

# CONSOLIDATED SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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FOR THE

## SLIGO DESTINATION EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AA</b>	Appropriate Assessment
<b>ACA</b>	Architectural Conservation Area
<b>CFRAM</b>	Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management
<b>DAFM</b>	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
<b>DECC</b>	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
<b>DEDP</b>	Destination Experience Development Plan
<b>DEHLG</b>	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
<b>DHLGH</b>	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Agency
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FI</b>	Fáilte Ireland
<b>GSI</b>	Geological Survey Ireland
<b>HSE</b>	Health Service Executive
<b>IFI</b>	Inland Fisheries Ireland
<b>pNHA</b>	Proposed Natural Heritage Area
<b>NHA</b>	Natural Heritage Area
<b>NPWS</b>	National Parks and Wildlife Service
<b>OPW</b>	Office of Public Works
<b>RMP</b>	Record of Monuments and Places
<b>RPA</b>	Register of Protected Areas
<b>RPS</b>	Record of Protected Structures
<b>RBMP</b>	River Basin Management Plan
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment
<b>SEO</b>	Strategic Environmental Objective
<b>S.I. No.</b>	Statutory Instrument Number
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area
<b>WFD</b>	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 (such as a plan or programme) or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European Site in view of its conservation objectives.

## Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

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

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

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

## Environmental Problems

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

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

## Environmental Vectors

Environmental vectors are environmental components, such as air, water or soil, through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported 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 Act and Regulations (as amended) to define a structure included by a planning authority in its Record of Protected Structures. Such a structure shall not be altered or demolished in whole or part without obtaining planning permission or confirmation from the planning authority that the part of the structure to be altered is not protected.

### **Recorded Monument**

A monument included in the list and marked on the map that 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 that have so far been identified. Any works at or in relation to a recorded monument require two months' notice to the former Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (now Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

### **Scoping**

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

### **Strategic 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 coordinated 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 the international, Community or Member State level and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Plan and the alternatives can be evaluated 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 Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan (hereafter referred to as 'the Plan' or 'DEDP'). It has been undertaken by CAAS Ltd. on behalf of Fáilte Ireland.

## 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 that has been given to the environmental assessment of plans and programmes, which help determine the nature and location of individual projects taking place. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan or programme, in order to ensure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest appropriate stages of decision-making in tandem with economic, social and other considerations.

## 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 27<sup>th</sup> 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 tourism.

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

## 1.4 Implications for the Plan

Article 3 para. 2 of the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes, or modifications to these:

- a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive<sup>1</sup>, or
- b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Directive requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)<sup>3</sup> is being undertaken on plans, programmes etc.

<sup>1</sup> Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification)

<sup>2</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

<sup>3</sup> AA is provided for by the Habitats Directive and is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action or project, alone and in combination

The tourism sector Plan does not contribute towards the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive and does not contain provisions or define rules that must be complied with when administrative consent of other projects is being granted.

The Plan does, however, fall under the definition of a "plan" contained within the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and therefore must be screened for the need to undertake AA. The Screening for AA has found that the Plan has the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the ecological integrity of European sites and that measures to ensure that potential effects are avoided are required. Taking into account the requirements of the Habitats Directive and recent case law (including, European Court of Justice Judgement C323-17), Stage 2 AA was therefore carried out for the Plan. As Stage 2 AA was undertaken on the Plan, SEA was also undertaken - see requirement at b) above. An SEA Determination is provided at Appendix I.

This SEA Environmental Report provides the findings of the SEA and should be read in conjunction with the Plan. This report has been placed on public display and will be altered in order to take account of non-material changes that were made to the original Draft Plan on foot of submissions following public display. Fáilte Ireland has taken into account the findings of this report and other related SEA output during their consideration of the Plan and before it is finalised. On finalisation of the Plan, an SEA Statement is prepared that summarises, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan.

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with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European site in view of its conservation objectives.

## Section 2 The Plan<sup>4</sup>

### 2.1 Overview

The Sligo DEDP represents a five year plan aligned with a ten year vision that will transform tourism in the North West and how visitors will engage with the northern region of the Wild Atlantic Way. The destination development approach mapped out within the Sligo DEDP will have a significant influence on regional visitor dispersion and the future importance of Sligo as an attractor for the North West region.

Achieving the goals of the Wild Atlantic Way regional tourism development approach requires many elements combining together. The transformation of Sligo as an international tourism destination will fulfil a dual purpose. It will grow the value of tourism for the county and become the stimulus for how visitors will engage with the North West. It will connect with the activity of other DEDPs such as North Mayo, Inishowen, Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne and Borders. The approach will leverage its geographic advantage as the closest Wild Atlantic Way destination from the Dublin market.

The Plan's **Vision** is: *"A year round adventure filled destination where the quality of the outdoor experience has put Sligo on the international stage. Spectacular coastal walks, long distance trails and greenways combined with epic off road biking experiences deliver anew blend of adventure and wellbeing experiences. It is recognised globally as a world class surfing destination where dabblers and enthusiasts share the waves with international surfers. Sligo town has developed into one of the country's in demand visitor destinations. The vibrant urban hotspot is brought alive by the animation of its innovative placemaking investment, festivals, events and cultural experiences. The appeal of Sligo among international and domestic visitors has been central to the transformation of the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way. The quality of the Sligo destination experience has disrupted regional visitor flows linking the destination with other regions and cross border opportunities. Sligo has an always on destination vibe that has changed the mix of*

*visitors, attracted by year round events, new attractions and ease of access to connected communities."*

The Sligo DEDP represents an overarching destination development framework linking existing and new projects with new opportunities for consideration. It builds on the ambition of the Wild Atlantic Way Regional Tourism Development Strategy (RTDS) and will be key to growing the value of tourism in the northern half of the region. This requires a collective stakeholder approach integrating all elements of the visitor experience to develop Sligo as a distinctive visitor destination.

The overarching objective is to ensure Sligo is a great place to live and great place to visit. This requires a focus on the products and experiences with the capacity to grow the value of tourism for local communities and ensure the economic benefits will be dispersed across the county. The destination and experience development approach places a priority emphasis on sustainability and climate action, highlighting the interdependency between all agencies and stakeholders to work together towards a shared vision for sustainable tourism in Sligo .

The key objectives of the Sligo DEDP are:

- Ensure the Sligo visitor experience is brought to life through the development of a mix of tourism products and experiences that will attract visitors and retain them for longer.
- Unlock the economic potential of tourism in Sligo by progressing a range of key initiatives that will disperse tourists across the wider destination.
- Strengthen the value of tourism to the local community by providing sustainable employment opportunities.
- Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development by enhancing and creating strong destination experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike.
- Create the conditions to attract leisure visitors on a year round basis to Sligo and immerse themselves actively in the community while providing the opportunity to interact with local people as part of the Sligo experience.
- Develop the role of Sligo as a key enabler for regional tourism development and transform how visitors engage with the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way.

<sup>4</sup> The Plan for adoption that encompasses the original Draft Plan that was placed on public display and minor modifications following public display. Minor modifications to the original Draft Plan following public display were subject to Screening for AA.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>5</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "Site Maintenance Guidelines" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others" (and any subsequent replacements).

The Plan is supported by Appendices relating to implementation plan and environmental considerations.

## 2.2 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

The Sligo DEDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use

development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSEs set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSEs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

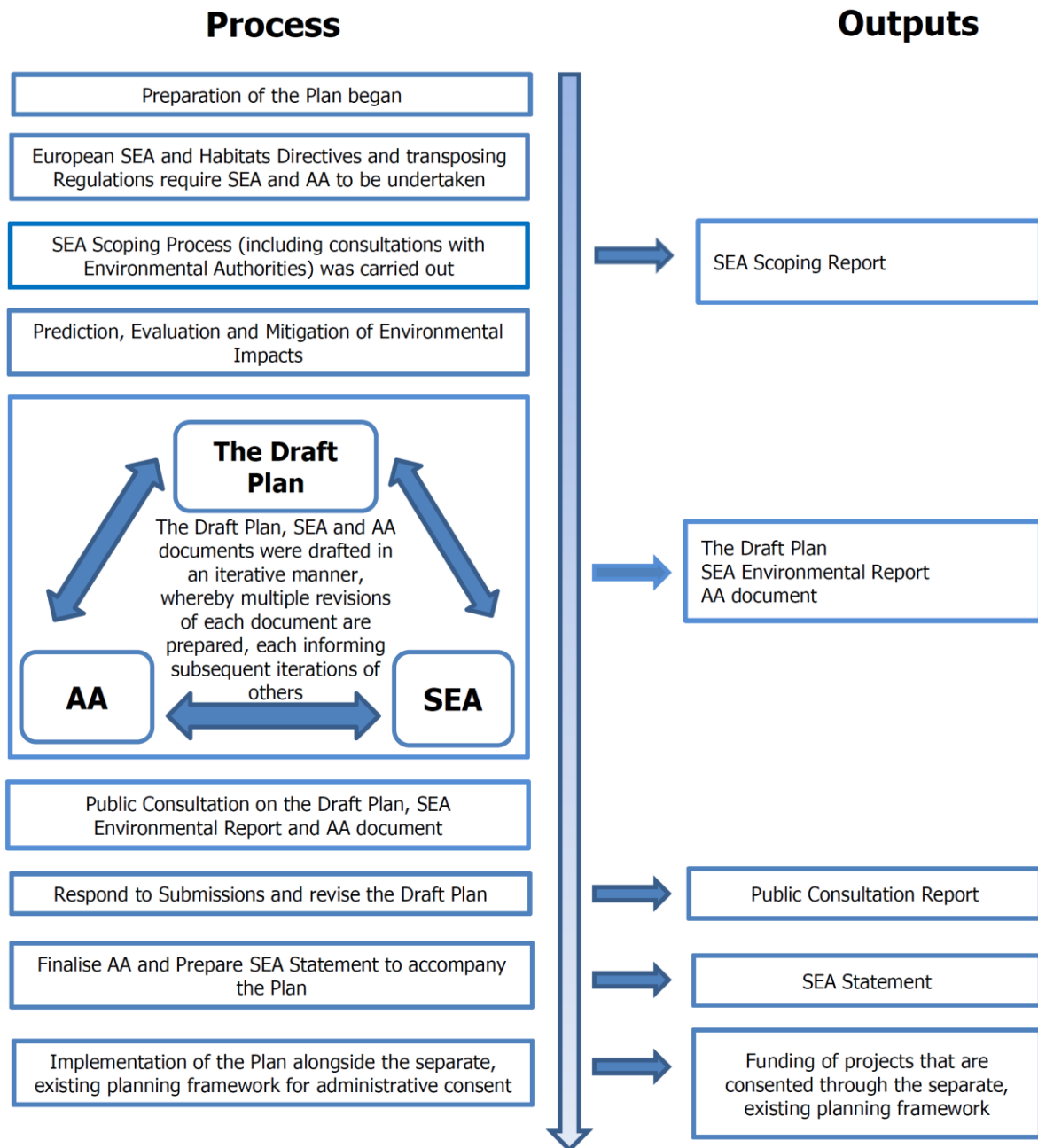
Implementation of the Sligo DEDP shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Sligo DEDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Sligo DEDP is not part and does not contribute towards.

<sup>5</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

## Section 3 SEA Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the integrated Plan preparation, SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes. The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the SEA and AA have informed the Plan.



**Figure 3.1 Overview of the SEA/AA/Plan-preparation Processes**

## 3.2 Hierarchy of Planning and Environmental Assessment

As detailed within Section 2.2 of this SEA Environmental Report and further expanded upon in the Plan, the Plan is situated in a hierarchy of documents setting out public policy for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, climate mitigation, town and country planning or land use. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and already provide for various measures that have been compiled into the Plan. The Plan aligns with and includes many of the provisions already in force under these documents. Furthermore, the Plan will be incorporated into the review and preparation of these documents.

Individual tourism projects must be consistent and comply with these higher-level documents setting out policy relating to land use and tourism and are subject to their own project level EIA and AA requirements as relevant.

## 3.3 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

### 3.3.1 Appropriate Assessment

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

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

### 3.3.2 Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

Many elements of the 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.<sup>6</sup> These include:

#### Scoping

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

#### Baseline

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

#### Alternatives

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

#### Impact assessment

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

#### Mitigation and monitoring

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

#### Reporting

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

#### Communication and consultation

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

*Assessment* (EPA, 2021) could be considered in terms of future projects that may arise from the Plan and how their environmental assessments could be linked with this SEA.

<sup>6</sup> EPA Guidance on the Tiering of environmental assessments – The influence of Strategic Environmental Assessment on Project level Environmental Impact

### 3.4 Scoping

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 that are specified under the SEA Directive<sup>7</sup>.

Relevant environmental authorities<sup>8</sup> identified under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by Fáilte Ireland 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 Fáilte Ireland. One submission was made by the Environmental Protection Agency and it was taken into account in undertaking the assessments and preparing the Draft Plan.

### 3.5 Alternatives

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

### 3.6 Environmental Report

In this SEA 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 Authority, 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.

This Environmental Report has been updated in order to take account of recommendations contained in submissions and in order to take account of changes that were made to the original, Draft Plan that was placed on public display. Updates to the Draft Plan did not provide for any uses, works or activities additional to those already provided for by the original Draft Plan that would present additional sources for effects. Consequently, they did not require further, detailed SEA or AA consideration.

This Environmental Report contains the information specified in Schedule 2 of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) as amended (see Table 3.1).

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

### 3.7 The SEA Statement

On finalisation of the Plan by Fáilte Ireland, an SEA Statement is prepared that includes information on:

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

<sup>7</sup> These components comprise biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

<sup>8</sup> The following authorities were notified: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

**Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report**

<b>Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report</b>	<b>Corresponding Section of this Report</b>
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 2, 5 and 8
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, particularly those relating to European 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
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section



## Section 4 Environmental Baseline

### 4.1 Introduction

Reflecting the specifications in the SEA Directive, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment for the following environmental components are identified in this section:

- Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna;
- Population and Human Health;
- Material Assets;
- Water;
- Air and Climatic Factors;
- Landscape;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Soil; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

Information which is relevant to planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects is identified (note that Article 5 of the SEA Directive, in accordance with the established European principle of subsidiarity, requires that the Environmental Report includes the information that may reasonably be required taking into account, inter alia, the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment).

The area to which the Plan relates (shown on Figure 4.1) covers the administrative area of County Sligo.

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland, where relevant.

### 4.2 Existing Fáilte Ireland Environmental Monitoring and Guidance

Fáilte Ireland regularly engages with environmental research that is used to make informed management decisions and produce robust guidelines to facilitate the protection of the environment. From its inception in 2014,

the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Operational Programme Monitoring Programme (undertaken to date by CAAS on behalf of Fáilte Ireland guided by relevant stakeholders) has been conducting research into the impacts of tourism on the receiving environment guided by an independent working group including the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

On site observational surveys and ecological assessments have covered 57 locations and monitored the activities and effects of over 26,000 visitors. The findings, published in the form of Visitor Observation Reports and Ecological Impact Reports, show that visitors cause low levels of effects and that relatively higher levels of effects are predominantly caused by the mismanagement of sites – or the lack of management. Effectively managed sites have been identified where visitor movements are facilitated alongside protection of environmental receptors such as Derrynane House. The research has shown that the protection of sites does not have to rely on infrastructure or visitor restrictions to avoid environmental effects. The monitoring has shown that that activity dynamics are key drivers of both impact occurrence and impact severity. Therefore, it is fundamental that management practices identify and appropriately manage the activities available at nature-based destinations. From the monitoring work it was seen that 75% of all visitor observations resulted in no identifiable effects; which highlights the feasibility of 'no impact tourism' being an achievable target.

As well as the site-specific data being collected, the Monitoring Programme collates and interprets existing national environmental indicator data, compiling the results into annual Macro-Monitoring Reports.

The monitoring program has yielded a strong dataset and is set to continue into the future, expanding beyond the WAW to look at a set of 19 sites across Ireland from 2021-2025. As the data expands and is consolidated over time, annual trends and comparisons can be explored which will provide further insights into site-specific interactions. One of the key expansions of the database being gathered, aims to explore impact distance thresholds around nature-

based tourism destinations. These data will be harnessed by Fáilte to inform management decisions and further refine existing guidelines and produce additional resources that facilitate environmental protection.

The findings of the Monitoring Programme are circulated to the local authorities with host sites and to site management teams at sites not under the management of local authorities. This ensures that the research can be harnessed on site by those responsible while contributing towards informed management plans and guidelines created by Fáilte Ireland.

In 2014, Fáilte Ireland published the WAW Site Maintenance Guidelines that provide details of the works that may be required to meet a minimum standard of presentation at WAW Discovery Points. The 2014 Guidelines include an Ecological Method Statement which sets out the ecological standards and procedures that must be complied with by local authorities in implementing any works.

Fáilte Ireland is currently preparing guidance for the WAW in order to facilitate the identification of available and effective management options and the championing of concepts like 'keeping it wild'.

Furthermore, Fáilte Ireland is preparing a guidelines to facilitate broad scale identification and understanding of the habitats present at Nature-based tourism destinations – including details relating to known sensitivities of the habitats. As well as these, Fáilte Ireland have produced a suite of guidelines giving detailed design guidelines and considerations for planning tourism projects at sensitive sites.

### 4.3 National Reporting on the Environment

The EPA's "Ireland's Environment - An Integrated Assessment 2020" report provides an integrated assessment of the overall quality of Ireland's environment, the pressures being placed on it and the societal responses to current and emerging environmental issues. This report has informed various parts of the environmental baseline provided below. The key environmental challenges or messages identified by the report are:

#### Environmental Policy Position

A national policy position for Ireland's

Environment.

#### Full implementation

Full implementation of existing environmental legislation and a review of the governance around the coordination on environmental protection across public bodies.

#### Health and Wellbeing

Protecting the Environment is an Investment in Our Health and Wellbeing.

#### Climate

Systemic change is required for Ireland to become the climate-neutral and climate-resilient society and economy that it aspires to be.

#### Air Quality

Adoption of measures to meet the World Health Organization air quality guideline values should be the target to aim for in the Clean Air Strategy.

#### Nature

Safeguard nature and wild places as a national priority and to leave a legacy for future generations.

#### Water Quality

Improve the water environment and tackle water pollution locally at a water catchment level.

#### Marine

Reduce the human-induced pressures on the marine environment.

#### Clean Energy

Ireland needs to move rapidly away from the extensive use of fossil fuels to the use of clean energy systems.

#### Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture

An agriculture and food sector that demonstrates validated performance around producing food with a low environmental footprint.

#### Water Services

Drinking water and wastewater infrastructure must meet the needs of our society.

#### Circular Economy

Move to a less wasteful and circular economy where the priority is waste prevention, reuse, repair and recycling.

#### Land Use

Promote integrated land-mapping approaches to support decision-making on sustainable land use.

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

## 4.4 Sustainable Development Goals

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

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

## 4.5 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

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

Ecosystems are multifunctional communities of living organisms interacting with each other and their environment. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human well-being (ecosystem services) either directly or indirectly contributing towards human wellbeing. There are four main types; provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services. Provisioning services are the products obtained from ecosystems such as food, fresh water, wood, fibre, genetic resources and medicines. Regulating services are defined as the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes such as climate regulation, natural hazard regulation, water purification and waste management, pollination or pest control. Support services highlight the importance of ecosystems to provide habitat for migratory species and to maintain the viability of gene-pools. Cultural services include non-material benefits that people obtain from ecosystems such as spiritual enrichment, intellectual development, recreation and aesthetic values<sup>9</sup>.

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

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

## 4.6 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Plan

The likely evolution of the environment in the absence of a Plan would resemble the environmental effects that are described for Alternative 1 (Business as Usual) under Section 7.

<sup>9</sup> <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/topics/ecosystem-services>



**Figure 4.1 Area to which the Plan relates**

Source: FI Sligo DEDP (December 2023)

## 4.7 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

### 4.7.1 Overview of ecological sensitivities and designations

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

**Key ecological sensitivities** across the area to which the Plan relates include those relating to:

- **Rare species and habitats** protected in the designated Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) located within the area to which the Plan relates;
- **Aquatic and riverine ecology** associated with the various streams, rivers and estuaries, such as the Rivers Drumcliff, Garavogue and Owenmore;
- **Peatlands** associated mainly with upland and coastal locations;
- **Coastal areas and marine waters and associated aquatic ecology** downstream of the area to which the Plan relates; and

- **Locally important habitats** within the area to which the Plan relates, including various woodlands, parks, gardens, hedgerows, old buildings/stone walls and lands used for agriculture within and surrounding the Plan area, providing habitats for flora and fauna and facilitating linkages and corridors to the surrounding countryside for the wildlife.

