, in terms of its potential impact on the visual, recreational, ecological and environmental integrity of the area.</p> <p>ILW 9: The broad zones of the lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands shall be protected from inappropriate development (see Appendix 10), i.e. development which adversely affects high amenity and landscape quality in relation to their setting. For example, the environs of Newcastle House and Woods, particularly adjoining the River Inny Bridge.</p> <p>ILW 10: The Council shall encourage and promote the investigation and use of the potential of the Canal towpaths for the provision of designated walking and cycle routes and wildlife corridors for recreational, amenity and educational purposes and the promotion of links with any further designated walking, cycling and wildlife routes existing or proposed throughout the County. This should be carried out in the context of an important resource for the population of the County and with a view towards the promotion of sustainable tourism projects in County Longford.</p> <p>ILW 11: The Council shall also promote and encourage the ongoing works to improve the navigability of the Royal Canal, and shall investigate the provision of mooring points on the islands within the major lakes of the County.</p> <p>ILW 12: The Council shall take whatever measures it considers necessary in order to 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>ILW 13: Development in the broad zones of the major rivers and lakes of the County, as illustrated in Appendix 10, will not normally be permitted and shall be restricted to extensions of existing dwellings, which shall be sensitively designed in terms of the individual site and materials. Intensive agricultural developments shall not normally be permitted in these areas.</p> <p>ILW 14: The Council recognises the historical, cultural and scenic importance of the Islands on the lakes and rivers within the County. These shall be protected from inappropriate development, whether on the Islands themselves or at locations that interferes with their integrity and setting.</p> <p>ILW 15: On channels managed by the Office of Public Works (OPW) a 5m (for minor channels) or 10m (for major channels) wide access strip shall be retained for opening access and maintenance purposes. The access strip should not be landscaped, paved or otherwise developed in a manner that would prevent access by a mechanical plant.</p> <p>ILW 16: The Council shall investigate existing bathing areas within the County with a view towards the implementation of the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 (or subsequent update), particularly with regard to the protection of Human Health</p> <p>ILW 17: The Council shall support measures to curtail the spread of invasive species within the Lakes and Inland Waterways and their vicinity, through the development of awareness programmes and the promotion of best practice procedures in partnership with relevant state agencies.</p>				
<p>Commentary: These Inland Lakes and Waterways provisions would beneficially affect the protection of water resources, human health, ecology, soil, the landscape and cultural heritage (SEOs W1 W2 PHH1 B1 B2 B3 S1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1) and would contribute towards the sustenance of sustainable rural management practices (SEO B4). The development and use of these waters would have the potential to adversely impact upon various environmental components however these impacts would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.</p>				

Architectural Heritage			
<p>ARCH 1: It is an objective of the Council to promote the maintenance and appropriate re-use of the existing building stock as a sustainable development issue and because of the contribution of older buildings, both individually and collectively, to the unique character, heritage and identity of the County.</p> <p>ARCH 2: It is an objective and policy of the Council that all development should be appropriate to its setting in the landscape or townscape, and should respond to and reinforce local character and heritage. This will ensure that high quality environments are either maintained or created by development.</p> <p>ARCH 3: It is an objective of the Council that all new development in urban and rural situations shall be guided by sustainable development principles.</p> <p>ARCH 4: It is the policy of the Council to encourage and promote the enhancement, management, protection and the promotion of access to and understanding of the architectural heritage of the County.</p> <p>ARCH 5: It is the policy of the Council that new works to existing buildings and structures of Architectural merit maintain and enhance their character and distinctiveness. In particular, original doors, windows, window/shopfront detailing and original exterior plaster finishes should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Replacement of existing features, such as windows, shall reflect the character of the existing structure in terms of the materials used and the architectural detailing. For example, timber sliding-sash windows should not be substituted with aluminium or uPVC windows.</p> <p>ARCH 6: It is policy of the Council 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>RPS 1: It is the policy of the Council to ensure the protection of structures included in the Record of Protected Structures generally and in particular by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling development which would alter the character of protected structures and proposed protected structures • Monitoring the condition of protected structures and proposed protected structures to identify those endangered by neglect, vandalism or unauthorised development and taking appropriate action • Preventing the endangerment of protected structures in the Council's ownership <p>In this regard, the Council shall seek further funding for the upkeep of protected structures within the County.</p> <p>RPS 2: It is the policy of the Council to issue Declarations as to the type of works that would affect the character of a protected structure and therefore require planning permission.</p> <p>RPS 3: It is the policy of the Council to administer the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Structures At Risk 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>RPS 4: It is the policy of the Council to acquire protected structures, where possible and where economic constraints permit, if this is necessary to protect the structure. On acquiring the structure, to its use or sale shall be considered by the Council.</p> <p>RPS 5: It is the policy of the council that applications for development where a protected structure or its setting is likely to be materially affected, will require an assessment in accordance with provisions of Chapter 6 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, issued by the DoEHLG (2004 or subsequent update). Planning Applications of this nature will be referred to the DoEHLG development applications unit and other relevant statutory bodies for comment. Any comments received from these bodies shall be taken into account in the consideration of the application.</p> <p>RPS 6: It is Council Policy to encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and reuse of existing older buildings/ buildings of architectural merit where appropriate in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.</p> <p>ACA 1: It is the policy of the Council to select and manage Architectural Conservation Areas in the County, as appropriate and ensure the preservation of the character of the Architectural Conservation Area within Ardagh.</p> <p>ACA 2: The Council will only normally permit development proposals where the following criteria is met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The development preserves and enhances the character of the area. b) The development is in sympathy with the built form of the area. c) The form, scale, materials and detailing of the development respects the characteristics of the area. d) Where appropriate, views of importance, including within, into and out of the area are preserved. e) Landscape features of significance, including important strands of trees and hedgerows that contribute to the character of the area are protected. f) The development shall not result in any environmental problems such as noise or nuisance which would be detrimental to the particular character of the area. 	CH1 CH2 L1 B2		B4 B1 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 M3 W3