#### Ecological designations include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)<sup>10</sup>;
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)<sup>11</sup>;
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)<sup>12</sup>;
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)<sup>13</sup>;
- Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas<sup>14</sup>;
- Salmonid Waters<sup>15</sup>
- Shellfish Waters<sup>16</sup>;
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchments<sup>17</sup>;
- OSPAR Sites<sup>18</sup>;
- Flora Protection Order<sup>19</sup> Sites;
- Wildfowl Sanctuaries<sup>20</sup>;
- RAMSAR Sites<sup>21</sup>;
- Nature Reserves<sup>22</sup>; and
- Tentative United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites.<sup>23</sup>

The following information is relevant to ecological networks and connectivity and non-designated habitats:

- CORINE land cover mapping (including areas likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive)<sup>24</sup>;
- Watercourses, wetlands and peatlands;

<sup>10</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.2.1 for more detail.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.2.1 for more detail.

<sup>12</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.2.2 for more detail.

<sup>13</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.2.2 for more detail.

<sup>14</sup> Refer to Sections 4.7.2.4 and 4.10.7 for more detail.

<sup>15</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.2.5 for more detail.

<sup>16</sup> In order to protect existing shellfish waters and to ensure the future protection of these areas, the European Union introduced the Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC). The purpose of this Directive is to put in place concrete measures to protect waters, including shellfish waters, against pollution and to safeguard certain shellfish populations from various harmful consequences, resulting from the discharge of pollutant substances into the sea. The Directive applies to the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs only (includes oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams). It does not include crustaceans such as lobsters, crabs and crayfish. **There are two areas of Shellfish Waters within, partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates: Drumcliff and Sligo Bay.**

<sup>17</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.

<sup>18</sup> Under the OSPAR Convention to Protect the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic, Ireland committed to establishing marine protected areas to protect biodiversity (OSPAR MPAs). There are currently 19 OSPAR MPAs in Ireland, which established a number of its SACs as OSPAR MPAs for marine habitats. **There are two OSPAR MPAs partially within/adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates: Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) MPA.**

<sup>19</sup> The Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 (S.I. No. 356 of 2015) gives legal protection to 65 species of bryophytes in the

Republic of Ireland (25 liverworts and 40 mosses). **There are number of locations within the area to which the Plan relates with a number of species protected by the Order, including: Knocknarea Glen (*Southbya tophacea*); Bunduff (*Petalophyllum ralfsii*); Yellow Strand, Raghly (*Didymodon acutus*); Fiddandarry (*Meesia triquetra*); and Annacoona (*Myurella julacea*).**

<sup>20</sup> Wildfowl Sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded from the 'Open Season Order' so that game birds can rest and feed undisturbed. There are 68 sanctuaries in the State. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries. **Wildfowl Sanctuaries within/partially within the area to which the Plan relates, include: Lough Gara (WSF-48) and Drumcliff Bay (part) (WSF-49).**

<sup>21</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.

<sup>22</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.

<sup>23</sup> Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.

<sup>24</sup> The CORINE land cover mapping classifies land cover under various headings. This dataset allows for the identification of lands that are likely to be most valuable to biodiversity including those which are likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive e.g., natural grasslands, peat bogs, salt marshes. CORINE Land Cover (CLC) is a map of the European environmental landscape based on interpretation of satellite images. Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface.

- Other relevant County Development Plan designations;
- The EPA's Framework National Ecological Network for Ireland<sup>25</sup>; and
- Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance<sup>26</sup>.

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 and facilitate linkages both between and within designated ecological sites, the non-designated surrounding countryside and urban areas.

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 Natura 2000 network of designated ecological sites are maintained.

Man-made habitats within the Plan area can also include important biodiversity features. Gardens provide habitats for a range of wildlife including various bird species, invertebrates such as bees and butterflies and mammals such as hedgehogs, mice, rats and foxes. These species move around between gardens using hedgerows and vegetated areas. These urban green spaces are of

importance as they form part of a network of green spaces across the Plan area including gardens, parks, graveyards, amenity walks, old railway lines and patches of woodland and scrub within which animals and plants continue to thrive.

Ecological islands or areas of habitat that are not connected to surrounding ecologically valuable habitats can also be important.

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

## 4.7.2 Further Detail

### 4.7.2.1 European Sites

European sites within the area to which the Plan relates occur in the greatest concentrations along the coast, the main waterways and in upland areas. These European sites (mapped on Figure 4.2) comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)<sup>27</sup>; and
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)<sup>28</sup>.

The SEA uses the same zone of influence cited in the AA; a 15 km buffer around the area to which the Plan relates. There are 51 European sites (36 SACs and 15 SPAs)<sup>29</sup> designated within this zone (mapped on Figure 4.2 and listed in Appendix II) out of which 31 European sites (20

<sup>25</sup> The EPA's Framework National Ecological Network provides a classification of the relative importance of areas by virtue of the biodiversity and flora that they contain and the connectivity they provide. Many of the areas identified are corridors.

<sup>26</sup> Including: Important Bird Areas: Cummeen Strand (Sligo Harbour); Ardboline Island and Horse Island; Drumcliff Bay and Ballintemple; Killala Bay; and Sligo and Leitrim Uplands; and the Tree Register of Ireland (TROI), which was set up in 1999 to compile a comprehensive database of remarkable trees in Ireland. The TROI identified 16 trees in Sligo that are considered environmental value to the County and that such trees should be protected from development where necessary.

<sup>27</sup> SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European

Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats)(Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

<sup>28</sup> SPAs have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) - referred to as the Birds Directive - due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the EU.

<sup>29</sup> In addition and separate to these European sites, there is a Northern Ireland site Lough Melvin SAC (Site number: UK0030047) afforded protection in Northern Ireland under *The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*. SACs and SPAs in the UK no longer form part of the EU Natura 2000 ecological network. The 2019 Regulations have created a national site network on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The national site network includes: existing UK SACs and SPAs; and new UK SACs and SPAs designated under these Regulations.

SACs and 11 SPAs) are designated within or partially within the Plan area.<sup>30</sup>

Other European sites shown on Figure 4.3 and listed in Appendix II include sites connected to the area to which the Plan relates via hydrological links but beyond the 15 km buffer.

All relevant European sites are listed in the Appendix II of this report. Additional information on European sites is provided in the AA Natura Impact Report which accompanies the Plan and this Environmental Report on public display.

#### 4.7.2.2 Natural Heritage Sites and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Areas Likely to contain Annex I Habitats

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

There are 11 NHAs and 80 pNHAs designated within, partially within and adjacent the area to which the Plan relates. NHAs and pNHAs designated within a wider 15 km buffer of the area to which the Plan relates including those immediately within the area to which the Plan relates are mapped on Figure 4.4 and listed in Appendix II.

Areas likely to contain Annex I Habitats (mapped on Figure 4.8) comprise selected CORINE landcover mapping entries which are indicative of these areas: broad-leaved forest, peat bog, natural grassland, water bodies, coastal lagoons, mixed forests, moors and heaths, intertidal flats, beaches dunes sand, inland marshes, stream courses, estuaries, sparsely vegetated areas, burnt areas, salt marshes, bare rocks, transitional woodland scrub and land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation.

<sup>30</sup> Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded in August 2023).

<sup>31</sup> The CORINE (Coordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data series was devised as a means of compiling geo-spatial environmental information in a standardised and comparable manner. CORINE has become a key data source for informing environmental and planning policy on a national and European level. The main land cover type in Ireland is agricultural land including forestry, which accounts for two-

Relevant ASSIs designated in Northern Ireland are also mapped on Figure 4.4.

#### 4.7.2.3 Land Cover Mapping

CORINE<sup>31</sup> land cover mapping for the area to which the Plan relates is shown on Figure 4.5. The most dominant land cover types in the area to which the Plan relates are pastures, peat bogs and land principally occupied by agriculture with significant areas of natural vegetation.

Categories from CORINE mapping that may indicate areas likely to contain Annex I habitats in the area to which the Plan relates (shown on Figure 4.8), include:

- Mineral extraction sites;
- Pastures;
- Non-irrigated arable land;
- Complex cultivation patterns;
- Land principally occupied by agriculture with significant areas of natural vegetation;
- Broad-leaved forest;
- Coniferous forest;
- Mixed forest;
- Natural grassland;
- Moors and heathlands;
- Transitional woodland-scrub;
- Beaches – dunes – sands;
- Sparsely vegetated areas;
- Burnt areas;
- Peat bogs;
- Inland marshes;
- Intertidal flats;
- Salt marshes;
- Estuaries;
- Water bodies; and
- Sea and ocean.

#### 4.7.2.4 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies that must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs). Entries to the RPAs within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates, designated by virtue of their value to biodiversity include a number of water-dependent habitats within the area that have been listed on RPAs relating to biodiversity –

thirds of the national landmass. Most of this is permanent grassland pastures. Peatlands and wetlands are the second most widespread land cover type, covering almost one-fifth of the country. While forested areas cover about one-tenth of the country. Despite rapid development in the past two decades, Ireland's landscape is predominantly rural and agricultural.

these relate to designated SACs and SPAs (see Section 4.7.2.4).

- WFD Shellfish Areas (as shown on Figure 4.6) – including Sligo Bay and Drumcliff and associated WFD Surface and Groundwater in Shellfish Areas; and
- WFD Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only) – the River Moy is designated as a Salmonid River under S.I. No. 293, and associated WFD Surface Water and Groundwater in Salmonid Regs, as shown on Figure 4.7.

RPA's designated by virtue of their value to humans are addressed under Section 4.10.7.

#### 4.7.2.5 Salmonid Waters

The Salmonid Regulations (S.I. 293/1988) designate the waters capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*) as protected. 34 (No.) rivers, tributaries and lakes are listed and protected under these Regulations that prescribe quality standards for salmonid waters, the sampling programmes and the methods of analysis and inspection to be used by local authorities to determine compliance with the standards. There are sections of rivers within the area to which the Plan relates designated as a Salmonid Water under these regulations: the River Moy, River Owengarve (Sligo) and River Mullaghanoe.

#### 4.7.2.6 Margaritifera Sensitive Areas

Freshwater pearl mussel is a globally threatened, long-lived and extremely sensitive species that can be impacted by many forms of pollution, particularly sediment and nutrient pollution and by hydrological and morphological changes, which may arise from developments, activities or changes in any part of the catchment. There are two species of freshwater pearl mussel in Ireland (*Margaritifera margaritifera* and *Margaritifera durrovensis*) and both are protected under Annex II and Annex V of the EU Habitats Directive.

Within the area to which the Plan relates, these are found within the Easky and Moy River Catchments (as mapped on Figure 4.9).

Twenty-seven Management Plans for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel have been published, the objective of which is to restore the freshwater pearl mussel populations in 27 rivers, or stretches of rivers that are within the boundaries of Special Areas of Conservation. The most significant pressures across these catchments were identified

as: point sources in relation to quarries, sand/gravel pits and wastewater treatments plants; and diffuse sources associated with agriculture (including overgrazing), forestry and on-site wastewater treatment systems.

### 4.7.3 Other Designations

Other relevant designations within the area to which the Plan relates include Nature Reserves and Ramsar Sites (mapped on Figure 4.8) and UNESCO Tentative World Heritage Sites.

#### 4.7.3.1 Nature Reserves

Nature Reserves are areas of importance to wildlife, protected under Ministerial order. There are currently 78 Statutory Nature Reserves in Ireland. Most are owned by the State but some are owned by organisations or private landowners. There are three State-owned Nature Reserves located within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.8): Easky Bog; Union Wood; and Ballygilgan (Lissadell).

#### 4.7.3.2 Ramsar Sites

Ramsar Sites are designated and protected under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Water Fowl Habitat, which was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. Ireland presently has 45 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance, with surface areas of 66,994 hectares. The objective of a Ramsar site is the conservation of wetlands for wildfowl. While Ireland ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1984 there is no legal backing for Ramsar sites unless they are also Nature Reserves or SPAs and as such are protected by the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 or the Birds or Habitats Directives. There are four Ramsar Site located within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.8): Killala Bay/Moy Estuary; Easky Bog; Lough Gara; and Cummeen Strand.

#### 4.7.3.3 UNESCO Tentative World Heritage Sites

A World Heritage Site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).<sup>32</sup> World Heritage Sites are designated by UNESCO for having cultural,

<sup>32</sup> For more detail refer to: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>.



historical, scientific or other form of significance.

A Tentative List is an inventory of natural and cultural heritage sites, which may have potential to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value and therefore considered suitable for nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Irish heritage sites currently on Tentative List<sup>33</sup> and within the area to which the Plan relates include (as mapped on Figure 4.20) "The Passage Tomb Landscape (Carrowmore and Carrowkeel in County Sligo)".

and flora and fauna however, legislative objectives governing biodiversity and fauna were not identified as being conflicted with.

#### 4.7.4 Existing Problems

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

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

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

Ireland's Article 12 Birds Directive Reports and the 6<sup>th</sup> National Report under the Convention of Biological Diversity identify similar issues.

The Plan includes robust measures to contribute towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna and associated ecosystem services. Previous changes in land uses arising from human development have resulted in a loss of biodiversity

<sup>33</sup> Source: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/72ef0-ministers-announce-new-world-heritage-tentative-list-for-ireland/>

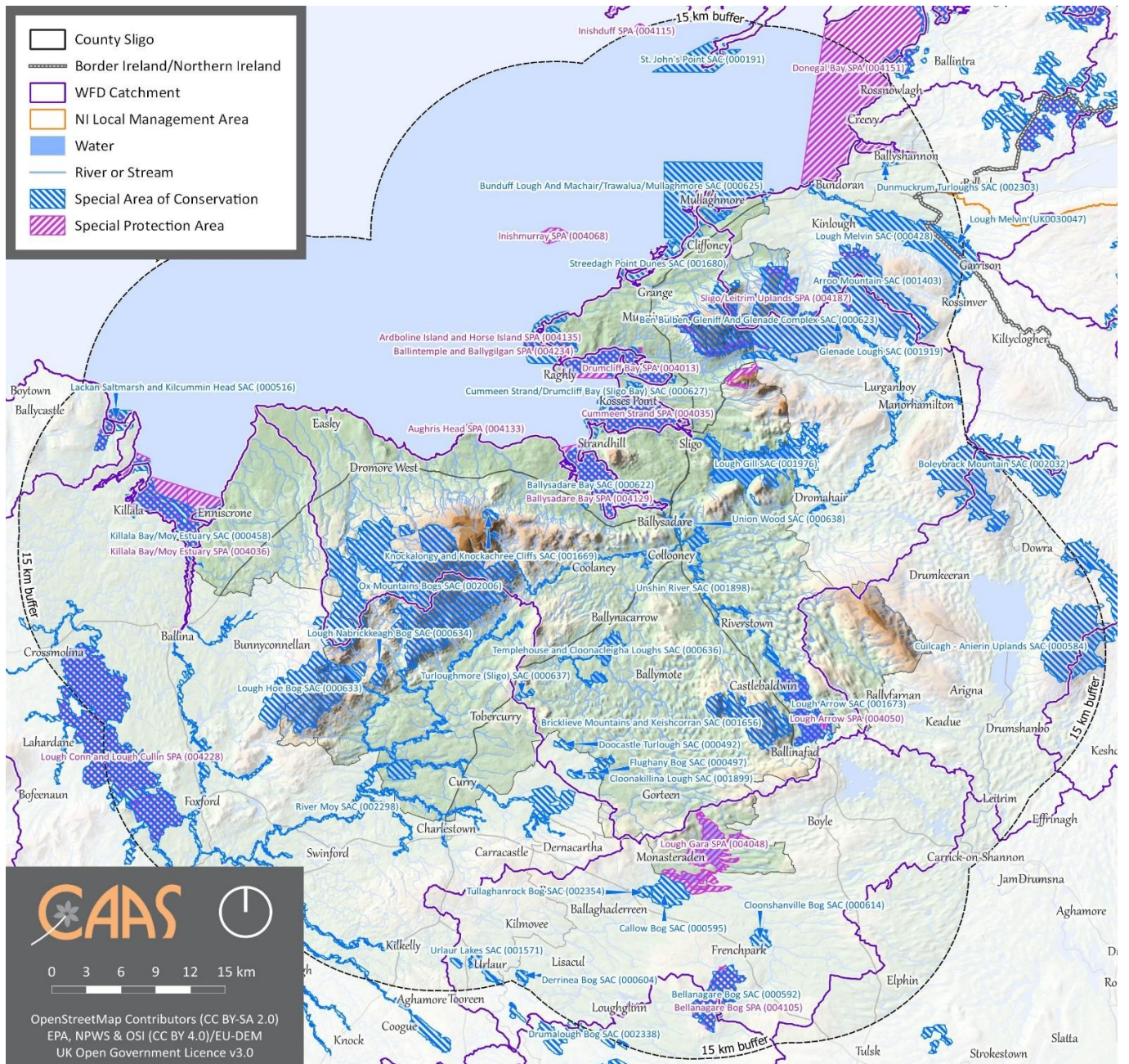
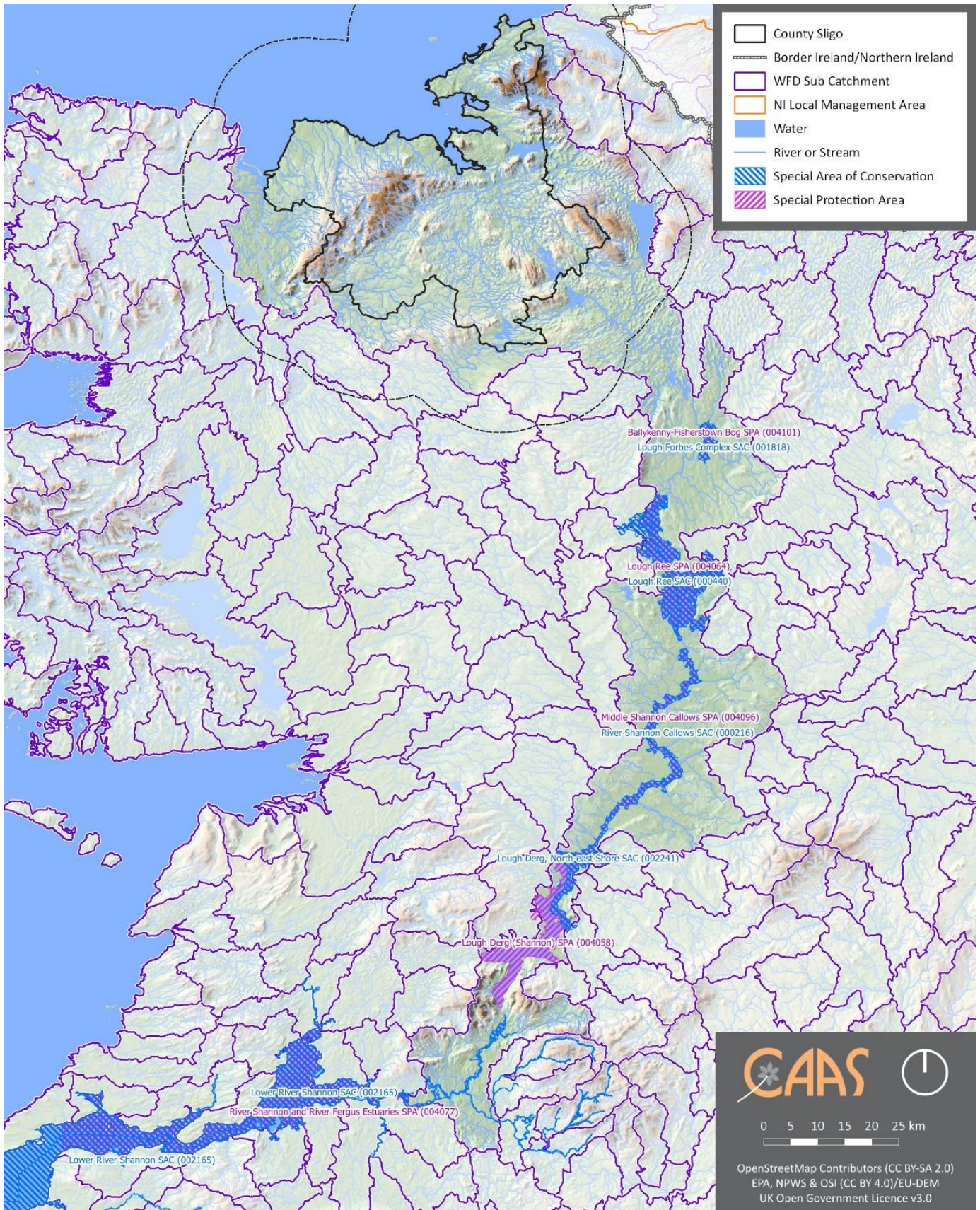
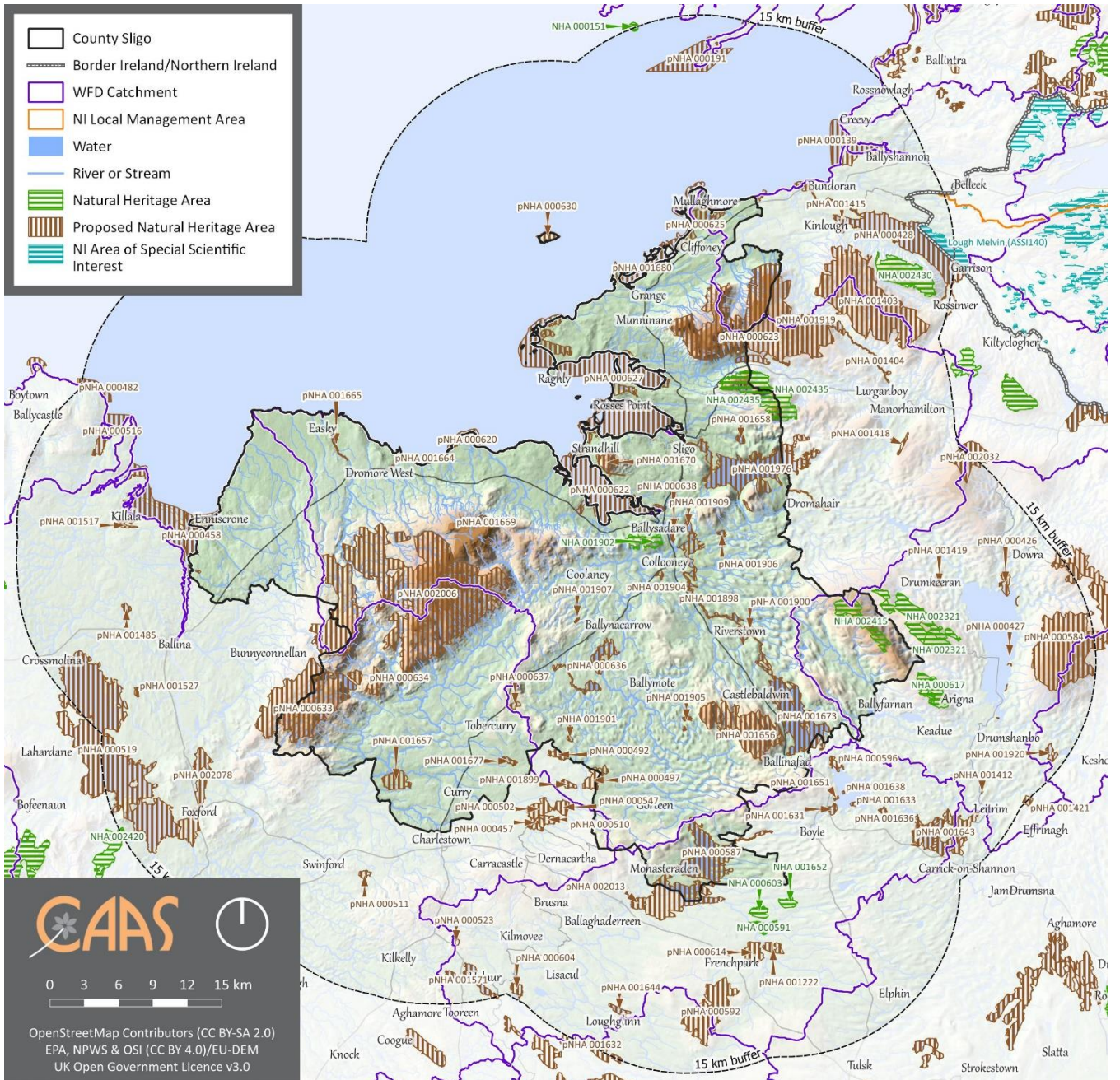