<p>HG 1: The Council will support the publication of an Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes and where possible will promote the intrinsic character of those within the County. However, it is important to recognise that whilst the Council supports this, that it is equally important to ensure that development is not precluded altogether and that proposals for development are considered where it can be demonstrated that this could ensure the future sustainability of the estate and County. In this regard the basic principles as set out in the Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2011) shall be taken into account. It is important to emphasize that these principals state that a degree of compromise will be required in adapting a protected structure (and by extension Designed Landscapes) to meet the requirements of modern living. This is particularly important where designed landscapes have been separated from the Estate and have been substantially compromised over the years by alternative uses.</p>				
<p>Commentary: 1 potential conflict due to a level of restriction on development in sensitive areas.</p>				
<p>Quality and Character of Urban Areas</p>				
<p>CHAR 1: It is the policy of the Council that areas of vacant, derelict and under-used land within existing built-up areas (Brownfield sites) should be brought into productive use, as an alternative to the use of Greenfield sites which inevitably involves some loss of natural resources.</p> <p>CHAR 2: It is the policy of the Council that all new development in urban and rural situations must be guided by high standards of design. During the lifetime of the Plan, the Council will produce appropriate design guidance in this regard, subject to resources.</p> <p>CHAR 3: The Council shall aim to identify and protect the character and quality of Urban areas through policy contained as part of this plan with regard to settlements defined at Section 1.6</p> <p>CHAR 4: It is the policy of the Council to encourage the re-use of the existing building stock in an appropriate manner in line with standard conservation principles and the Council's policy on sustainable development in order to integrate proposed development into the existing streetscape and to reduce potential construction and demolition waste.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 M1 M2 C1 S1 W1 W2 W3 L1 CH1 CH2</p>		<p>CH1 CH2</p>	<p>B4 M3</p>
<p>Commentary: The development of brownfield sites (CHAR 1) can reduce the need to develop greenfield sites thereby contributing towards the protection of various environmental components as well as contributing towards water services provision and efforts to maximise sustainable mobility levels. Brownfield development has the potential to result in conflicts with architectural and archaeological heritage.</p> <p>Requiring high standards of design (CHAR 2), protecting the character and quality of urban areas (CHAR 3) and integrating proposed developments into the existing streetscapes (CHAR 4) would be likely to benefit the protection of architectural and archaeological heritage.</p>				
<p>Amenities</p>				
<p>AM 1: It is the policy of the Council to 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"> • Provision of open space amenities • Sustainable management of water • Protection and management of biodiversity • Protection of cultural heritage • Protection of protected landscape sensitivities. <p>AM 1 (B): The Council recognises the importance of the County's biodiversity. During the lifetime of the Plan, the Council will prepare and implement a Biodiversity Action Plan that, inter alia, identifies the key biodiversity features of the County and prioritises actions to protect and enhance the natural heritage of the County.</p> <p>AM 2: It is the policy of the Council to promote linkages between established landmarks and landscape features and views, including recognition of these elements when zoning land and when considering individual development proposals.</p> <p>AM 3: It is the policy of the Council to provide, where feasible and appropriate, car-parking, lay-by facilities and access point in scenic and/or amenity areas as identified on the accompanying Scenic Routes Map (Appendix 6). These include the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleanavoher – to facilitate the provision of car parking facilities and improve access to the lake shore • Cashel – To secure and develop lands as an amenity area with car-parking provision and to establish mooring facilities at the lakeshore • Saints Island – To secure lands for public access provision • Clondra – To secure lands for the development of an amenity area 	<p>B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 C1 L1 CH1 CH2</p>		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 L1 CH1 CH2</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dring/Derrycassan – to secure public access and further landscaping and upgrading of the amenity area. To acquire land to link the public car park at Dring with Derrycassan wood for public access and amenity purposes • Ardagh Mountain – to provide public access and improve the lay-by area. To develop forest walks and provide signposting. • Annagh Lake – To provide for improvement of the amenity area • Derrynagalliagh – to provide for further development of the amenity area • Red Bridge – investigate the development of a mooring facility • Dunbeggan – To provide for further development of the amenity area • Enaghan – To secure and develop lands as an amenity area with parking provision and access to the lake • Killmore – To provide for an extension to boating and bathing facilities <p>Amenities in these areas shall be provided or improved in accordance with their protected status, where applicable, i.e. any proposals for amenity development shall be referred to the DoEHLG for comment/observations which shall be taken into account in the preparation of any plans and the carrying out of any works.</p> <p>AM 4: The Council shall investigate the possibilities of the provision of amenity facilities in other areas throughout the County over the plan period, including the provision of facilities at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrowbeg • Garrycam • Aghakine • Smear • Molly • Harbours on Royal Canal <p>AM 5: The Planning Authority shall control development in protected areas (scenic views and prospects, ridge lines, broad zones of the lakes, European sites etc.) which has the potential to negatively impact on the scenic, heritage and cultural assets of the County.</p> <p>AM 6: It is the policy of the Council to protect existing rights of way and investigate further provision particularly in relation to access to the Royal Canal and the County's lakes, rivers and forests and areas of historical, archaeological, architectural, recreational and cultural importance. To this end, the Council shall investigate the compilation of a register of rights of way within the County including mapping of same.</p> <p>AM 7: It is the policy of the Council to assess the existing public open spaces in the settlements of the County. Any deficiencies in public open space and areas where this deficiency may be addressed will be identified and provision facilitated through the zoning and development management process.</p> <p>AM 8: Developers of residential schemes may be required, as a condition on any grant of Planning Permission, to locate open spaces in such a way as to provide links to, or consolidation of, areas of public open space within a settlement. This requirement may be over and above the minimum required open space provision as set out in the residential policy section of this document.</p> <p>AM 9: It is the policy of the Council to provide for native and semi-native planting schemes in Local Authority developed parks and public spaces and to provide for the control and eradication of invasive and noxious species.</p> <p>AM 10: The Council shall investigate the preparation of a needs assessment with regard to the provision of public parks within the County.</p> <p>AM 11: It is the policy of the Council to promote the provision, improvement and expansion of sports facilities in the County, subject to normal planning criteria and the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.</p>				
<p>Commentary: These measures would be likely to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute towards increases in sustainable mobility and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (SEO C1); • Minimise increases in flood risk (SEO W3) and protect human health (SEO HH1); • Protect and manage biodiversity and water quality (SEOs B1 B2 B3 W1 W2 M2); • Protect cultural heritage and landscape sensitivities (SEOs CH1 CH2 L1); and • Allow for synergies with rural populations (SEO B4). <p>The development and use of certain amenities would have the potential to adversely impact upon various environmental components however these impacts would be mitigated by measures which have been</p>				

integrated into the Plan.

Social and Community

SC1: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the provision of community services, where appropriate, in order to meet the needs of new and existing communities.

SC 2: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate and promote the expansion and improvement of educational facilities including third level and adult education facilities, where possible, in appropriate locations.

SC 3: Through the zoning programme, it is the policy of the Council to ensure that adequate lands are available in appropriate and accessible areas in the major settlements of the County for the provision, expansion and/or improvement of educational facilities.

SC 4: To identify appropriate locations within settlements for childcare facilities. Areas zoned Residential, Educational, Institutional and/or Commercial as part of this plan or other relevant statutory document will generally be considered suitable for the establishment of childcare facilities, subject to usual planning considerations (as outlined below).

SC 5: Areas within a Light Industrial/Business Park Designation will generally be considered favourably, subject to normal planning criteria (as outlined below). Areas within or adjacent to sites utilised for heavy and/or extractive industries will not usually be considered for the provision of childcare facilities.

SC 6: Areas within the boundaries of settlements identified in the settlement strategy, particularly areas in the vicinity of existing educational institutions, will have a presumption towards the provision of Childcare facilities.

SC 7: The following planning criteria will be used to assess applications for childcare facilities in all cases:

- The suitability of the site for the size and type of facility proposed
- The availability of appropriate external play areas
- The accessibility of the proposed development, particularly in relation to public transport nodes, pedestrian access from existing residential areas and/or the workplaces of potential clients and existing educational facilities.
- The ability of the applicant to provide safe access, adequate parking, circulation and drop off facilities for clients and staff.
- The implications of the proposed development on the existing traffic flow and general road safety of the area.
- The availability of suitable sanitary services, or the ability of the applicant to provide such services safely within the site.
- The proposed operating hours of the facility

SC 8: In the case of proposed developments in areas other than those mentioned above, discussions with the Planning Department at Pre-Planning stage are highly recommended. In this regard and prior to arranging a pre-planning consultation, the applicant is advised to discuss their proposal with the relevant representatives from the Health Service Executive and Fire Department, and incorporate their respective requirements in order to facilitate useful pre-planning discussions.

SC 9:
In addition to the normal documents to be submitted in association with an application for Planning Permission, it is advisable that the following information is submitted as part of an application for permission for a childcare facility:

- A description of the Nature of the Facility, e.g. Full day Care, Sessional Day care, Drop-in Facility, After School care etc. to include the numbers and ages of children to be catered for
- Parking provision, vehicle circulation and drop-off areas for customers and staff
- Proposed hours of operation
- Provision, maintenance and security of open space.

SC 10: The Council shall consult with the HSE at the preparation stages Plans or relevant variations, in order to ascertain and include any plans for proposed physical developments in the relevant area.

SC 11: The Council will seek to increase existing and promote the provision of additional essential local health services including private Medical Centres.

SC 12: In relation to proposed surgery development, including change of use from residential development, for medical practitioners including doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, chiropodists, etc, the following issues shall be taken into consideration (in addition to normal planning criteria) in the assessment of applications for planning permission:

- The availability of car parking in accordance with Development Plan Standards.
- The potential impact on the residential amenity of the area.
- The size of the proposed practice in relation to the catchment area and the character of its location.

SC 13: It is the policy of the Council to monitor the need for cemetery provision throughout the county and to progress

B1 B2 B3 B4
PHH1 S1 W1 W2
W3 M1 M2 C1 L1

B1 B2 B3 B4 PHH1
S1 W1 W2 W3 M1
M2 M3 C1 L1 CH1
CH2

the development of cemetery extensions and the acquisition of lands for new cemeteries on the basis of identified needs, subject to resources. SC 14: It is the policy of the Council to manage and regulate the operation of the cemeteries in the county for which it is responsible in accordance with the relevant by-laws. SC 15: The Council shall continue to assess and evaluate applications for fire safety certificates through the Chief Fire Officer and pursue its fire prevention programme. SC 16: To provide advice and guidance with regard to proposed developments in order to ensure that appropriate provision is incorporated in the design of developments that reduce the likelihood of injury or damage to property.				
Commentary: Physical development that would be provided for and supported by these provisions would facilitate the chosen strategy for the Plan. The evaluation of the chosen strategy (Scenario 3) is detailed in full in Section 7.				

8.7.8 Appendices

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Appendix 1A Lands bounding Longford Environs - Zoning Definitions and Mapping	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1B Key Service Town, Granard, Zoning and Policy	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1C Service Town, Edgeworthstown, Zonings and Policy	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1D Local Service Towns, Zonings and Policy Ballymahon	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1D Local Service Towns, Zonings and Policy Lanesboro	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Abbeyshrule	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Ardagh	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Aughnacliffe	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Ballinallee	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Ballinamuck	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Carriglass	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Clondra	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Drumlish	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	

Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Keenagh	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Legan	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Appendix 1E Serviced Settlements, Zonings and Policy Newtownforbes	B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 B3 B4 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1	
Commentary: The zoning provided for by the Plan in designated settlements is phased, with the application of Strategic Residential and Industrial Reserve objectives where relevant ⁴⁴ . The zoning and phasing of land had particular regard to both the capacity of the settlements to contribute towards achieving the objectives of the Core Strategy as well as opportunities for public or sustainable travel and the availability of existing and planned critical water and waste water infrastructure. Phasing also took into account environmental sensitivities including biodiversity and flora and fauna and flood risk. By potentially delaying the development of lands within environmentally sensitive and flood risk areas, phasing could potentially improve the protection of ecology and water status and the minimisation of flood risk. This protection is also contributed towards by the various other provisions of the Plan. By potentially delaying the development of lands further away from town centres, phasing can further improve the provision of sustainable mobility patterns which are contributed towards by the Plan and further facilitate the accompaniment of water services infrastructure with new development and associated impacts. In addition, by providing for development within these settlements, and not in sensitive locations elsewhere, the Plan contributes towards the protection of environmental components outside of the settlement boundaries. Potential conflicts still remain between future development and environmental components however these conflicts are likely to be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan, including those which have been identified in Section 9 of this report.				

⁴⁴ Lands bounding Longford Environs (Strategic Residential Reserve); Granard (Strategic Residential Reserve and Strategic Industrial Reserve); Edgeworthstown (Strategic Residential Reserve and Strategic Industrial Reserve); Ballymahon (Strategic Residential Reserve and Strategic Industrial Reserve); Lanesboro (Strategic Residential Reserve); Abbeyshrule (Strategic Residential Reserve); Ardagh (Strategic Residential Reserve); Aughnaclyffe (Strategic Residential Reserve); Ballinalee (Strategic Residential Reserve); Ballinamuck (Strategic Residential Reserve); Drumlish (Strategic Residential Reserve and Strategic Industrial Reserve); Keenagh (Strategic Residential Reserve); Legan (Strategic Residential Reserve); Newtownforbes (Strategic Residential Reserve).

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.

Various environmental sensitivities and issues have been communicated to the Council through the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. By integrating all related recommendations 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.

9.2 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Land Use Zoning Maps

The Council have integrated all recommendations in relation to land use zoning that have arisen from the AA and SFRA processes which were undertaken alongside the SEA.

Land use zoning was guided by AA which provided, inter alia, information on the location of Natura 2000 sites. There are no Natura 2000 sites or parts of designated sites subject to zoning that would lead to direct habitat loss. This means that the zoning contained within the Plan will contribute towards the protection of ecological sites. The AA concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network⁴⁵.