Figure 4.2 European sites within and within 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates



**Figure 4.3 Other connected European sites beyond 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates**



**Figure 4.4 Natural Heritage Areas, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas within 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates**

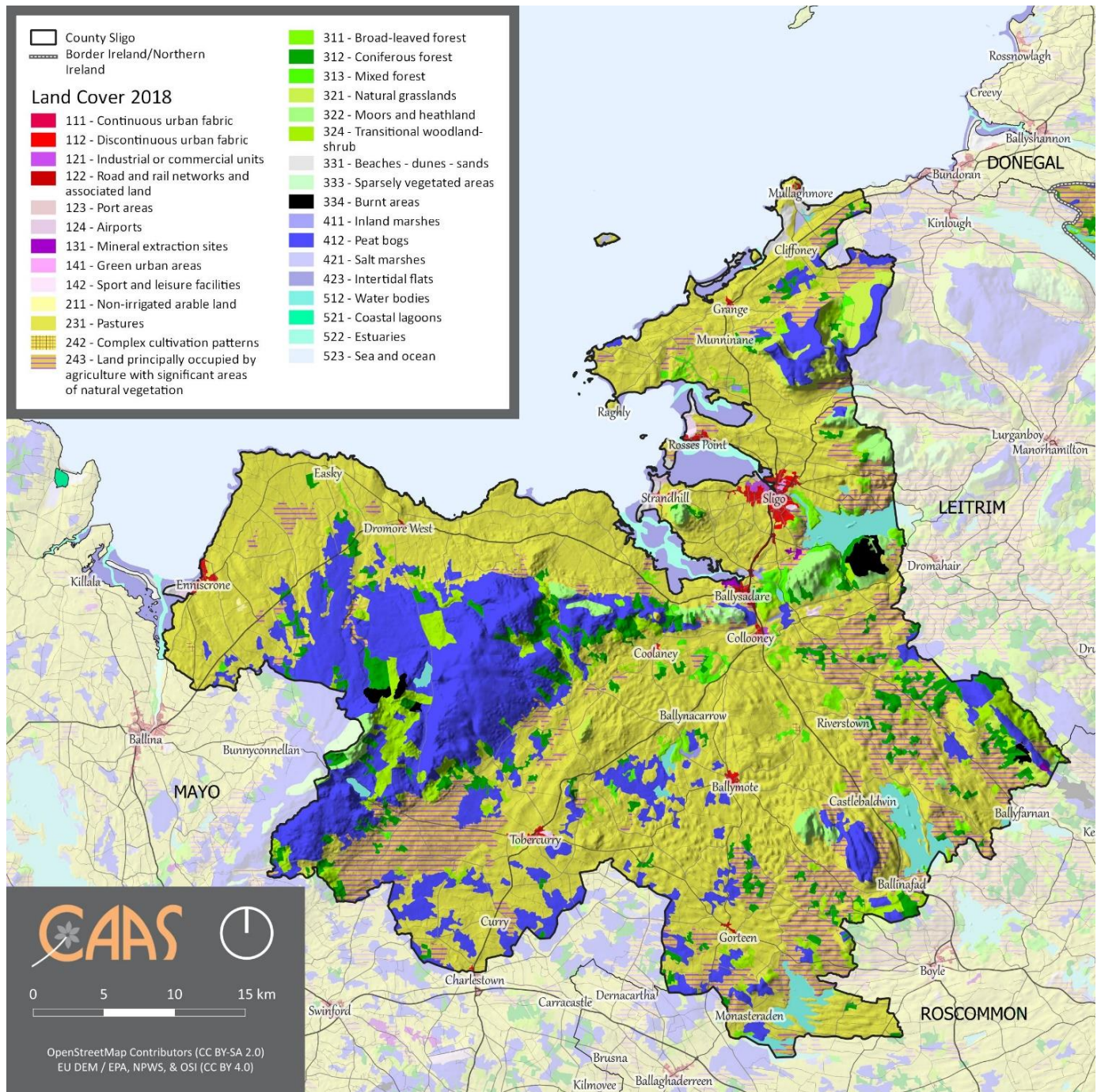


Figure 4.5 CORINE Land Cover 2018

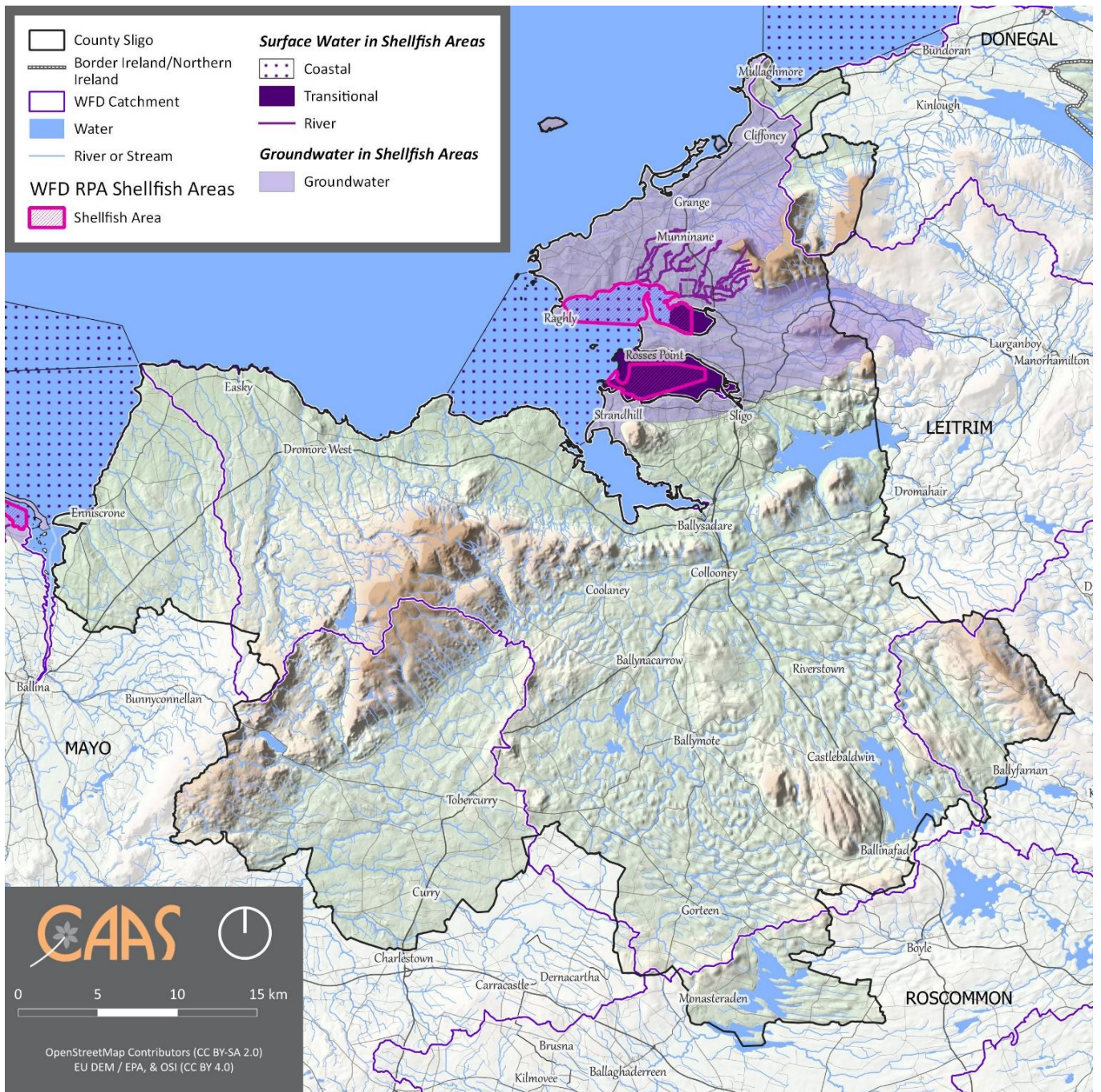
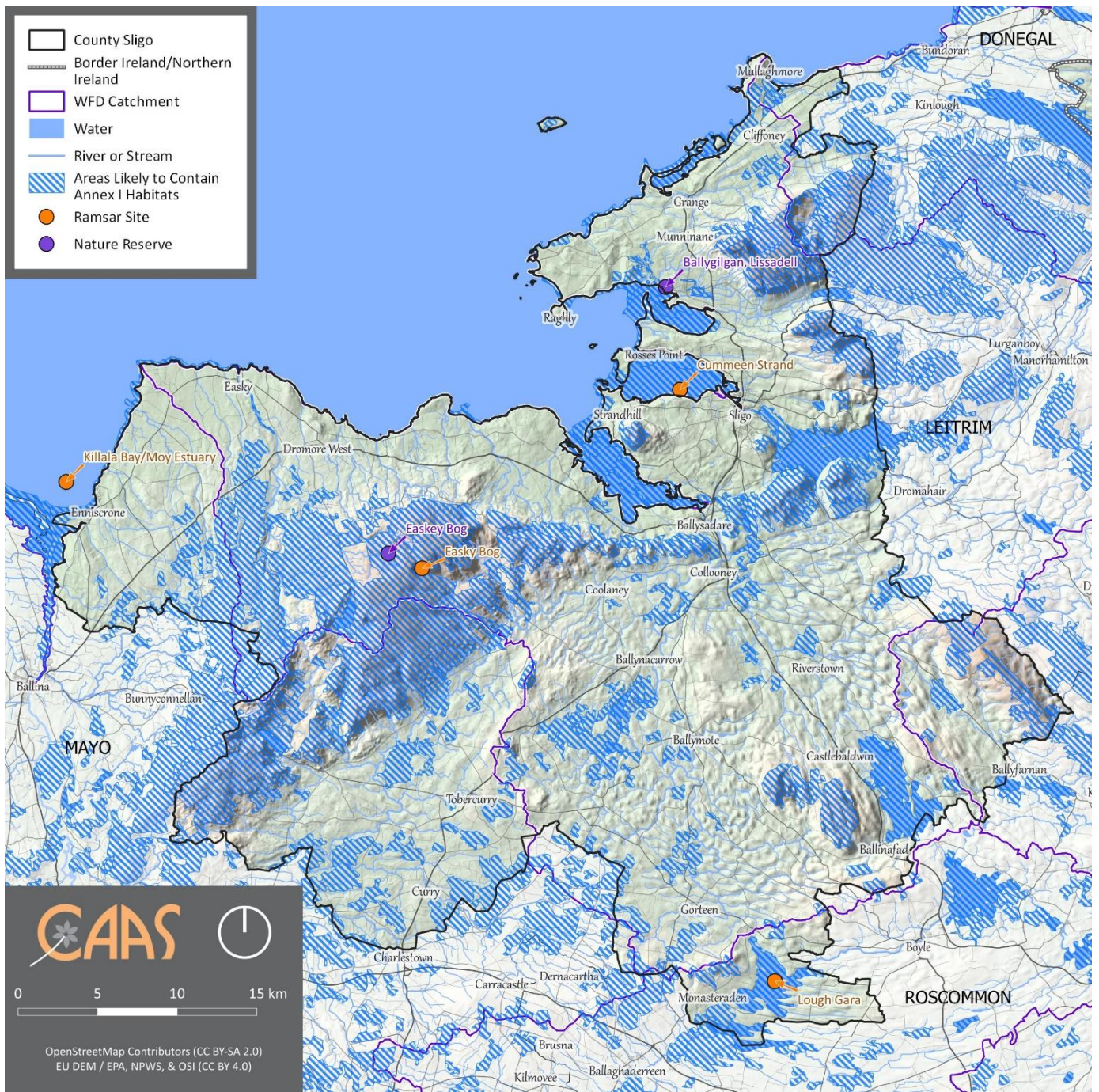


Figure 4.6 WFD RPA Shellfish Areas

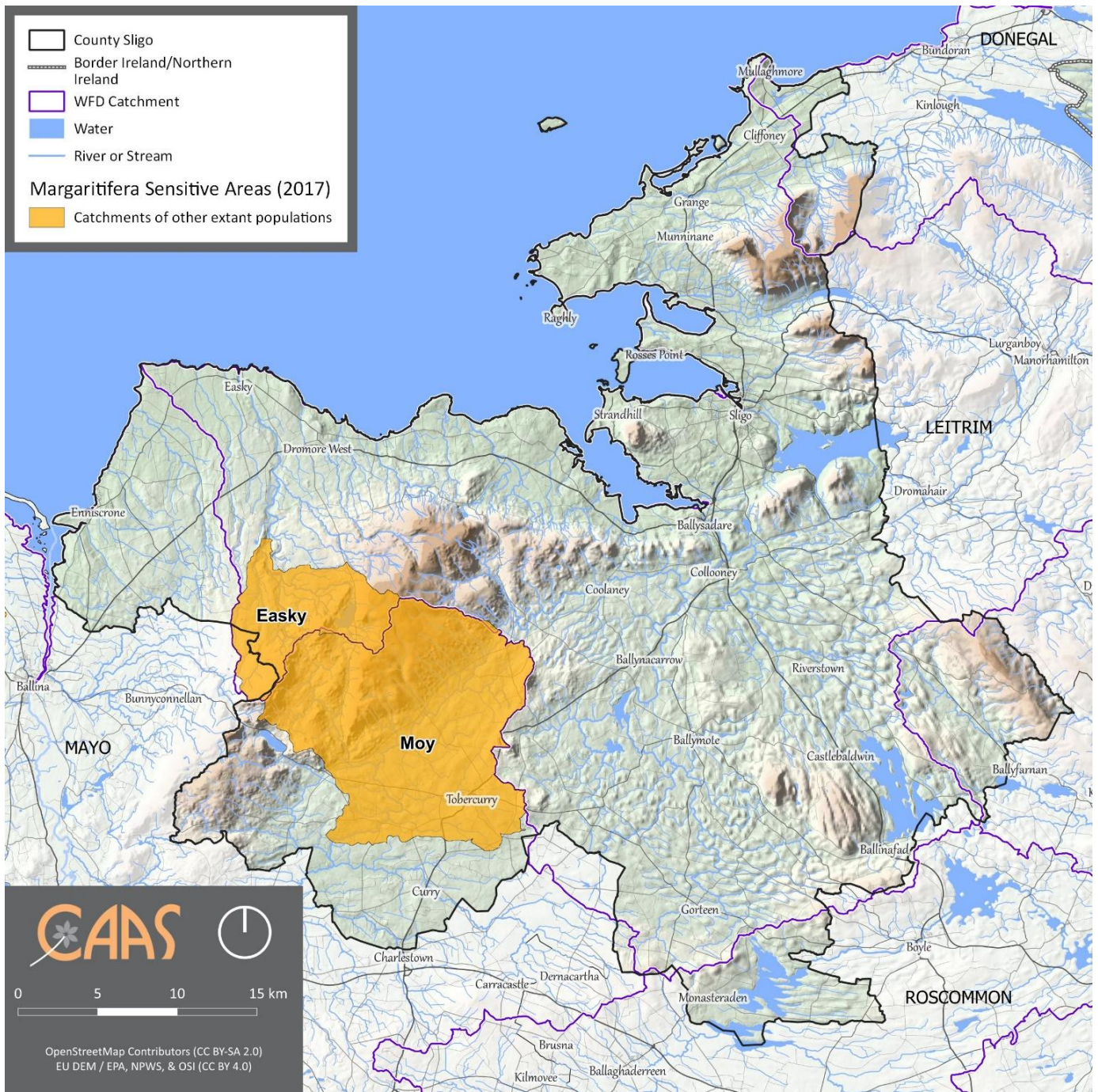


**Figure 4.7 WFD RPA Salmonid Rivers and WFD RPA Bathing Water Areas**



**Figure 4.8 Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites and Areas Likely to Contain Annex I Habitats**





**Figure 4.9 Margaritifera Sensitive Areas**

## 4.8 Population and Human Health

### 4.8.1 Population

In the 2022 Census, the total population of the area to which the Plan relates (i.e. County Sligo) was identified as being of 70,198 persons, an increase in total population by c. 7% (c. 4,663 persons) since the previous census.

Population has the potential to interact with various environmental components. Potential interactions include:

- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes (see Section 4.7);
- Contribution towards an increase in demand for wastewater treatment at the municipal level (see Section 4.12);
- Contribution towards increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction (see Section 4.12);
- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive areas (see Section 4.10); and
- Potential effects on water quality (see Section 4.10).

### 4.8.2 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.

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 plan or programme 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.

### 4.8.3 Soil

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

As is the case with other historically developed areas across the country, there is potential for contamination at local sites within the Plan area, especially where land uses occurred in the past in the absence of the high standards of today's environmental protection legislation.

### 4.8.4 Existing Problems

The greatest health risk from radiation in Ireland is caused by radon. The presence of radon gas, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils, occurs across the country. It accounts for more than half of the total radiation dose received by the Irish population. As a known carcinogen, in the same category as tobacco smoke and asbestos it is a cause of lung cancer. Exposure to radon for long periods or at high concentrations can lead to lung cancer.

The number of homes within the area to which the Plan relates with radon levels above the reference level is within the normal range experienced in other locations across the country<sup>34</sup>.

Parts of the Plan area are vulnerable to adverse effects from small changes in sea level combined with changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events and associated flooding of rivers and a number of smaller urban streams. Flooding in certain circumstances could pose a risk to human health. There is historic and predictive evidence of flooding within the area (see Section 4.10.9).

Also refer to the other sections of this report referred to above with respect to interactions with other environmental components.

<sup>34</sup> Mapping available at <http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap>

## 4.9 Soil

### 4.9.1 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, the EU Soil Strategy for 2030 sets out a framework and concrete measures to protect and restore soils, and ensure that they are used sustainably. It sets a vision and objectives to achieve healthy soils by 2050, with concrete actions by 2030. It also announces a new Soil Health Law by 2023 to ensure a high-level of environmental and health protection.

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

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

<sup>35</sup> Dark brown humus-mineral soil covered with a thin mat of partly decayed leaves.

<sup>36</sup> Well-drained mineral soils, associated with high levels of natural fertility.

<sup>37</sup> These are associated with alluvial (clay, silt or sand) river deposits.

<sup>38</sup> Thin soil consisting mainly of partially weathered rock fragments.

### 4.9.2 Soil Types

Active blanket bogs and active raised bogs are considered to be priority habitats, listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. Ombrotrophic (rain-fed) and minerotrophic (groundwater fed) peat soils are often indicative of areas that are the most sensitive to development due to ecological sensitivities and impeded drainage issues. Many of these peat areas are also subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.7). Peat soils are a dominant soil type occurring extensively within the area to which the Plan relates (see Figure 4.10).

Other soil types (shown on Figure 4.10) identified across the area to which the Plan relates include:

- **Brown podzolics**<sup>35</sup> (occurring mainly in the north-east and central parts of the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Brown earths**<sup>36</sup> (occurring mainly in the central and coastal areas throughout the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Alluvial soils**<sup>37</sup> (occurring mainly along the rivers, lakes and estuaries within the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Lithosol soils**<sup>38</sup> (occurring mainly in the west of the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Surface water and groundwater gleys**<sup>39</sup> (occurring mainly in the south, south-west, south-east and north of the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Luvisol soils**<sup>40</sup> (occurring mainly in central, south and north of the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Podzols**<sup>41</sup> (occurring mainly in the central parts of the area to which the Plan relates); and
- **Rendzinas**<sup>42</sup> (occurring mainly in the south-east of the area to which the Plan relates).

Tidal marshes can be found along rivers and coasts which flood and drain by the tidal movement of the adjacent estuary, sea or ocean. Sand dunes are small ridges or hills of sand found at the top of a beach, above the usual maximum reach of the waves. They form from windblown sand that is initially deposited around obstacles on the beach such as driftwood, rocks or a fence. Areas of tidal marsh occur along estuaries surrounding the area to which the Plan relates and blown sand and

<sup>39</sup> Wetland soils with slowly permeable horizons resulting in seasonal waterlogging.

<sup>40</sup> Generally fertile, widely used for agriculture and associated with significant accumulation of clay

<sup>41</sup> Infertile acidic soils with an ash-like subsurface layer associated with acid leaching typically formed under coniferous forest

<sup>42</sup> A fertile lime-rich soil with dark humus above a pale soft calcareous layer.

dunes occur in the north of the area to which the Plan relates. These areas are often very sensitive to development due to ecological sensitivities. Outcropping rock is found mainly in the coastal and upland areas.

### 4.9.3 Geological Heritage

Geological Survey of Ireland coordinates the Irish Geological Heritage Programme, which seeks to identify and select sites of geological interest within each county across the country. Sites that are appraised, but which are not selected for NHA designation, are classified as 'County Geological Sites' (CGSs), as recognised in the National Heritage Plan (2002). This enables their integration into County Development Plans. All sites of geological heritage importance are currently classified as County Geological Sites (CGSs) until such time that the most significant sites can be designated as geological NHAs.

The audit report of geological sites in County Sligo was published in 2004<sup>43</sup>. There are 25 County Geological Sites designated across the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.11)<sup>44</sup>, with the highest concentration of these sites occurring within coastal and upland locations, comprising:

- Meenamore;
- Diarmuid and Gráinne's Cave;
- King's Mountain Rift;
- Glencarbury Barite Mine;
- Aughris Head;
- Streedagh Point;
- Serpent Rock;
- Mullaghmore Head;
- Bricklieves/Keshcorran;
- Knocknarea;
- Split Rock or Giant's Rock;
- Slishwood Gap, Ox Mountains;
- Glen;
- Scalpnacapaill;
- Zion Hill;
- The Gap (NW of Lough Talt);
- Easky River solifluction lobe;
- Gleniff;
- Inishcrone;
- Truskmore;
- Swiss Valley;
- Geevagh;
- Lough Nasool – Lough Bo;

<sup>43</sup> The audit of County Geological Sites in County Sligo is available from GSI at ([www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)). Twenty-nine counties (including all local authority areas), have completed their geological audits to date.

<sup>44</sup> Relevant CGSs in adjacent counties are also mapped.

<sup>45</sup> For more information refer to <https://data.gov.ie/dataset/gsi-public-supply-source-protection-areas>.

- Benbulbin; and
- Knocknarea Glen.

### 4.9.4 Source Protection Areas

Source Protection Area delineation provides an assessment of the land area that contributes groundwater to a borehole or spring. Source reports have been undertaken by the GSI on behalf of Local Authorities since the mid-1990s.

Public Supply Source Protection Areas are managed by Uisce Éireann to supply Public Water Supply Schemes across Ireland. Source Protection Areas provide protection by placing tighter controls on activities within all or part of the zone of contribution of the source.

Groundwater bodies are important water supply sources for private wells, group schemes and local authority supplies and for use in a range of commercial activities. This is particularly the case in rural areas that are not served by public or group water schemes, with private bored wells being the only source of supply. There are a number of Source Protection Areas within the area to which the Plan relates<sup>45</sup>.

### 4.9.5 Landslides

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

The area to which the Plan relates has numerous locations with a history of landslide events<sup>46</sup> and many of these events are associated with the peatland and upland areas. The GSI have identified<sup>47</sup> the area to which the Plan relates as

<sup>46</sup> Landslide events are recorded in the National Landslides Database available from GSI ([www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)).

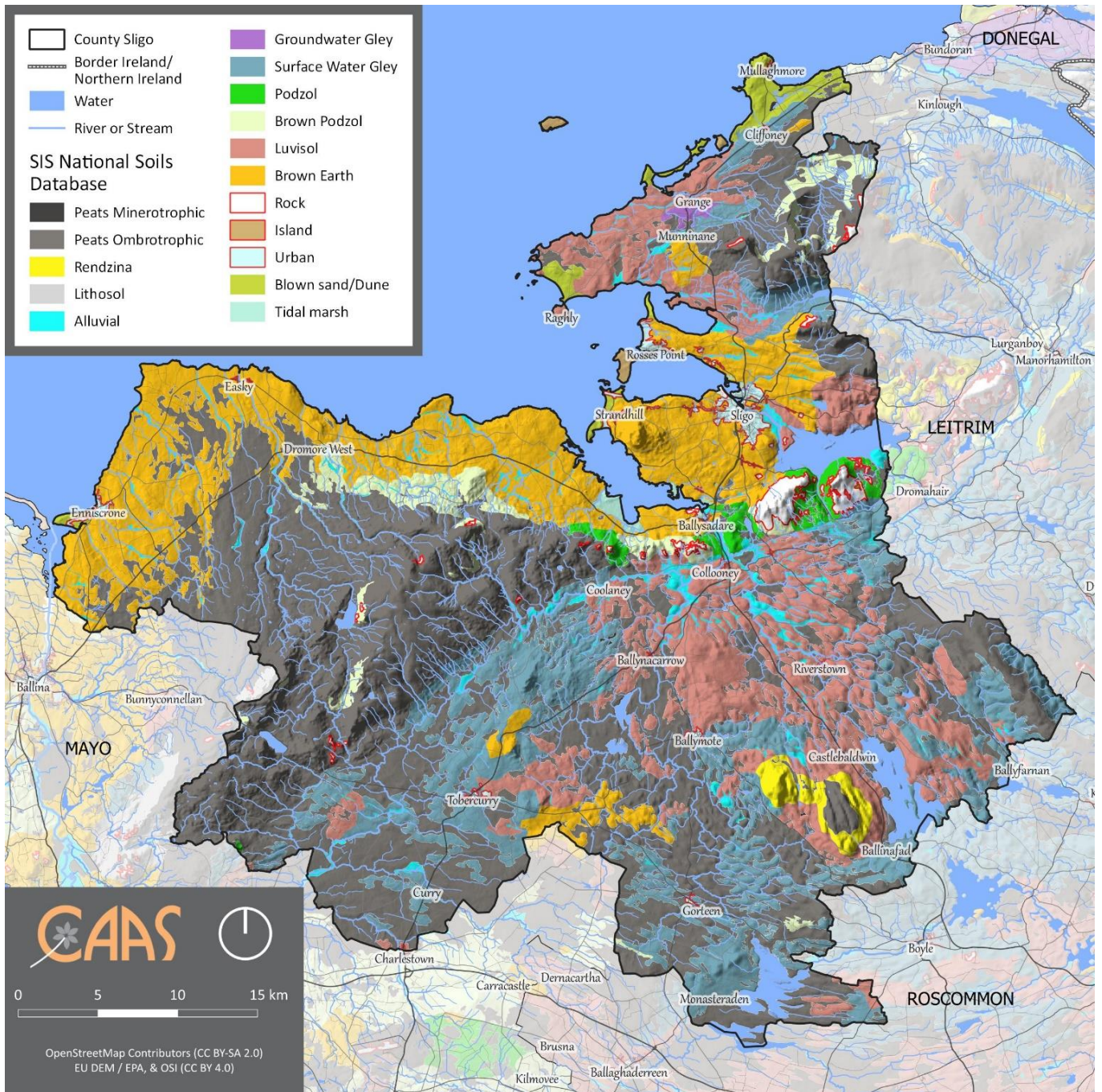
<sup>47</sup> <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/geohazards/projects/Pages/Landslide-Susceptibility-Mapping.aspx>

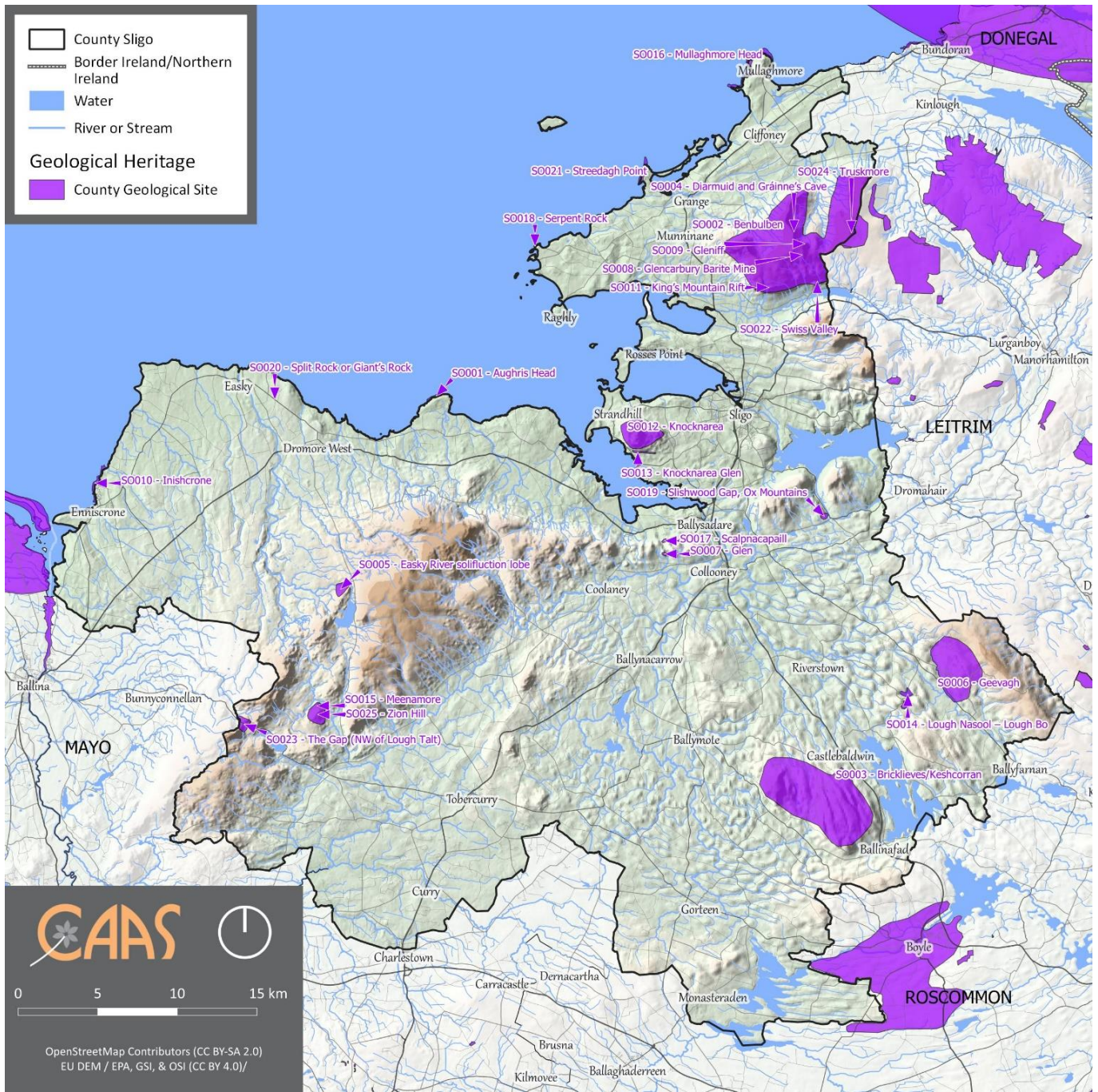
having mainly low levels of landslide susceptibility with some areas of moderately low, moderately high and high levels of landslide susceptibility associated mainly with peatlands and coastal and upland locations (mapped on Figure 4.12).

#### **4.9.6 Existing Problems**

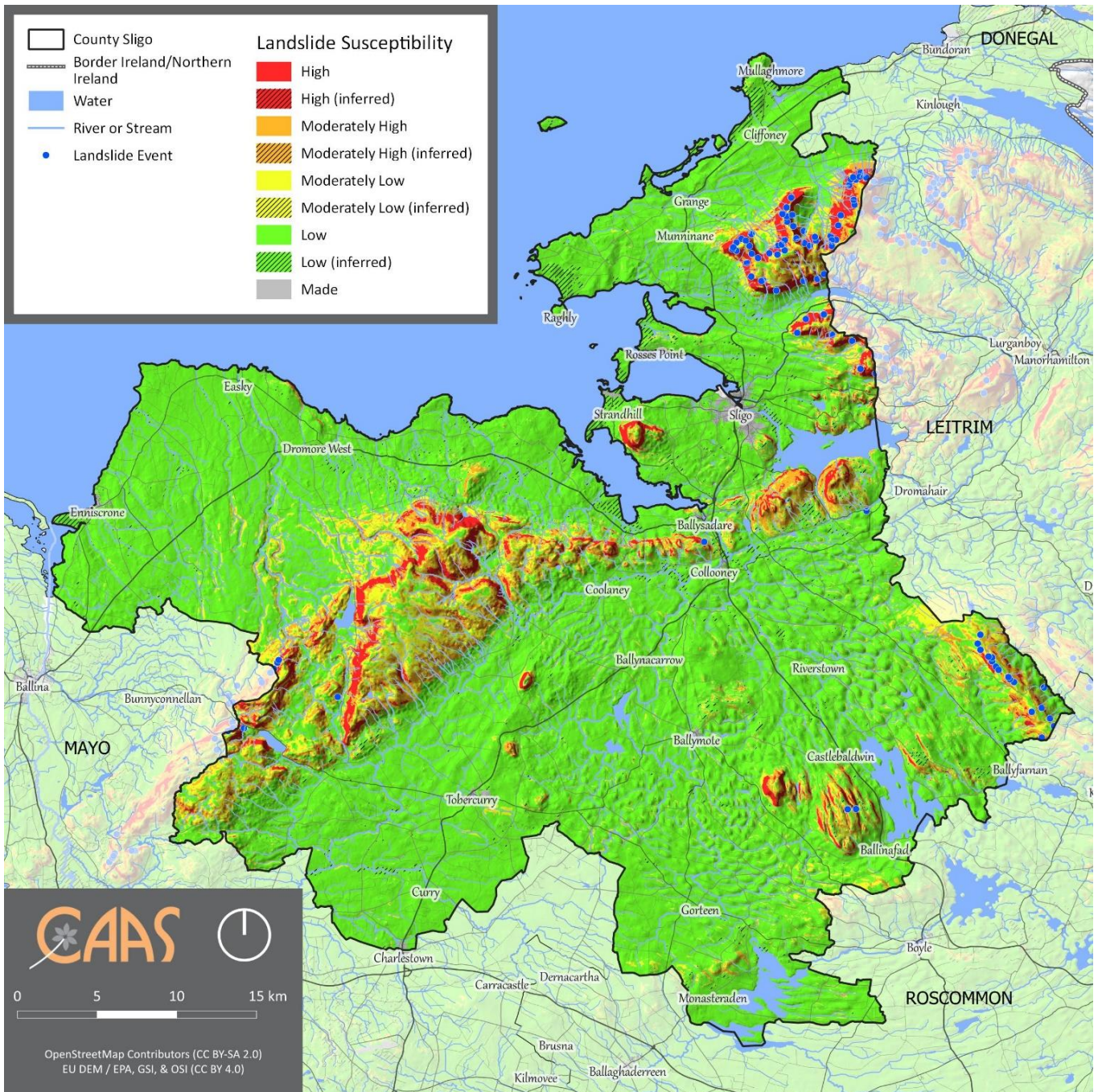
There have been a number of landslide events across the area to which the Plan relates and there are various areas identified by the GSI as being of elevated levels of landslide susceptibility (see Section 4.9.5).

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





**Figure 4.11 Geological Heritage**



**Figure 4.12 Landslide Susceptibility and Previous Landslide Events**



## 4.10 Water

### 4.10.1 The Water Framework Directive

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

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

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

<sup>48</sup> The most recent "*Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report*" was issued in May 2022, however, WFD data included is not updated each year due to the timescales of the monitoring. <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/water-framework-directive-statistics>

<sup>49</sup> This catchment includes the area drained by the River Erne and all streams entering tidal water between Aughrus Point and Kildoney Point, Co. Donegal. This is a cross border catchment with a surface area of 4,415km<sup>2</sup>, 2,512km<sup>2</sup> of which is located within The Republic.

<sup>50</sup> This catchment includes all streams entering tidal water in Sligo Bay and between Lenadon Point and Aughrus Point, Co. Donegal. The catchment has a surface area of 1,866km<sup>2</sup>. A small part of this catchment, 109km<sup>2</sup> is located within Northern Ireland.

<sup>51</sup> This catchment covers an area of 604km<sup>2</sup> and is characterised by the Brefine upland areas including the karst area of the Geevagh Hills, location of the Arigna Coalfield, the karstic southern slopes of Cuilcagh Mountain and the western flanks of Slieve Anierin (literally The Iron

Mountain) and rich in iron ore) which surround the lowland area containing the large source of the River Shannon (Shannon Pot) and Lough Allen.

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

### 4.10.2 Zone of Influence

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland) publish an annual "*Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report*", which includes information on the status of waterbodies in Northern Ireland.<sup>48</sup>

### 4.10.3 Surface Water Drainage

The Zone of Influence of the Plan beyond the area to which the Plan relates, with respect to impacts upon waters can be estimated to be all bodies of groundwater and all surface waters downstream areas of catchments which drain the area to which the Plan relates.

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

The area to which the Plan relates falls within five large river catchments: Erne<sup>49</sup>; Sligo Bay and Drowse<sup>50</sup>; Upper Shannon (26A<sup>51</sup> and 26B<sup>52</sup>); and Moy and Killala Bay<sup>53</sup>.