Land use zoning was also guided by the location of Flood Risk Zones A and B which have comparatively higher levels of flood risk than other areas and were identified by the SFRA. The indicative flood zones were used by the

Planning Department in line with the provisions contained in the DEHLG Flood Guidelines allowing for the Plan to contribute towards the minimisation of flood risk and associated beneficial environmental effects upon the protection of human health and material assets. All recommendations made by the SFRA were integrated into the Plan. More detail on SFRA recommendations can be found in the SFRA document which accompanies this report.

9.3 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Plan text

Table 9.1 links key mitigation measure(s) - which have been integrated into the Plan - to the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. The integration of these measures into the Plan occurred over a number of iterations and was informed by, inter alia, various communications through the SEA, AA and SFRA processes.

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.

The reference codes are those which accompany the relevant measures in Section 8 of this report and in the Plan.

⁴⁵ Except as provided for in Section 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 9.1 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Plan textText inserted as a result of the SEA, AA and SFRA processes is **green**.

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from the Plan
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites	<p>NHB 6:</p> <p>It is the policy of the Council to protect sites designated in National and European legislation, and in other relevant International Conventions, Agreements and Processes. This includes sites proposed to be designated or designated as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive¹ (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) • Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds) <p>Both the Birds and Habitats Directives have been transposed in Irish law by Ministerial Regulation. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 are the most important of these because they provide for the protection measures and management regime that apply to SPAs and SACs.</p> <p>No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 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 or projects (Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Nature Reserves, and Refuges for Flora or Fauna under the the Wildlife Act, 1976 as amended by Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000
	<p>NHB 21 (A):</p> <p>Proposed large-scale developments, particularly on greenfield sites and in environmentally sensitive areas, shall be assessed in terms of their impact on the biodiversity of the area.</p>
	<p>NHB 21 (B):</p> <p>All projects and plans arising from this plan will be screened 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>NHB 23:</p> <p>The National Parks and Wildlife Service will be invited to prioritise the preparation of Management Plans for Natura 2000 Sites which are located in the vicinity of the County. This is in order to examine how the Conservation Objectives of the sites can be achieved in the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the Plan area.</p>
	<p>AGR 10:</p> <p>In assessing an application for intensive pig or poultry units, the Planning Authority will have regard to the Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters Regulations (as amended) and require information on the following:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Depending on the size of the unit, an E.I.S. and/or Appropriate Assessment may be required. In addition an Integrated Pollution Control licence may be required from the Environmental Protection Agency. b) associated improvement works or associated infrastructure, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to Appropriate Assessment to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. c) The Council will 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 planning applications would need to be supported by an Appropriate Assessment where relevant.
	<p>RE 1:</p> <p>The Council shall prepare, where resources permit, a Renewable Energy Strategy for the County which will support the development of renewable energy production and ancillary facilities in order to enhance the sustainability of the County, promoting a low carbon economy and lifestyle. The Strategy shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment as relevant.</p>

	<p>RE 6: It will be Council policy to ensure that all proposed renewable energy projects, such as those related to wind or hydroelectric energy, and any associated improvement works or associated infrastructure, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to Appropriate Assessment to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.</p>
Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity	<p>NHB 1: It is an objective of the Council to protect, conserve and enhance the County's biodiversity and natural heritage. This includes wildlife (flora and fauna), habitats, landscapes and/or landscape features of importance to wildlife or which play a key role in the conservation and management of natural resources such as water.</p>
	<p>NHB 2: It is an objective of the Council to encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the County's biodiversity and natural heritage.</p>
	<p>NHB 8: The Council shall seek to 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. In addition, it is Council policy to protect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramsar sites under the The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (especially as Waterfowl Habitat).
	<p>NHB 10: 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;</p> <p>a) they 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,</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>b) they 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).</p>
	<p>NHB 19: It is the policy of the Council to encourage investigation into the establishment of wildlife areas and corridors, particularly in the context of educational, recreational and amenity facilities.</p>
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Wildlife Sites and species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976	<p>NHB 4: It is the policy of the Council to protect important geological or geomorphological sites in the County, including any sites proposed to be designated or designated as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs).</p>
	<p>NHB 6: see above</p>
	<p>NHB 7: The Council shall seek to identify, protect and conserve, in co-operation with the relevant statutory authorities, vulnerable, rare and threatened species of wild fauna and flora and their habitats with particular reference to those species identified in National and European legislation, and in other International Conventions, Agreements and Processes.</p>
Loss of population of the county involved in land management	<p>Various measures providing for populations in rural and supporting areas</p>
	<p>NHB 23: see above</p>
Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health	<p>ENV 2: Any application for planning permission for new development, extension to existing development or intensification or change of use shall be assessed in terms of its potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. 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>ENV 4: The Council shall pursue the preparation, establishment and implementation of/compliance with the following documents/regulations, and any future updates, through its Infrastructure Section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region • The National Hazardous Waste Plan • EU and National legislation on the prevention of Air and Noise Pollution
	<p>ENV 12: The Council, in tandem with the EPA, will seek to ensure that all developments are operated in a manner that does not contribute to deterioration in air quality</p>
	<p>ACA 2: The Council will only normally permit development proposals where the following criteria is met;</p> <p>a) The development preserves and enhances the character of the area.</p> <p>b) The development is in sympathy with the built form of the area.</p> <p>c) The form, scale, materials and detailing of the development respects the characteristics of the area.</p> <p>d) Where appropriate, views of importance, including within, into and out of the area are</p>