The area to which the Plan relates falls within five large river catchments: Erne<sup>49</sup>; Sligo Bay and Drowse<sup>50</sup>; Upper Shannon (26A<sup>51</sup> and 26B<sup>52</sup>); and Moy and Killala Bay<sup>53</sup>.

This catchment includes the area drained by the River Moy and all streams entering tidal water in Killala Bay between Benwee Head and Lenadon Point, Co. Sligo, draining a total area of 2,345km<sup>2</sup>. The lowland parts of the catchment are underlain by various types of limestones while the upland areas from the Ox Mountains and Croaghmoyle are underlain by a band of igneous and metamorphic rocks. Much of the lowland area south of Lough Conn exhibits a drumlin topography. There are extensive sand and gravel aquifers lying between Swinford and Charlestown to as far south as Knock, to the east of Ballina and southwest of Crossmolina.

The main waterbodies in the area to which the Plan relates include: Donegal Bay; Sligo Bay; Killala Bay; Garavogue Estuary; Ballysadare Estuary; Lough Gara; Lough Gill; Lough Arrow; Garavogue River; and Owengarve River.

#### 4.10.4 Surface Water Status

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

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

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

The WFD surface water status (2016-2021) for rivers and lakes within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates, including a number of *unassigned*<sup>54</sup> waterbodies, is shown on Figure 4.13.

The WFD status of the rivers and lakes within the area to which the Plan relates is classified as *high*, *good* and *moderate* however, sections<sup>55</sup> of rivers and streams (including: Bunnanaddan Stream; Cartonkillerdoe; Douglas, Sligo; Garavogue; Grange, Sligo; Owenmore, Sligo; Tubbercurry Stream; Tubbercurry; and Gill) are identified as being of *poor*, while the Templehouse Lake is identified as *bad* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

<sup>54</sup> There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. Overall status is currently not assigned and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies.

The status (2016-2021) of transitional and coastal waterbodies within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates ranges from *moderate* to *high* and *good*, including a number of *unassigned* waterbodies, as shown on Figure 4.13.

WFD surface water bodies status (2016-2021) within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates is listed in Appendix II.

The 'Blue Dot Catchments Programme' is a key action under the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021. The aim of the 'Blue Dot' programme is to protect and restore high ecological status to a network of river and lake catchments. 'Blue Dot' waterbodies within the area to which the Plan relates are shown on Figure 4.14.

In addition to this, many water bodies are identified as being at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives due to the damage being caused by significant pressures<sup>56</sup>. Significant pressures, those pressures which need to be addressed in order to improve water quality, have been identified for waterbodies that are 'At Risk' of not meeting their water quality objectives under the WFD. Significant pressures for surface water bodies within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates are listed in Appendix II. There are various types of pressures identified, such as:

- **Agricultural pressures** - can include issues related to farming including loss of excess nutrients and sediment loss to surface waters from diffuse sources such as spreading of fertilisers and manures. Excess phosphorous and sediment are typically issues for rivers and lakes, and too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.
- **Urban run-off pressures** - can include leaking sewers and run-off from paved and unpaved areas and misconnections where private foul connections are connected to storm sewers instead of the foul sewer network.
- **Urban wastewater pressures** - can include direct discharge of nutrients from urban wastewater treatment plants and discharge from combined storm overflows or storm water overflows. Discharges of elevated concentrations of phosphorus, ammonium and nitrogen impact on the ecology of surface waters.

<sup>55</sup> As per EPA classification system ([gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps](https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps)).

<sup>56</sup> EPA (2022): Report on Water Quality in Ireland 2016-2021

- **Hydromorphological and anthropogenic pressures** are identified together in many instances. Hydromorphological pressures can include: modifications to the physical habitat conditions or the natural functioning of a waterbody which can impact on ecology, caused by dredging and straightening of rivers (chanellisation), land drainage or hard infrastructure such as dams, weirs, culverts or other obstructions. Anthropogenic pressures can include: water abstractions; invasive species; agriculture; use of fertilizers, manures and pesticides; animal husbandry activities; inefficient irrigation practices; deforestation of woods; aquaculture; pollution due to industrial effluents and domestic sewage; mining; and recreational activities.
- **Extractive industry-related pressures** – can include different activities that lead to the extraction of raw materials from the earth, such as oil, metals, mineral and aggregates. Impacts from extractive sites include sediment/siltation pollution and alteration to the physical environment.
- **Forestry pressures** - can include poorly managed and inappropriately sited forest operations, negatively impact on water quality and aquatic habitats and species. The most common water quality problems arising from forestry relate to the release of sediment and nutrients and the impacts from acidification. Forestry may also give rise to changes in stream flow regimes caused by associated land drainage.
- **Domestic wastewater pressures** – can include septic-tank systems associated with one-off housing and small unlicensed private urban waste-water treatment plants. If not correctly installed and well maintained, these systems can result in leakage of untreated effluent to waters.
- **Invasive species pressures** - can include those relating to non-native species introduced outside their natural range that threaten ecosystems, habitats and native species with environmental or socio-economic harm. Currently 37 species have been identified across the EU as a high priority for management, and nine of these occur in Ireland. The potential impacts of IAS include the alteration of eco-systems (by causing bank erosion, for example), inhibition of access to water bodies, hindrance of land development and, in some cases, potential human health impacts.

### 4.10.5 Groundwater

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

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

The WFD groundwater status (2016-2021) of all groundwater underlying the area to which the Plan relates (shown on Figure 4.15) is identified as being of *good* status, meeting the objectives of the WFD.

### 4.10.6 Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity

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

Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter into groundwater. The vulnerability of aquifers underlying the area to which the Plan relates are mapped on Figure 4.16. Classifications comprise:

- Low vulnerability;
- Moderate vulnerability; and
- High, Extreme and Extreme (rock at or near surface or karst) vulnerability.

The GSI also rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource; this is referred to as aquifer productivity. Productivity

classifications (mapped on Figure 4.17) relevant within the area to which the Plan relates comprise:

- *Regionally important aquifer karstified;*
- *Regionally important aquifer karstified (Conduit);*
- *Locally important aquifer karstified;*
- *Locally important aquifer bedrock which is moderately productive only in local zones;*
- *Locally important aquifer, bedrock which is generally moderately productive;*
- *Poor aquifer bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones;*
- *Poor aquifer bedrock which is generally unproductive; and*
- *Locally important gravel aquifer.*

### 4.10.7 WFD Registers of Protected Areas

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

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

- WFD RPA Drinking Water Surface Water Bodies<sup>57</sup> (as mapped on Figure 4.18), including lakes (such as Killsellagh, Gill, Arrow, Gara, Labe, Talt and Easky) and the Grange River. Groundwater beneath the entire area to which the Plan relates is also included on the RPA for Drinking Water for Groundwater bodies;
- WFD RPA Bathing Waters and associated WFD Surface Waters in Bathing Locations (as shown on Figure 4.13), including bathing locations at: Enniscrone Beach; Dunmorran Beach; Rosses Point Beach; Streedagh Beach; and Mullaghmore Beach;
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Areas (Lakes and Rivers) and associated Surface Water and Groundwater in Nutrient Sensitive Areas (as shown on Figure 4.19).

<sup>57</sup> Various water bodies are used for drinking water abstraction in accordance with European Communities

(Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 278/2007).

There are also a number of RPAs in the area to which the Plan relates designated by virtue of their value to biodiversity - these are addressed under Section 4.7.

#### 4.10.8 Bathing Waters

For bathing waters, Mandatory and Guide Values are set out for bathing waters in the 2006 EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Regulations. Mandatory Values are values that must be observed if the bathing area is to be deemed compliant with the Directive. Compliance with Guide Values exceeds guidance with Mandatory Values and can be regarded as quality objectives that bathing sites should endeavour to achieve.

Bathing waters are now classed into four quality categories: excellent, good, sufficient or poor, with a minimum target of sufficient required to be achieved for all bathing waters.

The most recent available data from the EPA for 2022<sup>58</sup> shows that locations of designated bathing waters (shown on Figure 4.13) are classified as *sufficient* at Mullaghmore Beach and *good* at Enniscrone Beach, and *excellent* at Rosses Point, Dunmoran Beach and Streedagh.

The Blue Flag award is given to beaches and marinas that have excellent water quality and maintain other standards including effective and appropriate management to ensure the protection of the natural environment and safety standards. Rosses Point Beach was awarded with the Blue Flag in 2023.

#### 4.10.9 Flooding

Flooding is an environmental phenomenon which, as well as causing economic and social impacts, could in certain circumstances pose a risk to human health. The existence of flood risk across the country is illustrated by various sources of information on historical flooding events – including those available from the Office of Public Works, the lead Authority on flooding in the country, National Flood Hazard Mapping website. In addition to this historic

mapping there is predictive, modelled Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Risk and Hazard mapping available from the OPW including through the National Catchment Flood Risk Management Programme. These mapping sources identify flood risk from various sources, including fluvial, pluvial, coastal and groundwater. The Flood Risk and Hazard mapping has informed the preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans, which have been in force since 2018 across different parts of the Plan area.

Certain areas across the area to which the Plan relates are at risk from pluvial<sup>59</sup>, fluvial<sup>60</sup> and coastal<sup>61</sup> flooding. Historical flooding is documented at a number of locations within the area to which the Plan relates.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) as required by the 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (OPW and DEHLG, 2009) is relevant to project planning and development and associated environmental assessment and administrative consent of projects.

#### 4.10.10 Existing Problems

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

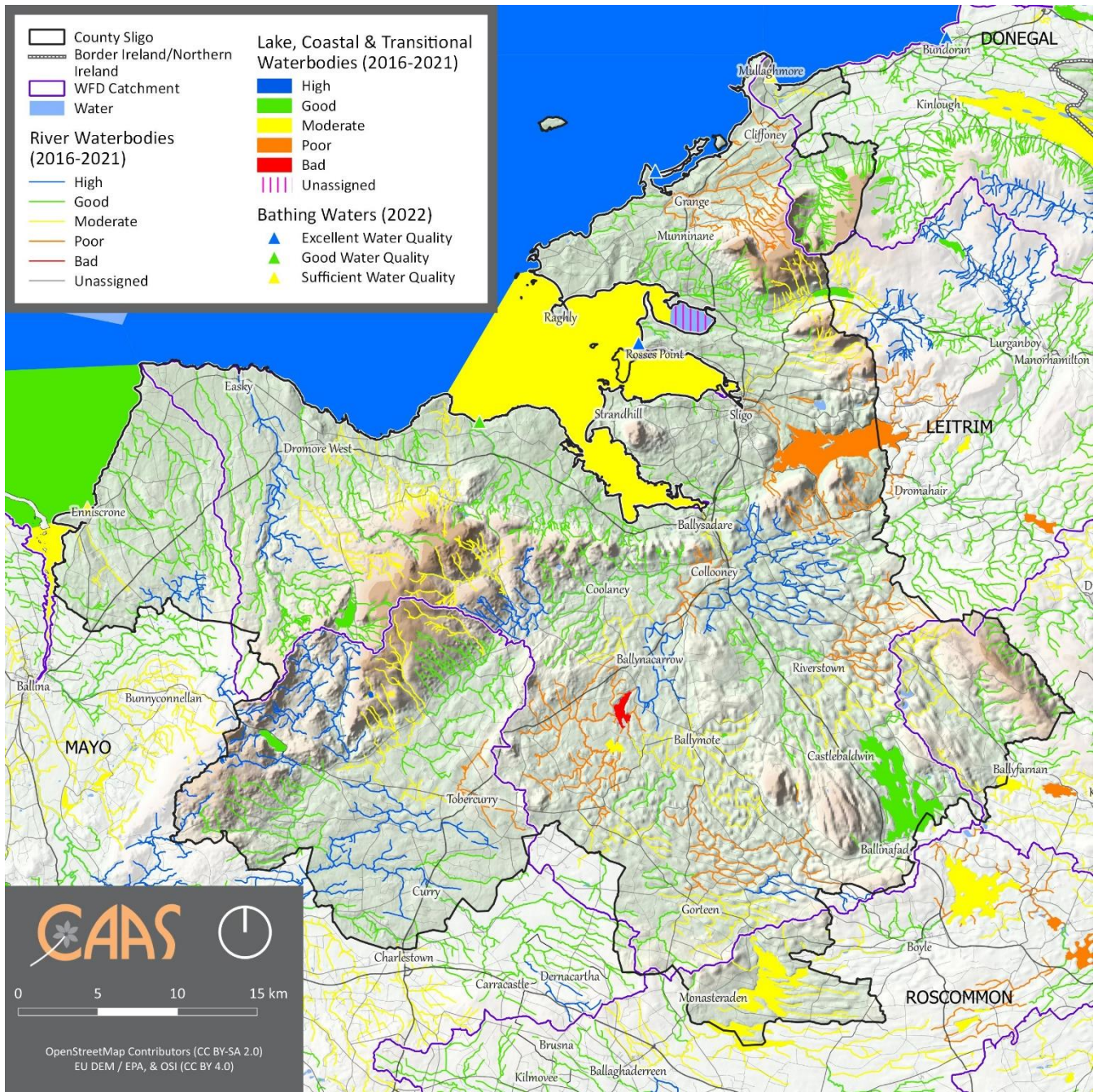
There is historic and predictive evidence of elevated levels of flood risk from fluvial and coastal sources at various locations across the area to which the Plan relates.

<sup>58</sup> EPA (2023) Report: *Bathing Water Quality in Ireland 2022*

<sup>59</sup> Resulting from high intensity rainfall events where run-off volume exceeds capacity of surface water network.

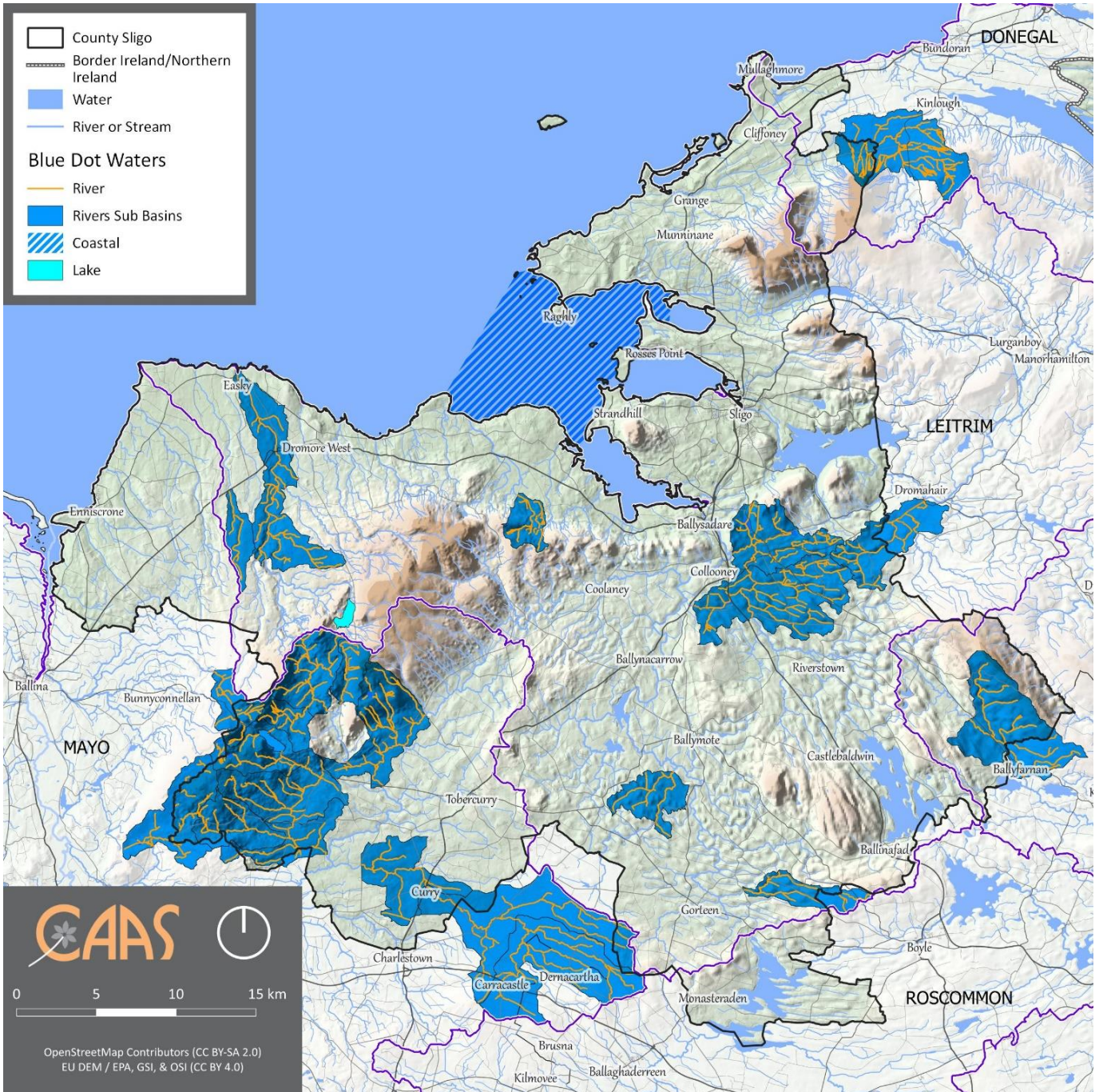
<sup>60</sup> Watercourse capacity is exceeded or the channel is blocked and excess water spills from the channel onto adjacent floodplains.

<sup>61</sup> Resulting from higher sea levels than normal causing the sea to overflow onto land. Such flooding is influenced by high tide level, storm surges and wave action.

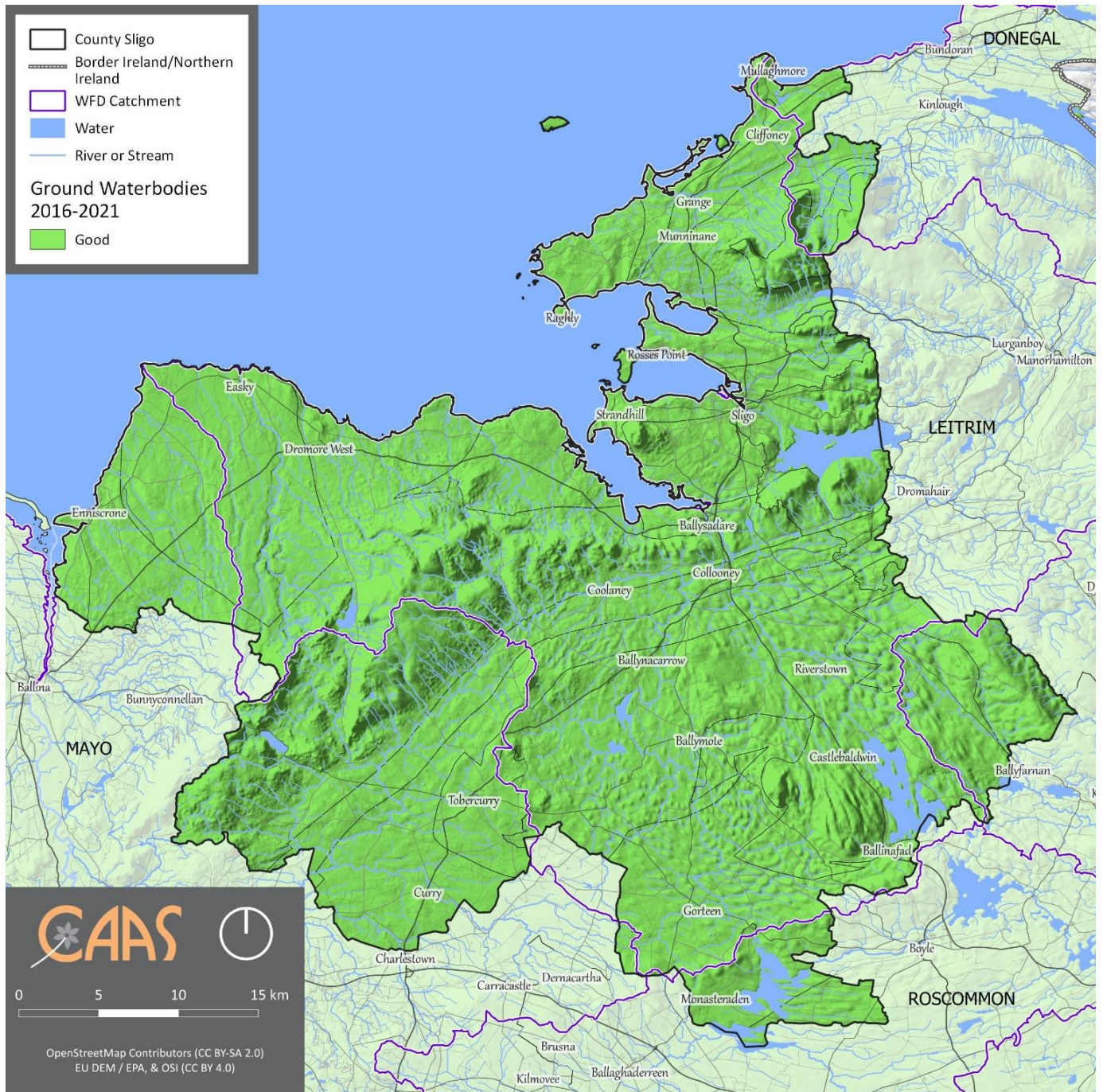


**Figure 4.13 WFD Surface Waterbodies Status (2016-2021) and Bathing Waters (2022)** <sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> This map shows Bathing Water Quality in Ireland in 2021 (dataset issued in 2022) – for the most recent bathing water quality mapping please refer to: <https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/bathing-water-quality-in-ireland-in-2022.php>

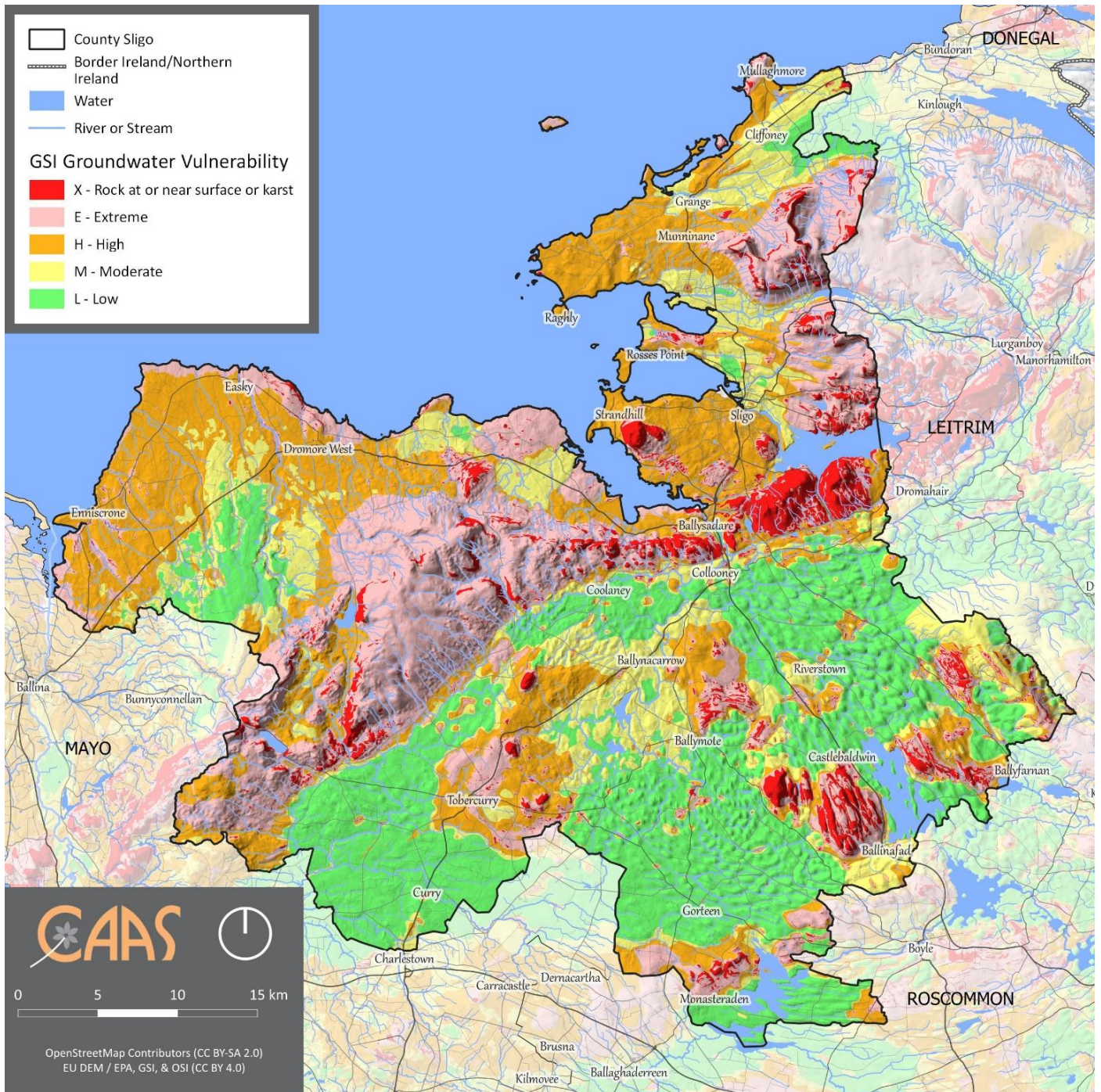


**Figure 4.14 'Blue Dot' Waterbodies**



**Figure 4.15 WFD Groundwater Status (2016-2021)**





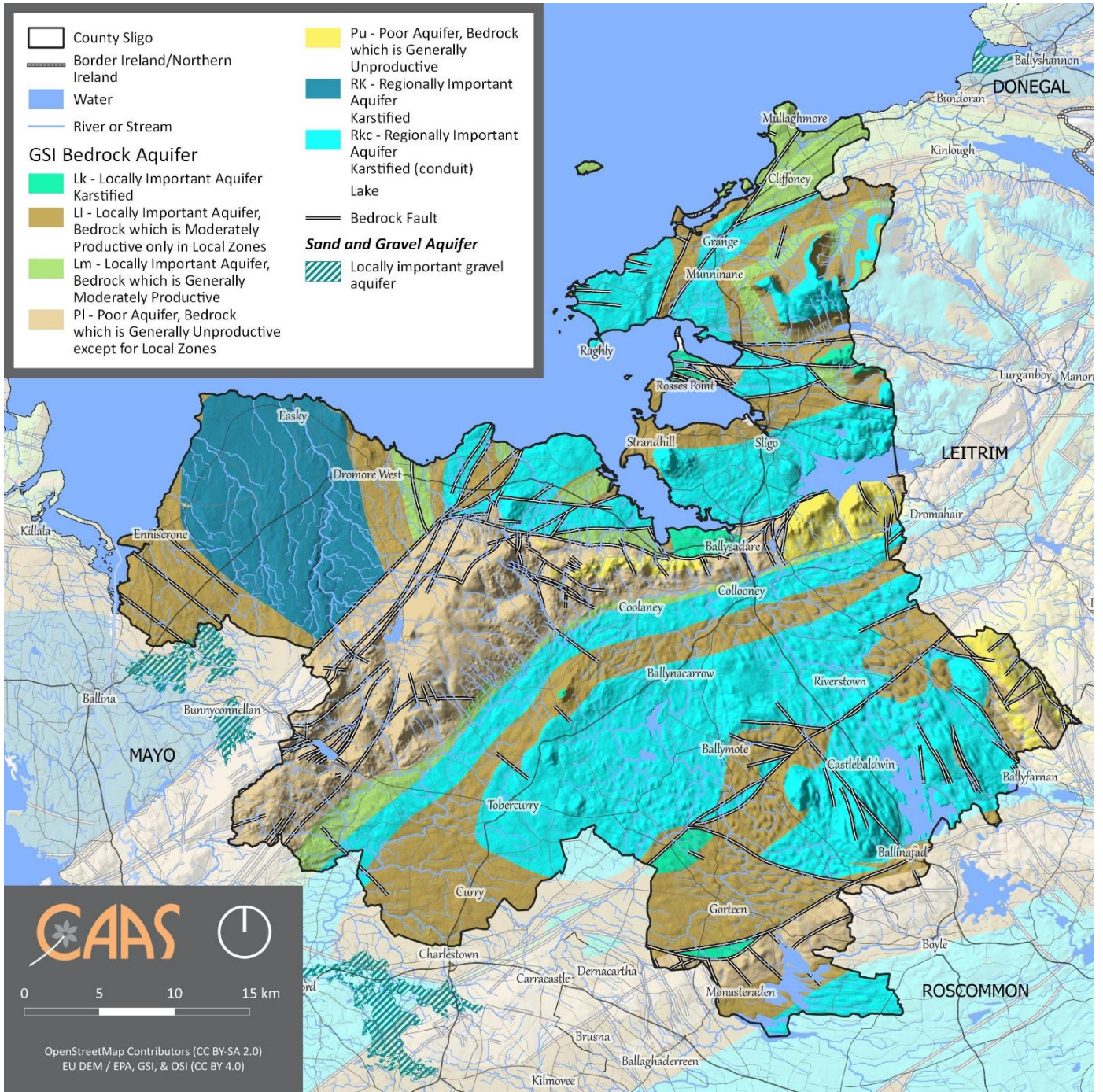
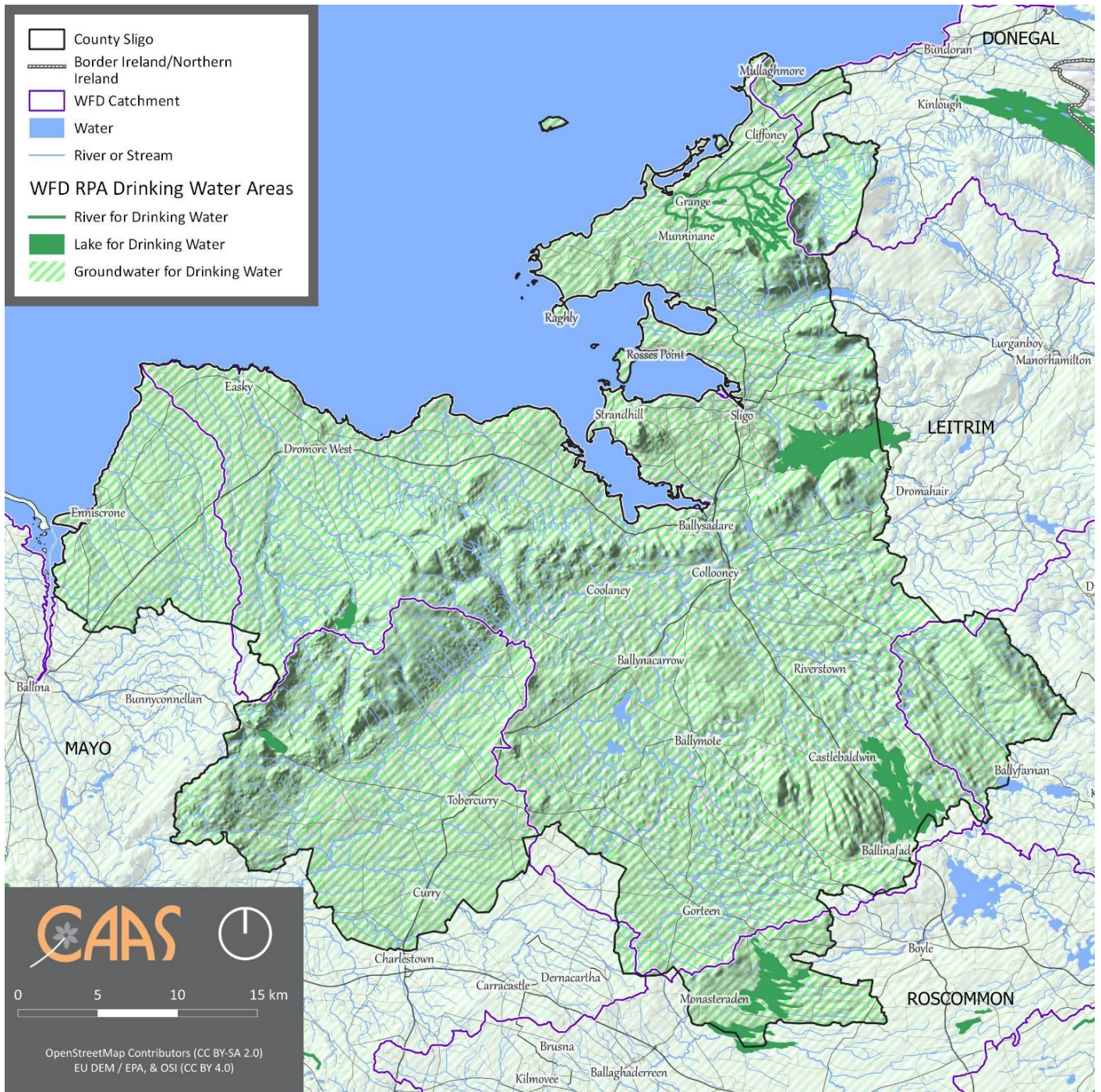
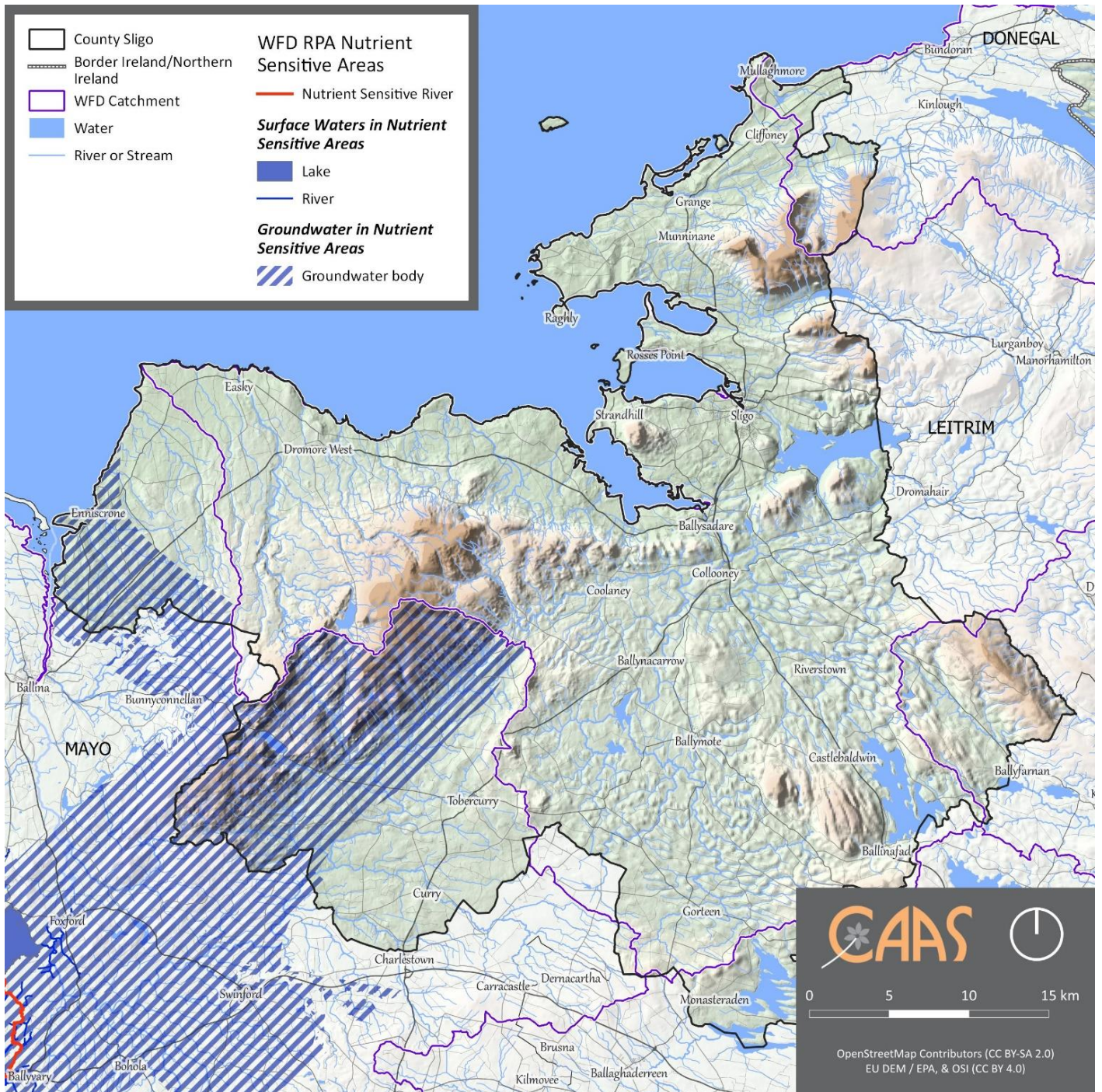


Figure 4.17 Groundwater Productivity



**Figure 4.18 WFD Register of Protected Areas: Drinking Water**



**Figure 4.19 WFD Register of Protected Areas: Nutrient Sensitive Areas**

## 4.11 Air and Climatic Factors

### 4.11.1 Climatic Factors

Various provisions relating to climatic factors have been integrated into the Plan, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland. Such measures include those relating to (for more detail refer to Section 9):

- Walking and cycling; and
- Contribution towards European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures including those relating to resilience.

Interactions with climatic factors are also present with other environmental components including water/flooding (see Section 4.10).

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

*Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2022* (EPA, 2023)<sup>63</sup> report details the most recent provisional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions for Ireland. Provisional total national greenhouse gas emissions in 2022 (excluding LULUCF<sup>64</sup>) are estimated to be 60.76 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq) which is 1.9% lower (or 1.19 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq) than emissions in 2021 (61.95 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq) and follows a 5.1% increase in emissions reported for 2021. Emissions are 0.5% lower than pre-pandemic 2019 figures.

Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector increased by 6% or 0.66 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2022, having already increased by 6.6% in

2021. Transport emissions in 2022 were over 95% of the 'pre COVID' level from 2019.

The EPA's 2023 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2022-2040* provides an updated assessment of Ireland's total projected greenhouse gas emissions out to 2040, using the latest inventory data for 2021 as the starting point. The report provides an assessment of Ireland's progress towards achieving its national ambitions under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and EU emission reduction targets for 2030 as set out under the Effort Sharing Regulation<sup>65</sup>. Key findings identified as part of the report are that:

- Ireland is not on track to meet the 51% emissions reduction target (by 2030 compared to 2018) based on these projections, which include most 2023 Climate Action Plan measures. Further measures still need to be identified and implemented to achieve this goal.
- The first two carbon budgets (2021-2030), which aim to support the achievement of the 51% emissions reduction goal, are projected to be exceeded by a significant margin of between 24% and 34%.
- Sectoral emissions ceilings for 2025 and 2030 are projected to be exceeded in almost all cases, including agriculture, electricity, industry, and transport.
- It is projected that Ireland can meet its original EU Effort Sharing Regulation target of a 30% emission reduction by 2030 (compared to 2005) if all measures and flexibilities are used. Reaching the new 42% EU emission reduction target will require full and rapid implementation of Climate Action Plan 2023 measures and further measures to be implemented.
- Emissions in the 'Additional Measures' scenario are projected to be 29% lower in 2030 (compared with 2018) whereas in the 'Existing Measures' scenario the emissions reduction is projected to be 11%. Faster implementation of measures will be required to meet both National and EU targets.
- Emissions from the energy industries sector are projected to decrease by between 50% and 60% over the period 2021 to 2030. Renewable energy generation is projected to

<sup>63</sup> The provisional estimates of Ireland's greenhouse gas figures for the years 1990-2022 are based on interim energy balances provided by the SEAI in June 2023 and the latest available data from other data providers such as the Central Statistics Office and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). These are compiled using methodologies in accordance with UNFCCC reporting

guidelines. Verified emissions data from installations within the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) are included.

<sup>64</sup> Land use, Land use Change and Forestry

<sup>65</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/842 of on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement.

range from 68% to over 80% of electricity generation as a result of projected further and rapid expansion in wind energy and other renewables.

- Manufacturing combustion emissions are projected to reduce by between 6% and 22% from 2021 to 2030 with the implementation of efficiency measures and renewable heat generation. However, industrial process emissions are projected to increase by 5% from 2021 to 2030 due to anticipated increased cement production.
- Total emissions from the agriculture sector are projected to decrease by between 4% and 20% over the period 2021 to 2030. Savings are projected from a variety of measures including switching to different fertilisers, limits on nitrogen fertiliser usage and bovine feed additives.
- Transport emissions are projected to decrease by 1% to 35% over the period 2021-2030. Measures that are projected to contribute to higher emissions reductions include 943,500 EVs by 2030, a 20 per cent biodiesel blend rate and a 20% reduction in total passenger vehicle kilometres.
- Emissions from the residential sector are projected to decrease by 36% to 47% between 2021 and 2030 with commercial and public services sector emissions projected to decrease by 19% to 49%. Measures projected to achieve this include 5.7 TWh of biomethane used for heating, energy efficiency retrofits and the installation of up to 680,000 heat pumps in residential homes.
- Emissions from the land use, land use change and forestry sector are projected to increase over the period 2021 to 2030 as our forestry reaches harvesting age and changes from a carbon sink to a carbon source. Planned policies and measures for the sector, such as increased afforestation, water table management on agricultural organic soils and peatland rehabilitation, are projected to reduce the extent of the emissions increase.