	<p>preserved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Landscape features of significance, including important strands of trees and hedgerows that contribute to the character of the area are protected. f) The development shall not result in any environmental problems such as noise or nuisance which would be detrimental to the particular character of the area. <p>Also see measures related to water quality, flooding, waste water treatment and drinking water supply and quality.</p>
<p>Damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource; Geology; Failure to maximise urban consolidation</p>	<p>HOU DS 4: The Council may promote and encourage development in existing settlements by private, voluntary and co-operative groups where practical and appropriate through the following measures :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Opening up of appropriately zoned previously inaccessible land banks and making this land available to the relevant parties. b) Reduction in development charges in order to promote the re-use and/or refurbishment of derelict or run-down properties. c) The acquisition of derelict property where it can provide infill and/or reduce negative visual impact, particularly in or adjoining areas designated as being of high amenity or of high scenic value. <p>CHAR 1: It is the policy of the Council that areas of vacant, derelict and under-used land within existing built-up areas (Brownfield sites) should be brought into productive use, as an alternative to the use of Greenfield sites which inevitably involves some loss of natural resources.</p> <p>RPS 6: It is Council Policy to encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and reuse of existing older buildings/ buildings of architectural merit where appropriate in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.</p> <p>GEO 1: It is policy of the Council to protect sites of geological importance within the County, as listed in the above table, from inappropriate development that may result in the deterioration of the geological feature.</p>
<p>Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies</p>	<p>ENV 6: The Council shall seek to protect ground and surface water resources from pollution. To this end, any identified major catchment areas of surface water bodies, capable of use as a potable water resource or other beneficial use and areas of aquifer vulnerability shall be protected. Development of a potentially pollutant nature in these areas and any future areas identified shall be prohibited.</p> <p>ENV 7: It is the policy of Longford County Council to encourage and promote compliance with the recommendations contained in the Shannon International and North Western International River Basin Management Plans.</p> <p>ENV 8: The Council, where possible, in tandem with the Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) will support the development and implementation of a Groundwater Protection Scheme.</p> <p>ENV 9: The Council shall implement the relevant recommendations contained within the River Basin Management Plans for the Shannon International River Basin District and the North Western International River Basin District, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>ENV 10: The Council, where appropriate, shall 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>WS 10: To protect existing sources of municipal water supplies through restricting potentially pollutant development within a specified distance from the proposed source. In this regard, buffer areas are identified in Appendix 4. In these areas it must be demonstrated that development proposals will not have an adverse impact on the proposed water source.</p> <p>WS 11: To protect, within its powers, valuable groundwater sources and important surface water bodies from pollution through infiltration by domestic, agricultural or other sources effluent/pollutant material.</p> <p>WS 12: Where potential municipal water supplies are identified, it shall be the policy of the Council to restrict potentially pollutant development within a specified distance from the proposed source.</p> <p>SW 2: Surface water storage measures shall be provided 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 Standards (SUDS), "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>Increase in the risk of flooding</p>	<p>SFRA 1: It is the policy of the Council to 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 Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). The Council will also take account of the North Western and Shannon International Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies.</p>

	<p>SFRA 2: The Council will actively work with the CFRAM Programme and catchment based Flood Planning Groups, especially in the east of the County 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. Such strategies would be most important in areas where significant changes in the levels of development are likely to occur and may be informed by monitoring changes in upstream hydrology including those relating to land cover.</p> <p>SFRA 3: 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. Promote the sustainable management and uses of water bodies and avoid, where possible, culverting or realignment of these features.</p> <p>SFRA 4: Where resources are available, the Council will contribute towards the improvement and/or restoration of the natural flood risk management functions of flood plains. Where possible these functions should be aligned with other functions including those relating to recreation and amenity, habitat protection and management of water quality.</p> <p>SFRA 5: Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing surface water drainage system in the County, ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in all new developments. Surface water runoff from development sites will be limited to pre-development levels and planning applications for new developments will be required to provide details of surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems proposals.</p> <p>SFRA 6: The Council shall implement the key principles of flood risk management set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines as follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid development that will be at risk of flooding or that will increase the flooding risk elsewhere, where possible; • Substitute less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible; and • Mitigate and manage the risk, where avoidance and substitution are not possible. <p>Development will not be permitted in flood risk areas, particularly floodplains, except where there are no alternative and appropriate sites available in lower risk areas that are consistent with the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>Development in areas which have the highest flood risk should be avoided and/or only considered in exceptional circumstances (through a prescribed Justification Test) if adequate land or sites are not available in areas which have lower flood risk. Most types of development would be considered inappropriate in areas which have the highest flood risk. Only water-compatible development such as docks and marinas, dockside activities that require a waterside location, amenity open space, outdoor sports and recreation and essential transport infrastructure that cannot be located elsewhere would be considered appropriate in these areas.</p> <p>SFRA 7: Lower tier plans shall undertake SFRA in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and in consultation with the OPW.</p> <p>As part of a Stage 1 SFRA (flood risk identification), the flood risk indicators identified in the SFRA for the County Development Plan as well as any newly available information should be examined in order to determine whether further investigation and Stage 2 SFRA (Initial flood risk assessment) is required. This examination should use the Council's GIS database of flood risk indicators which will be kept up to date and will add, as appropriate, new information made available through the CFRAM Programme. Stage 2 SFRA's for lower tier plans will, at a minimum, undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A confirmation of the sources of flooding; • An appraisal of the adequacy of the available flood risk indicator information for the settlement; • Consultation with area engineer/local foreman and local knowledge, where available; • Ground truthing of flood risk indicators and site walkovers facilitating the identification of, inter alia, vegetation associated with frequent inundation and micro-topography; • The identification of flood risk zones. <p>The Council shall take into account the findings of the assessments undertaken (including that which may be provided as part of any Stage 3 SFRA, detailed flood risk assessment) during the preparation of the lower tier plans, including those provisions relating to land use zoning.</p> <p>SFRA 8: Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all planning applications in areas at risk of flooding, even for developments appropriate to the particular Flood Zone. The detail of these site-specific FRA's 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. Further details with regard to the requirements for site-specific FRA's are provided in the Technical Appendices of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.</p> <p>SFRA 9: SFRA's and site-specific FRA's shall 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) shall be consulted with to this effect.</p>
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	<p>SFRA 10: A detailed site-specific FRA may be requested for projects specified in the County Development Plan. Such projects could include waste water treatment plants, collection networks, drinking water treatment plants, transport infrastructure and water-compatible developments that have the potential to affect the movement of flood waters.</p>
	<p>SFRA 11: Flood risk may constitute a significant environmental effect of a development proposal that in certain circumstances may trigger a sub-threshold EIS. FRA should therefore be an integral part of any EIA undertaken for projects within the County.</p>
	<p>FLO 1: In areas susceptible to flooding, development may be restricted and where necessary developers will be required to submit a Flood Risk/Impact Assessment and proposals for a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS). This shall also apply in areas where it is considered that the proposed development will impact on flooding elsewhere</p>
	<p>FLO 2: It is the policy of the Council to 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 Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any superseding document). 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 FRA in accordance with the criteria set out under the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.</p>
	<p>FLO 3: The Council shall implement the recommendations and provisions of the DEHLG/OPW publication Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any updated/superseding document) in relation to flood risk management within the County. This will include the following: a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated on Flood Zones A and B, 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. b) Development proposals in areas where there is an identified or potential risk of flooding (including pluvial and/or groundwater flooding) or that could give rise to a risk of flooding elsewhere may be required to carry out a site-specific FRA, and Justification Test where appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Any FRA 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. c) 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. 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 Habitats Directive Assessment, as appropriate.</p>
	<p>FLO 4: The Council, in tandem with the OPW, will support the preparation, establishment and implementation of any future Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies prepared for catchments within the County area.</p>
	<p>FLO 5: Where the probability of flooding from rivers is low (less than 0.1% flood zone C) the developer should satisfy him or herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed. Among other things, mapping including the OPW's Pluvial and Groundwater Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment mapping should be considered for this purpose.</p>
	<p>FLO 6: Planning applications on lands identified within groundwater and pluvial PFRA areas shall be accompanied by a site-specific FRA that corresponds with that outlined under Chapter 5 'Flooding and Development Management' of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Such assessments shall be prepared by suitably qualified experts with hydrological experience and shall quantify the risks and the effects of any necessary mitigation, together with the measures needed or proposed to manage residual risks.</p>
	<p>FLO 7: In the case of lands transected by the outer boundary of Flood Zone A or B, where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority (by more detailed local topographic survey information) that the outer boundary does not reflect local topographical and /or flood path conditions, the Planning Authority may consider the extension of uses allowed in an adjacent land use zone into the Flood Zone area. The proposal will also be subject to the submission of a site-specific FRA and Justification Test as appropriate and the developer satisfying the Planning Authority and him/herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed and will not increase flood risk elsewhere</p>
	<p>FLO 8: Where Flood Zones have been zoned according to the information contained in a site-specific FRA provided by the land owner this should be noted on the relevant zoning map.</p>
	<p>FLO 9: Where the probability of flooding from rivers is low (less than 0.1%, flood zone C) the developer should satisfy him or herself that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed. Among other things, mapping including the OPW's Pluvial and Groundwater Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment mapping should be considered for this purpose</p>

Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment	<p>WS 1: To consolidate the provision of basic environmental services in accordance with appropriate programmes outlined, providing an integrated infrastructural base for the physical, economic and social development of the towns and villages in County Longford.</p> <p>WS 2: Development shall only be permitted once adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided. Where required, public wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure - which fully complies with requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) including the need to provide secondary treatment and other treatment as required - shall be operational and with adequate capacity to accommodate waste water arising from development, prior to developments being occupied. Discharges arising from this collection and treatment shall also comply with the requirements of the Directive.</p> <p>WS 2 (a) It is the policy of Longford County Council to investigate and promote the preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council. Such a Plan may be prepared jointly with other Water Services Authorities.</p> <p>WS 3: It is the policy of Longford County Council to support the establishment of additional projects in terms of improving existing water supply, establishing new supplies, sewerage mains provision (including the connection of unsewered areas, including individual properties/premises, serviced by septic tanks to the existing and planned sewer network) and improvement of existing treatment plants in the medium and long-term and for their extension to include adjoining residential dwellings.</p> <p>WS 4: It is the policy of the council to support the establishment and implementation of a small water and sewerage scheme programme for Longford County as part of the Rural Water Programme, established for the construction and upgrade of Group Water Schemes, small public water and sewerage schemes, and the taking in charge of Group Water Schemes.</p> <p>WS 5: Longford County Council shall promote the extension of existing water supply and wastewater services where required and where resources permit.</p> <p>WS 6: The Council shall support the preparation, establishment and implementation of the following documents insofar as they relate to the Water Services Section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sludge Management Strategy • The Water Conservation Plan, including the promotion of water conservation measures in new and existing developments • The Rural Water Plan <p>WS 14: The Council shall support the upgrading of Longford Town effluent treatment plant and phased sewerage system improvements shall continue on an on-going basis.</p> <p>WS 18: The Council shall implement the relevant recommendations set out in the EPA publication (and any subsequent update) Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland (EPA Office of Environment Enforcement, 2012).</p>
Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean	<p>WS 1, WS 2, WS 2 (a), WS 3, WS 4, WS 5, WS 6, WS 14 and WS 18: see above</p> <p>WS 9: To ensure that the public drinking water supply of the County complies with relevant EU drinking water standards and to support the extension of supply, where necessary and where resources permit, to meet demand.</p> <p>WS 10: To protect existing sources of municipal water supplies through restricting potentially pollutant development within a specified distance from the proposed source. In this regard, buffer areas are identified in Appendix 4. In these areas it must be demonstrated that development proposals will not have an adverse impact on the proposed water source.</p> <p>WS 11: To protect, within its powers, valuable groundwater sources and important surface water bodies from pollution through infiltration by domestic, agricultural or other sources effluent/pollutant material.</p> <p>WS 12: Where potential municipal water supplies are identified, it shall be the policy of the Council to restrict potentially pollutant development within a specified distance from the proposed source.</p> <p>WS 19: The Council shall consult the EPA publication "The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland" (and any subsequent update) in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the County.</p>
Failure to contribute towards sustainable transport and associated impacts	<p>ROADS 2: To provide a road network which is safe and efficient for all road users, cognisant of the requirements of all traffic, including motorised vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>PED 1: The Planning Authority aims to improve the attractiveness and usability of the pedestrian environment of the County, particularly in residential areas, designated settlements and in areas of high amenity.</p> <p>PED 2: The Council shall promote the use of alternative transport to the private car through encouraging enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>PED 3: Facilitate the provision of cycleways and footpaths, particularly in conjunction with new housing developments. The Council shall also promote the potential development of long distance walking routes,</p>

	<p>particularly those with historical and cultural associations and links to other routes in adjacent Counties.</p> <p>PED 4: The Council shall promote the organisation of traffic in towns and villages in order to separate motor vehicular, bicycles and pedestrian traffic. This is to be carried out in accordance with the 'National Manual for the provision of Cycle Facilities in Urban Areas', 'The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' and 'The National Cycle Manual'.</p> <p>PED 5: The Council shall investigate the provision of dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes along routes of high amenity.</p> <p>PT 1: The Council shall promote the facilitation of a public transport system and development patterns that works towards the integration of spatial planning and transport.</p> <p>PT 2: The Council shall support the provision of transport initiatives that promote the development of Rural Transport Networks that enhance social inclusion of rural communities.</p> <p>RL 1: To facilitate and promote the provision of a fast, efficient and user-friendly rail service which maximises the economic and social potential of County Longford and recognises its strategic location within the Country.</p> <p>RL 2: To facilitate the expansion and development of existing and any future proposed rail facilities and supporting infrastructure within the County.</p> <p>RL 3: To support the development of intra-regional rail linkages in accordance with Regional policy.</p> <p>RL 4: To utilise the existing rail service and promote its use as an alternative mode of transport in line with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>RL 5: To concentrate development which may be aimed at those commuting to and from Dublin within close proximity of existing rail links and to facilitate, where practical, improved access for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>RL 6: To facilitate and promote greater integration of public and private transport modes.</p> <p>RL 7: To promote the use of the rail system in relation to the industrial and commercial development of the County.</p> <p>RL 8: The heritage value of the entire rail network is acknowledged and, as such, the retention, conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of this valuable resource is promoted.</p> <p>BUS 1: To facilitate and promote the provision of an efficient and user-friendly bus service which maximises the economic and social potential of County Longford and recognises its strategic location within the Country.</p> <p>BUS 2: To promote the improvement of bus services to further the principles of social inclusion and sustainable development, including the national rural transport initiatives and potential medical transport initiatives connecting local, regional and national facilities.</p> <p>BUS 3: To facilitate the provision of an integrated transport system for the Town and its environs and the County as a whole, with specific investigation into the potential provision of a dedicated bus terminus at Longford and an Urban shuttle service.</p>
Increases in waste levels	<p>WAS 1: It is the policy of the Council to facilitate and promote the implementation of the Midlands Waste Management Plan within its functional area.</p> <p>WAS 2: It is the policy of the Council to 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 control criteria</p> <p>WAS 3: The Council shall have regard to the Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region in the implementation, operation and management of schemes and services for the disposal of waste within the County.</p> <p>WAS 5: Where considered necessary, the Planning Authority will require 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>
Effects on entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and other archaeological heritage	<p>HER 1: The Planning Authority shall promote the protection and conservation of heritage sites, artifacts and monuments and the integrity of their setting, as listed and illustrated in the Record of Monuments and Places (see Appendix 7)</p> <p>HER 5: 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</p>