#### 4.11.2 Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Climate mitigation describes the action to reduce the likelihood of climate change occurring or reduce the impact if it does occur. This can include reducing the causes of climate change (e.g., emissions of greenhouse gases) as well as reducing future risks associated with climate change.

The National Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall

greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting Ireland on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as set out in the Climate Act 2021. The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated periodically, to ensure alignment with legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings. The upcoming Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) will be the third annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan. CAP24 builds upon CAP23 by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The Plan will provide a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

Climate adaptation is a change in natural or human systems in response to the impacts of climate change. These changes moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities and can be in response to actual or expected impacts.

The National Adaptation Framework (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2018), sets out the national strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the country to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of positive impacts. The National Adaptation Framework outlines a whole of government and society approach to climate adaptation. Under the Framework, several Government Departments will be required to prepare sectoral adaptation plans in relation to a priority area that they are responsible for. Local authorities must ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all local policy, including planning policy. Following a review of the existing NAF under the 2021 Climate Action Plan, an updated NAF is expected to be published in 2024.

The statutory Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Transport Sector was prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act (2015) and the National Adaptation Framework (2018) and published by the Department of Transport in 2019. The Plan sets out the national strategy to reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive impacts, with an objective to help develop resilience within the sector in order to

safeguard transport infrastructure from future climate impacts.

In 2018, four Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO) were established for the purpose of coordinating climate action at regional and local levels. As specified in its Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), the Northern and Western Regional Assembly supports the work of the Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO).

Sligo County Council's first Climate Change Adaptation Strategy was prepared in 2019. The Strategy set out the Local Authority's strategic priorities, measures and responses for adaptation in County Sligo over the subsequent years, up to 2024.

Sligo County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 sets out how the local authority will promote a range of mitigation, adaptation and other climate action measures, to help deliver on the national climate obligations and the Government's overall National Climate Objective, which seeks to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

### 4.11.3 Alternative Fuels and Renewable Electricity Generation Targets

The use of alternative fuels, including electricity, forms a significant part of government policy to reduce transport emissions. The Plan facilitates a mode shift away from the private car to public transport, walking and cycling and provisions relating to electric vehicles. This will contribute towards reductions in the consumption of non-renewable energy sources and achievement of legally binding renewable energy targets.

The first Renewable Energy Directive (RED)<sup>66</sup> was the most important legislation influencing the growth of renewable energy in the EU and

<sup>66</sup> Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.

<sup>67</sup> Directive (EU) 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources (recast).

<sup>68</sup> SEAI (2022): *Energy in Ireland 2022 Report*. Available at: <https://www.seai.ie/publications/Energy-in-Ireland-2022.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> The emissions associated with international transport (i.e. international aviation and maritime navigation) are

Ireland for the decade ending in 2020. From 2021, RED was replaced by the second Renewable Energy Directive (REDII)<sup>67</sup>, which continues to promote the growth of renewable energy out to 2030. RED set out two mandatory targets for renewable energy in Ireland to be met by 2020, while REDII sets new targets and criteria to be met by Ireland in 2030 and the interim.

The overall renewable energy share is referred to as the overall RES target. REDII introduced a binding EU-wide target for overall RES of 32% in 2030 and requires Member States to set their national contributions to the EU-wide target. As per the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030, Ireland's overall RES target is 34.1% in 2030. The sectoral targets are referred to as RES-E (electricity), RES-T (transport) and RES-H (heat). Ireland's NECP 2021-2030 set targets for RES-E of 70%, RES-H of 24% and RES-T of 14%, by 2030.<sup>68</sup>

### 4.11.4 Energy Security

Greater use of alternative fuels, including renewable energy, has the potential to further contribute towards energy security. Energy demand for transport in 2022 was 19.9% higher than in 2021, as travel patterns continued to rebound to pre-COVID levels.<sup>69</sup> Demand for the diesel and petrol used in road transport in 2022 was 6.1% and 13.9% higher than in 2021, respectively. Demand for jet kerosene in 2022 was 128% higher than in 2021.<sup>70</sup>

Indigenous production accounted for 32% of Ireland's energy requirements in 1990. However, since the mid-1990s import dependency had grown significantly, due to the increase in energy use together with the decline in indigenous natural gas production at Kinsale since 1995 and decreasing peat production. Ireland's overall import dependency reached 90% in 2006. It varied between 85% and 90% until 2016 when it fell to 69%. This trend reflects the fact that Ireland is not endowed with significant indigenous fossil fuel resources

accounted for separately, outside the national accounts of Ireland's greenhouse gas inventory from the EPA, and carbon budgets. The emissions from international flights (which increased by 128% in 2022) do not count towards national transport emissions.

<sup>70</sup> SEAI (2023): *Energy in Ireland 2023 Report*

and has only in recent years begun to harness significant quantities of renewable resources and more recently natural gas from the Corrib field.

#### 4.11.5 Ambient Air Quality

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well-being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed. The principles to this European approach are set out in the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) (which replaces the earlier Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 and the first, second and third *Daughter Directives*; the fourth *Daughter Directive* will be included in CAFE at a later stage).

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

The EPA's (2023) *Air Quality in Ireland 2022 Report* identifies that:

- Air quality in Ireland is generally good, however, there are concerning localised issues.
- Ireland met all of its EU legal requirements in 2022 but it did not meet the more stringent health-based World Health Organisation (WHO) Air Quality guidelines.
- Fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) from solid fuel combustion and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) from vehicle emissions are the main pollutants.
- It is estimated that there are approximately 1,300 premature deaths annually in Ireland due to poor air quality from PM<sub>2.5</sub>.
- The choices people make in how they heat their homes and how they travel directly impact the quality of the air they breathe.
- Ireland's ambition in the Clean Air Strategy is to move towards the WHO Air Quality guidelines.

The report further identifies the critical role of local authorities in the enforcement and implementation of existing plans and

investment in infrastructure to encourage cleaner and healthier air quality choices, including:

- Local authorities must provide more resources to increase air enforcement activities and implement the new solid fuel regulations.
- Investment in clean public transport infrastructure across the country must be maintained and increased.
- More safe footpaths and cycle lanes must be created to continue to increase active travel as a viable and safe alternative to car use and associated NO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

In order to apply with European Directives relating to air quality, the EPA manages the National Ambient Air Quality Network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants at locations across the country.<sup>71</sup>

#### 4.11.6 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing EU 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 indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people who 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.

In compliance with the Directive and transposing Environmental Noise Regulations (S.I. No. 140 of 2006), Noise Action Plans have been prepared for each local authority area within the country. The Sligo County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 is currently in force within the area to which the Plan relates. The Action Plans include noise mapping and are required to include measures to manage noise issues and effects, including noise reduction if necessary.

<sup>71</sup> For more detail on current daily air quality data for the Plan refer to: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>.



### 4.11.7 Existing Problems

The Climate Change Advisory Council's *The Annual Review 2021* raised the issue of the implementation gap whereby ambition on climate policy was not being matched by verifiable actions. Several issues regarding implementation continue to cause concern and are re-emphasised throughout *The Annual Review 2022*. *The Annual Review 2023* reported that at the current rate of policy implementation, Ireland will not meet the targets set in the first and second carbon budget periods unless urgent action is taken immediately and emissions begin to fall much more rapidly.

Air quality and noise present challenges, especially in urban areas, as detailed under the relevant sub-sections above. With regard to air quality, air pollution from transport is dominated by NO<sub>x</sub> emissions. Of these, NO<sub>2</sub> is particularly impactful from a health perspective. The Plan will help to facilitate reductions in emissions and a transition from dependence on fossil fuel combustion powered transport.

## 4.12 Material Assets

Other material assets, in addition to those detailed below, covered by the SEA include archaeological and architectural heritage (see Section 4.12) natural resources of economic value, such as water and air (see Sections 4.10 and 4.11).

### 4.12.1 Water Services

#### 4.12.1.1 Wastewater

The EPA's 2023 report '*Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2022*' identified that:

- 15 large urban areas that did not meet European Union treatment standards in 2022 require improvements to comply with these standards;
- 26 towns and villages discharging raw sewage into the environment every day must be connected to wastewater treatment plants;
- 6 collecting systems (sewers) must be upgraded to address the findings of a judgement from the Court of Justice of the European Union;
- 39 priority areas require improvements to protect rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters that are adversely impacted by wastewater; and

- 12 areas need improvements in wastewater treatment to protect endangered freshwater pearl mussels.

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

None of the Wastewater Treatment Plants in County Sligo (and within the area to which the Plan relates) are currently listed as a priority area.<sup>72</sup>

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

#### 4.12.1.2 Wastewater Infrastructure

The area to which the Plan relates is served by combined sewer networks, including septic tanks and sewerage treatment schemes serving agglomerations under 500 Population Equivalent (PE) and urban WWTPs. As identified in the existing Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied and extended), there are 31 major wastewater treatment schemes within County Sligo, of varying size and complexity. Outside serviced towns and villages, much of the wastewater produced is treated and disposed of onsite by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary effluent treatment systems.

The most recent and available Uisce Éireann compliance report for the wastewater treatment plants serving the area to which the Plan relates, provide information on the environmental performance and wastewater discharge licence compliance of the following WWTPs<sup>73</sup>:

- **Ballysadare WWTP (Licence No. D0095-01)** – compliant;

<sup>72</sup> Updated list of priority urban areas (EPA, April 2024)

<sup>73</sup> Uisce Éireann (2023): *Annual Environmental Reports (AERs)*

- **Enniscrone WWTP (Licence No. D0102-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS;
- **Sligo WWTP (Licence No. D0014-01)** – compliant;
- **Cliffoney WWTP (Licence No. D0394-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS;
- **Collooney WWTP (Licence No. D0093-01)** – compliant;
- **Mullaghmore WWTP (Licence No. D0239-01)** – compliant;
- **Easky WWTP (Licence No. D0373-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS;
- **Coolaney WWTP (Licence No. D0392-01)** – compliant.

The provision of well-maintained quality wastewater treatment infrastructure is essential to facilitate sustainable development of the town while also protecting the environment and public health. Uisce Éireann is now responsible for the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater where public wastewater facilities exist in towns and villages.

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

#### 4.12.1.3 Water Supply

Currently there are eight schemes supplying public water throughout Sligo<sup>74</sup> comprising: Carns Hill Water Supply Scheme; Foxes Den Water Supply Scheme; Kilsellagh Water Supply Scheme; Lough Easky Regional Scheme; Lough Talt Regional Scheme; North Sligo Regional Scheme; South Sligo Regional Scheme; Riverstown Regional Scheme; and Killaraght Regional Scheme. In rural areas, individual wells are used to serve farms and single houses.

<sup>74</sup> Sligo CDP 2017-2023 (as varied and extended)

<sup>75</sup> The preparation of the NWRP has been divided into two phases, the combination of which will become the final NWRP. The NWRP Framework Plan (Phase 1) has now been adopted. Phase 2 of the NWRP (four Regional Water Resources Plans), currently in preparation, will address the needs across the 535 individual water supplies and identify the solutions to address these needs.

As identified in the existing Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied and extended), there are two main sources of water supplying the Sligo and Environs area, namely Kilsellagh Reservoir and Lough Gill. The Sligo and Environs Water Supply Scheme is designed to provide for the domestic, agricultural and industrial water requirements of Sligo City and its outlying regions, such as Ballincar, Rosses Point, Strandhill, Ballysadare, Collooney and Ballintogher. Lough Talt Regional Water Supply covers the area of County Sligo east of the Ox Mountains. It supplies to Ballymote, Bellaghy, Coolaney, Ballinacarrow, Aclare, Banada, Cloonacool, Curry and Tobercurry. Currently there is a water treatment plant at Kilsellagh and two plants treating water from Lough Gill – Cairns Hill and Foxes Den.

Uisce Éireann is responsible for providing and maintaining adequate public water supply infrastructure. Public group water schemes are maintained and monitored by Sligo County Council.

Uisce Éireann is currently preparing a National Water Resources Plan (NWRP)<sup>75</sup> to address urgent issues with the supply and demand for drinking water in Ireland over the short, medium and long term.

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports that are supported by Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies that are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above. The most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q4 of 2023, published in September 2023)<sup>76</sup> does not include any water scheme that supplies the Plan area.

<https://www.water.ie/projects/strategic-plans/national-water-resources/>

<sup>76</sup> Available at:  
<https://www.epa.ie/publications/compliance--enforcement/drinking-water/annual-drinking-water-reports/epa-drinking-water-remedial-action-list-q4-of-2023.php>

### 4.12.2 Public Assets and Infrastructure

Some bigger settlements across the area to which the Plan relates include: Sligo, Ballymote, Enniscrone, Tubbercurry, Ballysadare, Collonee, Coolaney, Grange and Strandhill.

The area to which the Plan relates is served by rail, bus, cycle network, regional and strategic roads. There are three railway stations in Sligo that are served by the train line to Dublin – Sligo Mac Diarmada Station (Sligo Town), Collooney Station and Ballymote Station. The ports and harbours located across the area to which the Plan relates have many functions including transport, fishing, marine leisure, tourism and recreational uses.

The area to which the Plan relates provides with access to Wild Atlantic Way, the natural environment and other significant cultural, tourism, recreation and sports assets including access to lakes, forests and mountains.

Public assets and infrastructure that have the potential to be impacted upon by the development of tourism related infrastructure, if unmitigated, include resources such as public open spaces, parks and recreational areas; public buildings and services; utility infrastructure (electricity, gas, telecommunications, water supply, wastewater infrastructure etc.). These resources are generally located within the immediate outskirts of urban/suburban areas.

Various provisions relating to material assets have been integrated into the Plan, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland.

### 4.12.1 Green Infrastructure

Parks and open space promote health and well-being, provide recreational facilities and range of habitats for various species. Green infrastructure is also a crucial component in building resilient communities capable of adapting to the consequences of climate change with trees, woodlands and wetlands providing carbon capture and slowing water flows while improving air quality.

### 4.12.2 Woodland

Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are a valuable resource in terms of biodiversity, recreation and tourism, and also important as links in the green infrastructure network.

### 4.12.3 Peatlands

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

### 4.12.4 Coastline

The coastline and coastal erosion are topics with relevance to various environmental components. Coastlines can be amongst the most sensitive and valuable resources, in terms of natural and cultural heritage, scenic beauty and recreation. The coast is also an important economic resource - particularly for the fishing, aquaculture, leisure and tourism industries. Some of the settlements within the area to which the Plan relates have developed along or near the coast.

### 4.12.5 Waste Management

Waste management across the area to which the Plan relates is guided by the Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021. The Connacht Ulster Region comprises: Cavan County Council; Donegal County Council; Galway City Council; Galway County Council; Leitrim County Council; Sligo County Council; Mayo County Council; Monaghan County Council; and Roscommon County Council. The Plan provides a framework for the prevention and management of waste in a sustainable manner.

There are three Region Waste Management Plans in Ireland and these will be replaced by a new National Waste Management Plan for a

Circular Economy, which will take account of the various measures outlined in A Waste Action Plan for A Circular Economy - *Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020-2025*.

#### **4.12.6 Existing Problems**

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

The provisions of infrastructure and supporting services for development, particularly water and wastewater services, is critical.

The Capital Investment Plan 2020-2024 is Uisce Éireann 5-year investment plan for water and wastewater assets and infrastructure to 2024. As the national water utility, Uisce Éireann is delivering improvements to water and wastewater services throughout Ireland where they are needed most urgently based on a clearly defined set of priorities.

2018 saw long dry spells, which Met Éireann compared to 1976 when similar drought conditions were experienced across the country. The prolonged hot weather during the summer caused a huge increase in water usage across the country. As demand for water rose to critical levels, Uisce Éireann supplies were put under severe stress as more water was being used than could be produced.

Uisce Éireann is currently preparing a National Water Resources Plan (NWRP) to address issues with the supply and demand for drinking water in Ireland over the short, medium and long term. Measures have been integrated into the Plan that will ensure that those receiving funding from Fáilte Ireland will not direct additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure have been identified (for more detail refer to Section 9).

## 4.13 Cultural Heritage

### 4.13.1 Archaeological Heritage

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

The European Convention on Protection of the Archaeological Heritage known as the Valletta Convention of 1992. This was ratified by Ireland in 1997 and requires that appropriate consideration be given to archaeological issues at all stages of the planning and development process.

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

A Tentative List is an inventory of natural and cultural heritage sites, which may have potential to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value and therefore considered suitable for nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Irish heritage sites currently on Tentative List<sup>77</sup> and within the area to which the Plan relates include (as mapped on Figure 4.20) "The Passage Tomb Landscape (Carrowmore and Carrowkeel in County Sligo)".

To date there has been over 6,500 known Recorded Monuments identified in County Sligo<sup>78</sup> including many monuments in State Care (such as: Rathmore Holy Well; Knockmullin Burial Ground; Cabragh Wedge Tomb; and Rathbarran Mass Rock). Each of the Recorded Monuments is encircled by a Zone of Archaeological Notification. Clusters of archaeological heritage are concentrated within and surrounding towns and villages and in lowland rural areas.

Sligo's archaeological heritage includes monuments from the Mesolithic Period (7,000 BC) to the end of the Medieval Period (1,700 AD). These monuments range from megalithic tombs, churches, castles, linear earthwork and ringforts and are found throughout the County. There are also approximately 1,200 industrial heritage sites across the County as identified in the Industrial Archaeology Survey of County Sligo (2005).

Sligo has a number of significant archaeological and historical landscapes, the most notable being the Cuil Irra Peninsula (which includes Knocknarea, Carrowmore and Carns Hill), Carrowkeel and Inishmurray. The cluster of megalithic tombs at Carrowmore represents one of the four major passage tomb cemeteries in Ireland and is the largest such cemetery in the country. Others include Carrowkeel, also in County Sligo, as well as Newgrange and Lough Crew in County Meath. The archaeological landscape of the Cuil Irra (Knocknarea) Peninsula dates from around 4,000 BC, which formed an important ritual centre in the Neolithic period. Queens Maeve's Cairn on Knocknarea is an iconic landscape feature of County Sligo and forms part of Sligo's Neolithic passage tomb tradition.

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

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

<sup>77</sup> Source: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/72ef0-ministers-announce-new-world-heritage-tentative-list-for-ireland/>

<sup>78</sup> Sligo CDP 2017-2023 (as varied)

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

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

A Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)<sup>79</sup> is a manual containing a numbered list of all certain and possible monuments. An Urban Archaeology Survey was completed in 1995 and contained reports on historic towns dating to before 1700 A.D. with a view to delineating zones of archaeological potential (SMR Zones of Notification). The SMR formed the basis for issuing the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) - the statutory list of recorded monuments established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

Various archaeological monuments, including entries to the SMR and RMP are located within the area to which the Plan relates. Figure 4.20 shows the spatial distribution of recorded monuments within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates. Clusters of archaeological heritage are concentrated around the towns and villages and in lowland rural areas across the area to which the Plan relates. These monuments include examples of medieval sites such as megalithic tombs, churches, castles, linear earthwork and ringforts and are found throughout the area to which the Plan relates.

These archaeological monuments include a number of National Monuments in State Care

<sup>79</sup> The RMP was issued for each county between 1995 and 1998 in a similar format to the existing SMR. However, the RMP differs from the earlier lists in that, as defined in the Act, only monuments with known locations or places where there are believed to be monuments are included. The large archive and supporting database are managed

Ownership and Guardianship within the area to which the Plan relates, listed in Appendix II, including (mapped on Figure 4.20):

- Queen Maeve's Tomb (Knocknarea);
- Inishmurray Island;
- Castlebaldwin Castle;
- Castleore Cashel;
- Drumcliffe High Crosses & Round Tower; and
- Sligo Abbey.