	<p>protection of this Development Plan and/or the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, shall be referred to the relevant section of the DoEHLG for observations/comment prior to a grant of permission/approval being obtained. In particular, the unique historical, mythological and cultural significance of Ardagh Mountain shall be recognised. Developments which materially impinge on the character of the mountain will not be permitted.</p> <p>ARC 1: It is an Objective of the Council to protect known and unknown archaeological areas, sites, structures, monuments and objects in the County. In this regard, development in the vicinity of recorded monuments shall be referred to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Development Applications Unit for comment and these considered in the assessment of any application for development. In general, development within a 20m radius of a recorded monument will not be permitted and proposed development within 75 metres discouraged (subject to other policies contained within this Plan).</p> <p>ARC 5: It is the policy of the Council to 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. The approach will be favoured in these circumstances as the most appropriate means of protecting the heritage of the County, in accordance with government policy.</p> <p>ARC 6: It is the policy of the Council to strictly control development proposals on unzoned lands which may be detrimental to, any area, site, structure, monument or object of archaeological significance, or detract from, its interpretation and setting. In this regard, the Planning Authority shall seek an assessment - to be carried out by a licensed archaeologist - of developments which may impact on a national or recorded monument, the designated zone of archaeological importance surrounding any monument or other site of archaeological significance within the County. Development will only be permitted where the Council, in consultation with the DoEHLG, considers it acceptable as per the assessment and subject to any necessary mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse impact on the monument and/or its settings.</p> <p>ARC 9: In securing the preservation of the archaeological heritage, the Planning Authority will have regard to the recommendations of the DoEHLG, both in respect of whether or not to grant Planning Permission and in respect of the condition to which permission would, if granted, be subject.</p> <p>ARC 10: Where necessary, the Planning Authority may impose, through the Development Management Process, conditions to safeguard that adequate measures are taken to identify and mitigate the archaeological impacts of any development, including where required the completion of a licensed excavation.</p> <p>ARC 11: It is policy of the Council to protect the National Monuments as outlined in the table entitled 'Monuments protected under Preservation Orders' (see table overleaf)</p> <p>ARC 12: It is policy of the Council to protect the monuments of Archaeological, Historical and Cultural Interest as outlined in the table of the same name (see overleaf), and illustrated on the Map included as part of Appendix 7.</p>
Effects on entries to the Records of Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas and architectural heritage	<p>HER 5: see above</p> <p>RPS 1: It is the policy of the Council to ensure the protection of structures included in the Record of Protected Structures generally and in particular by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling development which would alter the character of protected structures and proposed protected structures • Monitoring the condition of protected structures and proposed protected structures to identify those endangered by neglect, vandalism or unauthorised development and taking appropriate action • Preventing the endangerment of protected structures in the Council's ownership <p>In this regard, the Council shall seek further funding for the upkeep of protected structures within the County.</p> <p>RPS 2: It is the policy of the Council to issue Declarations as to the type of works that would affect the character of a protected structure and therefore require planning permission.</p> <p>RPS 3: It is the policy of the Council to administer the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Structures At Risk 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>RPS 4: It is the policy of the Council to acquire protected structures, where possible and where economic constraints permit, if this is necessary to protect the structure. On acquiring the structure, to its use or sale shall be considered by the Council.</p> <p>RPS 5: It is the policy of the council that applications for development where a protected structure or its setting is likely to be materially affected, will require an assessment in accordance with provisions of Chapter 6 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, issued by the DoEHLG (2004 or subsequent update). Planning Applications of this nature will be referred to the DoEHLG development applications unit and other relevant statutory bodies for comment. Any comments received from these bodies shall be taken into account in the consideration of the application.</p>

	<p>RPS 6: It is Council Policy to encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and reuse of existing older buildings/buildings of architectural merit where appropriate in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.</p> <p>ARCH 6: It is policy of the Council 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>ACA 1: It is the policy of the Council to select and manage Architectural Conservation Areas in the County, as appropriate and ensure the preservation of the character of the Architectural Conservation Area within Ardagh.</p> <p>ACA 2: The Council will only normally permit development proposals where the following criteria is met; a) The development preserves and enhances the character of the area. b) The development is in sympathy with the built form of the area. c) The form, scale, materials and detailing of the development respects the characteristics of the area. d) Where appropriate, views of importance, including within, into and out of the area are preserved. e) Landscape features of significance, including important strands of trees and hedgerows that contribute to the character of the area are protected. f) The development shall not result in any environmental problems such as noise or nuisance which would be detrimental to the particular character of the area.</p>
<p>Occurrence of adverse visual impacts</p>	<p>HER 2: It is the policy of the Council to update the Heritage Plan over the lifetime of the Development Plan. The Landscape Character Assessment shall be reviewed on an on-going basis and updated where necessary.</p> <p>LCA 1: It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the County's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and, where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the existing local landscape. Proposed developments, where located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes (as defined in the assessment), may be required to provide a landscape report detailing how the proposal will impact on the landscape and mitigation measures to be taken where necessary to address negative impacts. Proposed developments which have a detrimental impact on the landscape will not normally be permitted.</p> <p>LCA 2: Longford County Council recognises the diverse and unique landscape character of the County, and as such, landscape conservation areas may be designated in order to achieve its objective of protecting and enhancing the County's landscape. Physical development shall not adversely impact on areas designated as visually important/sensitive under this section.</p> <p>LCA 3: It is the policy of the Council to preserve views and prospects as illustrated on the accompanying map as part of Appendix 6 and as listed in the following tables. Views are divided into full and intermittent in order to differentiate areas where scenic views may be partial or absent along a particular route. The following table lists the routes (as numbered on the map) and lists the townlands through which they pass for identification purposes.</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>(Green Infrastructure) AM 1: It is the policy of the Council to 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"> • Provision of open space amenities • Sustainable management of water • Protection and management of biodiversity • Protection of cultural heritage <p>Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.</p> <p>(Climate Adaptation) CLI 1: The Council recognise European and national objectives for climate adaptation and will work with the EPA, the Regional Assembly and neighbouring planning authorities in implementing future Guidance for climate change proofing of land use plan provisions as is flagged in the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (DECLG, 2012). The Council will integrate as appropriate, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and any related Guidelines which may arise during its implementation.</p> <p>(Linkages) AM 2: It is the policy of the Council to promote linkages between established landmarks and landscape features and views, including recognition of these elements when zoning land and when considering individual development proposals.</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 enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

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.

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.

The Monitoring Programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues - including unforeseen effects - as they arise. Such issues may be identified by the Council or identified to the Council by other agencies.

10.3 Sources

Measurements for indicators generally come from existing monitoring sources. Existing monitoring sources include those maintained by the Council and the relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office.

Internal monitoring of the environmental effects of grants of permission in the Council will provide monitoring of various indicators and targets on a *grant of permission by grant*

*of permission*⁴⁶ basis. Where significant adverse effects - including positive, negative, cumulative and indirect - have the potential to occur upon, for example, entries to the RMP, entries to the RPS or ecological networks as a result of the undertaking of individual projects or multiple individual projects such instances should be identified and recorded and should feed into the monitoring evaluation.

10.4 Reporting

A stand-alone Monitoring Report on the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan will be prepared before in advance of the beginning of the review of the Plan. This report should 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 corrective action.

10.5 Thresholds

Thresholds at which corrective action will be considered include:

- The occurrence of flood events;
- Court cases taken by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht regarding impacts upon archaeological heritage including entries to the RMP;
- Complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable environmental impacts resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan;
- Boil notices on drinking water; and
- Fish kills.

⁴⁶ The likely significant effects of development proposals on environmental sensitivities are further determined during the development management process. By documenting this determination (e.g. whether a proposed development will impact upon a Protected Structure or whether a proposed development can be adequately served with water services) while granting permissions, or at a later date, the requirement to monitor the effects of implementing the Plan can be achieved.

Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Source (Frequency)
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan ⁴⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Department of Arts, 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). Consultations with the NPWS (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).
	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from development provided for in the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years).
	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Consultations with the NPWS (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).
	B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976.	B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976	
	B4: Population of the county involved in land management	B4: Sustain the population of the county involved in land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO Population Data (every c. 5 years).
Population and Human Health	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from development provided for by the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations with EPA and Health Service Executive (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).
Soil	S1: Soil extent and hydraulic connectivity	S1: To minimise reductions in soil extent and hydraulic connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
Water	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)	W1: Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' ⁴⁸ by 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland.
	W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC	W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).

⁴⁷ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- no alternative solution available;
- imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and
- adequate compensatory measures in place.

⁴⁸ Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately the following in the current national schemes of classification as set out by the EPA:

- Q4 in the biological classification of *rivers*; and
- Mesotrophic in the classification of *lakes*.

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Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Source (Frequency)
Water	W3: Number of incompatible developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk	W3: Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
Material Assets	M1: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	M1: All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	M2: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan	M2: No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland reports (multi-annual). EPA Remedial Action List (every quarter).
	M3i: Total collected and brought household waste M3ii: Packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers	M3i: Minimise increases in and, where possible, reduce household waste generation M3ii: Maximise increases in packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA National Waste Reports EPA Ireland's Environment Reports
Air and Climatic Factors	C1: Percentage of population working within the county travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means	C1: An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO Population Data (every c. 5 years).
Cultural Heritage	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential (and the context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) - protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	CH1: Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Consultation with Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).
	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	CH2: Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Consultation with Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).
Landscape	L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands - which is granted permission under the Plan	L1: No developments permitted which result in avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands - resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).

Section 11 SEA Summary Table

Below is a summary table outlining how likely significant effects (if unmitigated) are linked to relevant mitigation measure(s) - which have been integrated into the Plan - and indicator(s) which will be used for monitoring.

Table 11.1 SEA Summary Table: Likely Significant Effects, Mitigation Measures and Indicators for Monitoring

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from the Plan	Primary Indicator(s) for Monitoring
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites	Policies NHB 6, NHB 21 (A), NHB 21 (B), NHB 23, AGR 10, RE 1 and RE 6.	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive
Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity	Policies NHB 1, NHB 2, NHB 8, NHB 10 and NHB 19.	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Wildlife Sites and species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976	Policies NHB 4, NHB 6 and NHB 7.	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1976.
Loss of population of the county involved in land management	Various measures providing for populations in rural and supporting areas and Policy NHB 23.	B4: Population of the county involved in land management
Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health	Policies ENV 2, ENV 4, ENV 12 and ACA 2. Also see measures related to water quality, flooding, waste water treatment and drinking water supply and quality.	HH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from development provided for by the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency
Damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource	Policies HOU DS 4, CHAR 1, RPS 6 and GEO 1.	S1: Soil extent and hydraulic connectivity
Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies	Policies ENV 6, ENV 7, ENV 8, ENV 9, ENV 10, WS 10, WS 11, WS 12 and SW 2.	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC
Increase in the risk of flooding	Policies SFRA 1 to 11 and FLO 1 to 9.	W3: Number of incompatible developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk

Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment	Policies WS 1, WS(a), WS 2, WS 3, WS 4, WS 5, WS 6, WS 14 and WS 18	M1: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan
Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean	Policies WS 1, WS 2, WS 2 (a), WS 3, WS 4, WS 5, WS 6, WS 14, WS 18, WS 9, WS 10, WS 11, WS 12 and WS 19	M2: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan
Increases in waste levels	Policies WAS 1, WAS 2, WAS 3 and WAS 5	M3i: Total collected and brought household waste M3ii: Packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers
Failure to contribute towards sustainable transport and associated impacts	Policies ROADS 2, PED 1, PED 2, PED 3, PED 4, PED 5, PT 1, PT 2, RL 1, RL 2, RL 3, RL 4, RL 5, RL 6, RL 7, RL 8, BUS 1, BUS 2 and BUS 3	C1: Percentage of population working within the county travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means
Effects on entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and other archaeological heritage	Policies HER 1, HER 5, ARC 1, ARC 5, ARC 6, ARC 9, ARC 10, ARC 11 and ARC 12	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential (and the context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) – protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan
Effects on entries to the Records of Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas and other architectural heritage	Policies HER 5, RPS 1, RPS 2, RPS 3, RPS 4, RPS 5, RPS 6, ARCH 6, ACA 1 and ACA 2	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan
Occurrence of adverse visual impacts	Policies HER 2, LCA 1, LCA 2 and LCA 3	L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to protected views and prospects and broad zones including lakes, rivers, canals and deciduous woodlands - which is granted permission under the Plan