The Underwater Archaeology Unit was established within the National Monuments Service to manage and protect Ireland's underwater cultural heritage, including the quantification of the underwater resource and assessing development impacts in order to manage and protect this aspect of Ireland's heritage. The Shipwreck Inventory is principally a desktop survey with information gathered from a broad range of cartographic, archaeological and historical sources, both documentary and pictorial. An inventory of wrecks covering the coastal waters off County Dublin was published in 2008. Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1987 and 1994. Significant wrecks less than 100 years old can be designated by the Underwater Heritage Order on account of their historical, archaeological or artistic importance. Such Orders can also be used to designate areas of seabed or land covered by water to more clearly define and protect wreck sites and archaeological objects. Under the legislation all diving on known protected wreck sites or with the intention of searching for underwater cultural heritage is subject to licensing requirements.

Lakes, rivers, estuaries, coastal and transitional waters within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates, may contain many features and finds associated with maritime/riverine heritage such as shipwrecks, piers, quay walls, fords, stepping stones and associated archaeological objects and features. Sites of particular archaeological significance in County Sligo include the wrecks of three ships considered to be of the Spanish Armada (c.1588 A.D.) at Streedagh, County Sligo.<sup>80</sup>

by the National Monuments Service and the records are continually updated and supplemented as additional monuments are discovered. (<https://data.gov.ie/dataset/national-monuments-service-archaeological-survey-of-ireland>).

<sup>80</sup> National Monuments Service: Wreck Viewer ([arcgis.com](http://arcgis.com))

### 4.13.2 Architectural Heritage

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

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

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

- The interior of the structure;
- The land lying within the curtilage<sup>81</sup> of the structure;
- Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- All fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of architectural heritage are indicated within developed urban and suburban locations across the area to which the Plan relates, as shown on Figure 4.21. There are currently over 700 Protected Structures designated in County Sligo, including churches, houses, bridges, castles, lodges and artisan dwellings. Notable protected structures in County Sligo include: St. Crumnath's Cathedral; Pollachurry Pier; Coastguard Station; Oyster Island Lighthouse; Sligo Gaol; and Markree Demesne.

<sup>81</sup> Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property boundary, it can originally have included lands, features or even buildings now in separate ownership, e.g. the lodge

In addition to Protected Structures, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in a development plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA that might alter the character of the structure or the ACA. There are currently seven ACAs designated in County Sligo: two ACAs in Ballymote; and Market Cross ACA; Courthouse ACA; Cathedral ACA; Wolfe Tones ACA; and O'Connell Street ACA in Sligo Town.<sup>82</sup>

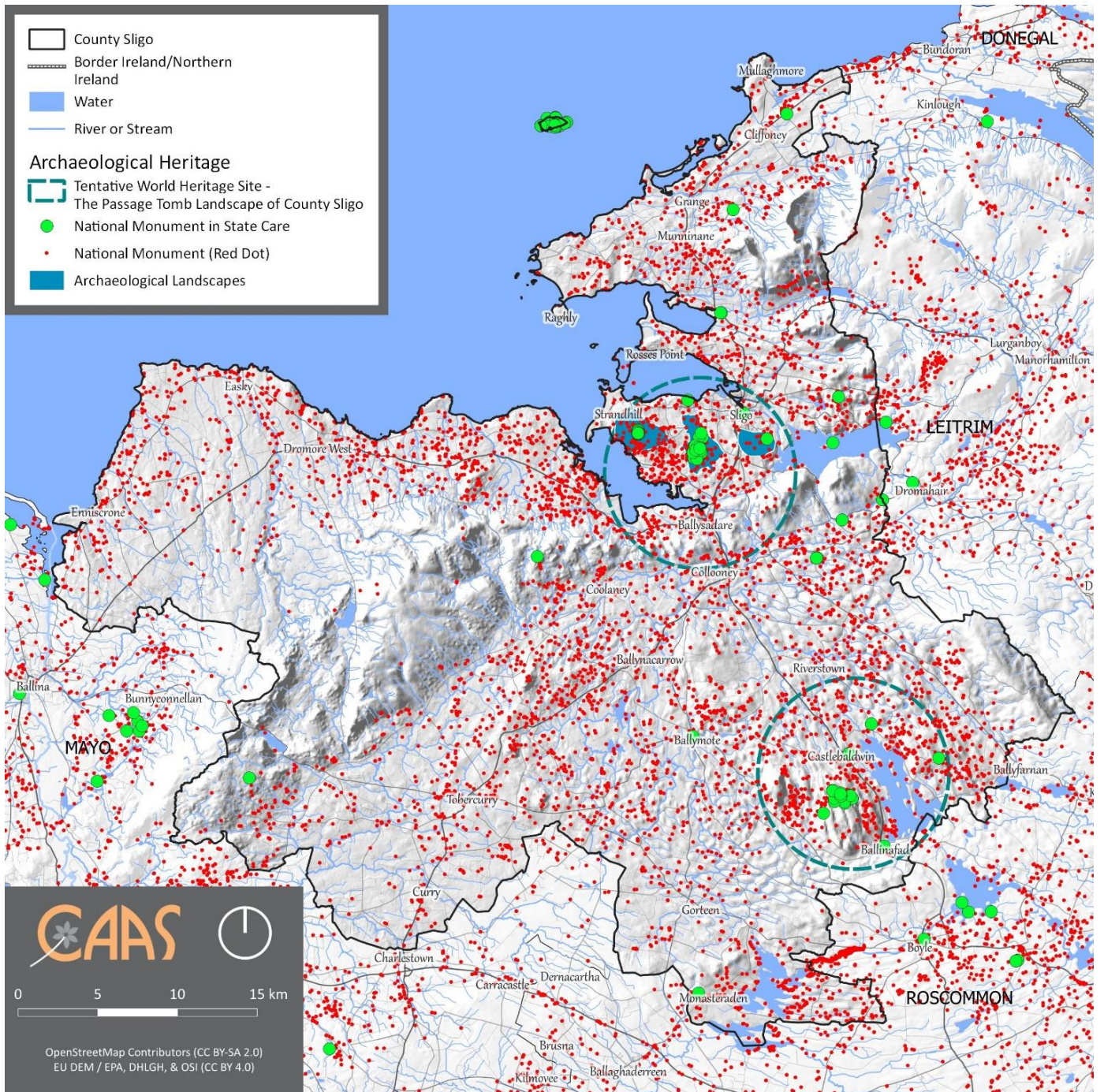
The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a State initiative under the administration of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the local authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures. Figure 4.21 shows entries to NIAH within the area to which the Plan relates, including historic gardens and designed landscapes such as Markree Castle; and Classiebawn Castle.

### 4.13.3 Existing Problems

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

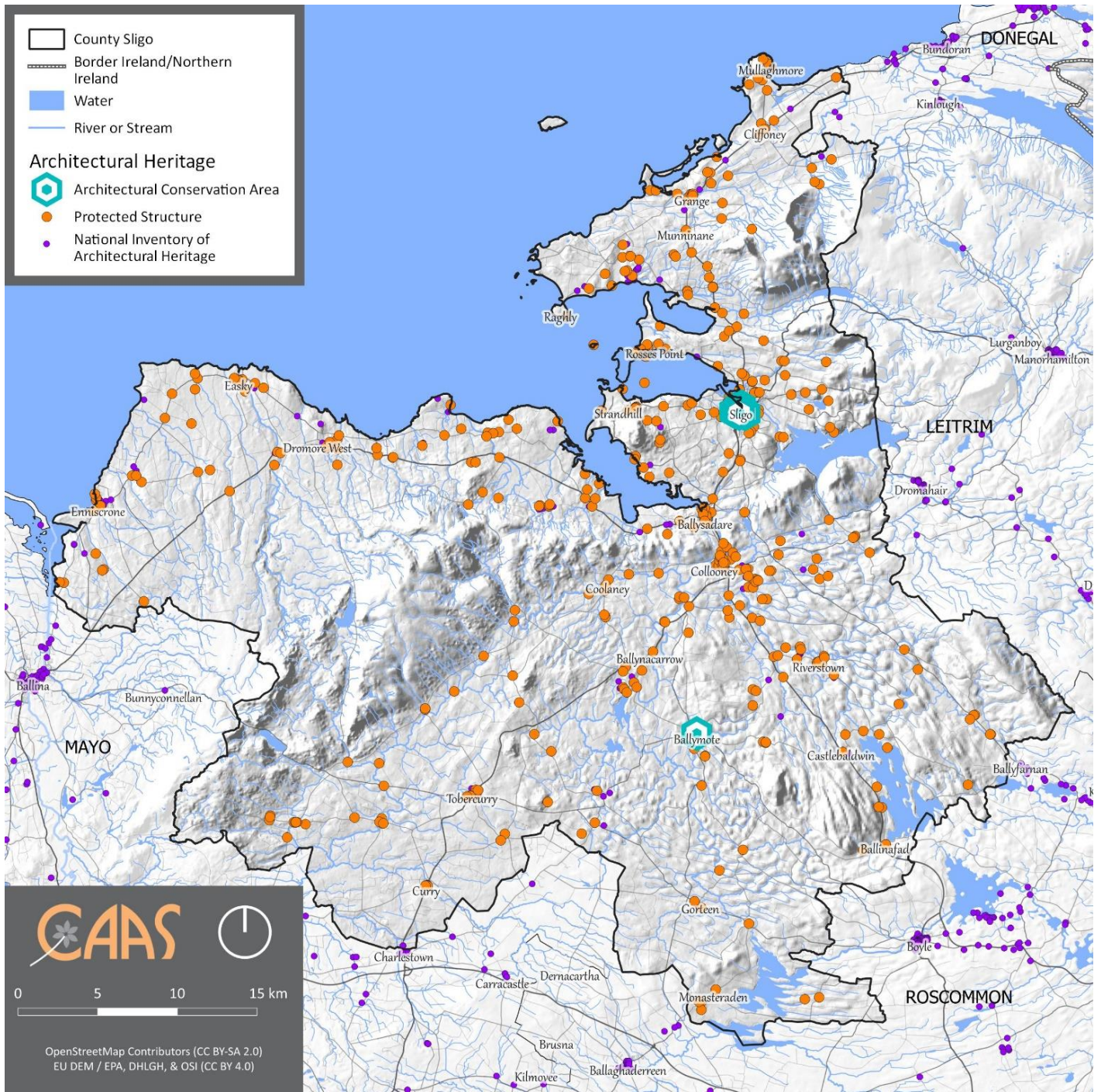
of a former country house, or the garden features located in land subsequently sold off. Such lands are described as being attendant grounds, and the protection extends to them just as if they were still within the curtilage of the Protected Structure.

<sup>82</sup> Sligo CDP 2017-2023 (as varied)



**Figure 4.20 Archaeological Heritage**





**Figure 4.21 Architectural Heritage**

## 4.14 Landscape

### 4.14.1 Introduction<sup>83</sup>

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

The area to which the Plan relates is characterised by a variety of mainly rural landscapes, including rough pasture predominantly in the mountains, hills, and peat bogs. On the east, the boundary with County Leitrim runs southward through the coastal lowland to the limestone Dartry Mountains, including Benbulbin Mountain (noted as one of Ireland's most distinctive natural landmarks). The County boundary crosses Glencar and an area of plateau to Lough Gill with the island of Innisfree. West of the Collooney Gap, the ridge forms the Ox Mountains and a peat moorland and to the north an area of continuously farmed lowland, from the mouth of the River Moy to the Leitrim border. The coastal areas of the County include Sligo Bay with three long estuaries, leading to the towns of Drumcliff, Sligo, and Ballysadare, which receive the waters of the Rivers Drumcliff, Garravogue, and Owenmore.

The different landscapes found across the area to which the Plan relates have varying visual and amenity values, topography, exposure levels and contain a variety of habitats. Each landscape type has varying capacity to absorb development related to its overall sensitivity.

### 4.14.2 Landscape Character Assessment

The European Landscape Convention was ratified in Ireland in 2002, this required EU

<sup>83</sup> *Good practice guidance on SEA for the tourism sector* (EPA, 2023), and also to the *Good practice guidance on SEA*

Member States to adopt national measures to promote landscape, planning, protection and management.

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

Landscape designations are assigned to particular areas for the purpose of managing change whilst having regard for the full range of special qualities and natural and cultural values attached to these areas. Designation can help safeguard important and sensitive landscapes and landscape features which are particularly valued and may have limited capacity for change. The designation process can contribute to wider policies for guiding development, by specifically identifying and safeguarding areas of landscape which are of particular importance and sensitivity.

A landscape characterisation and appraisal study for Sligo County Council was completed in 1996. This resulted in a map that was the basis for the Landscape Characterisation Map, which classified the areas in the County according to its visual sensitivity and capacity to absorb new development without compromising the scenic character of certain areas (mapped on Figure 4.22). It identified the following:

- Normal Rural Landscapes (generally have the capacity to absorb a wide range of new development forms);
- Sensitive Rural Landscapes (low capacity to absorb new development);
- Visually Vulnerable Areas (extremely low capacity to absorb new development); and Scenic Routes.

Areas, which are of exceptional value and of international importance, such as the Cuil Irra Peninsula, Carrowkeel and Inishmurray and are highly sensitive to development.

### 4.14.3 Landscape Designations in Adjacent Counties

County Roscommon borders County Sligo to the south. Roscommon County Council have identified seven Landscape Character Types and 36 Landscape Character Areas within the County. Landscape Character Areas adjacent to County Sligo, include: Lough Allen and Arigna

and landscape (EPA, 2023) have been considered throughout the SEA process.

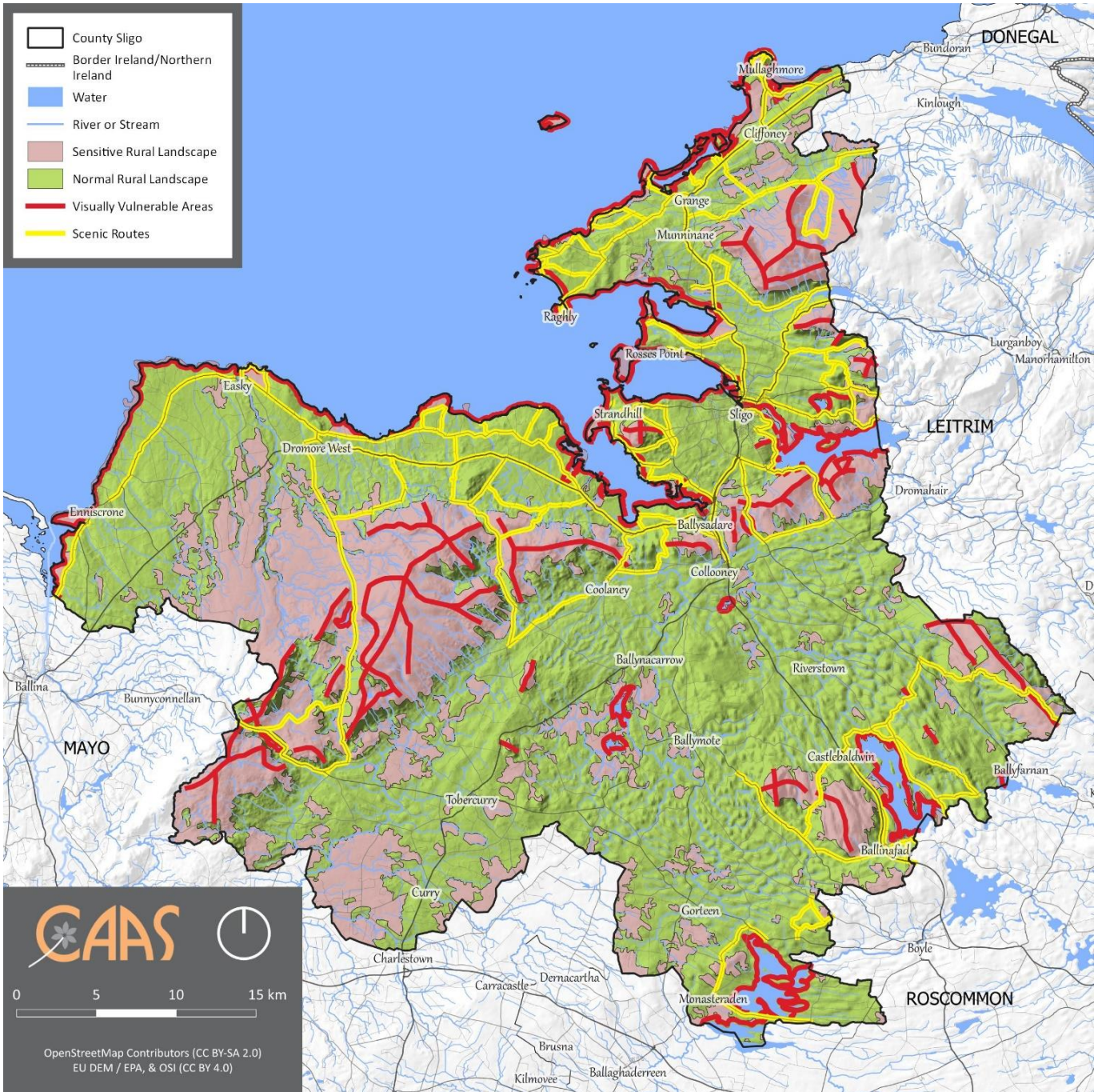
Foothills; Upper Shannon and Derreenannagh Drumlin Belt; Lough Corry Drumlin Basin; Kilglass Drumlin Lakelands; and Slieve Bawn and Feirish Bogland Basin. Other landscape designations within County Roscommon include Scenic Views and Scenic Routes.

County Leitrim borders County Sligo to the east. Leitrim County Council have identified 17 Landscape Character Types and 14 Landscape Character Areas. Landscape Character Areas adjacent to County Sligo, include: Tullaghan Coast; Tievebaun Uplands; The Northern Glens and Central Lowlands; The Doons and Crackauns; and Corry Mountain. Other landscape designations within County Leitrim include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Areas of High Visual Amenity; Protected Views and; Scenic Routes.

County Mayo borders County Sligo to the west. Mayo County Council have identified 16 Landscape Character Units. Landscape Character Units adjacent to County Sligo, include: North Mayo Drumlins; East Mayo Drumlins; and East-Central Drumlin Spine. Other landscape designations include Area Designations.

#### **4.14.4 Existing Environmental Problems**

The legislative objectives governing landscape and visual appearance were not identified as being conflicted with.



**Figure 4.22 Landscape Sensitivity**

## **Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives**

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

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

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

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

**Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives, Indicators and Targets**

<b>Environmental Component</b>	<b>Strategic Environmental Objectives</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	B1: To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>84</sup>	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 <sup>85</sup>
	B2: To contribute towards 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 (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from the Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from the Plan
	B3: To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites <sup>86</sup> 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	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan  B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan  B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species resulting from the Plan
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	PHH1: To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from 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 the Plan
<b>Soil</b>	S1: To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource	S1: Artificial surfaces land cover extent	S1: Contribute towards the target of the National Planning Framework's SEA (2018) to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."
<b>Water</b>	W1: To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters	W1i: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009)  W1ii: Mandatory and Guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (S.I. No. 79 of 2008)	W1i: No deterioration in the status of any surface water or adverse effect upon the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the Plan  W1ii: No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve Mandatory values and, where possible, Guide values as a result of the Plan

<sup>84</sup> '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.

<sup>85</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) No alternative solution available; (b) Imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the programme to proceed; and (c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

<sup>86</sup> The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

<b>Environmental Component</b>	<b>Strategic Environmental Objectives</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
	W2: To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters	W2: Interactions with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC resulting from development adhering to the Plan	W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD
	W3: To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	W3: Compliance of relevant lower tier assessments and decision making with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	W3: For lower-tier assessments and decision making to comply with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	AC1: To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives.	AC1: Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation have been integrated into the Plan	C1: To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented
<b>Material Assets</b>	M1: For development to be served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health	M1: Number of instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity is unavailable	M1: No instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity that does not present a danger to human health are unavailable
	M2: To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and fisheries	M2: Number of significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure	M2: No significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure
	M3: To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse	M3: Preparation and implementation of construction and environmental management plans	M3: For construction and environmental management plans to be prepared and implemented for relevant projects
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	CH1: To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH1: No unauthorised adverse effects on archaeological heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan
	CH2: To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH2: No unauthorised adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan
<b>Landscape</b>	L1: To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

## Section 6 Description of Alternatives

### 6.1 Introduction

As per the requirements of the SEA Directive, this SEA considers reasonable alternatives, which are capable of being implemented for the Plan, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the Plan.

### 6.2 Current Situation (Alternative 1: Business as Usual)

As identified in the Plan, there are various **opportunities** associated with the current tourism development situation include:

- Year round experience development based on the extensive outdoor adventure product base of the county.
- Cluster approach to experience development leveraging world class experiences such as surfing, mountain biking and golf.
- Revitalisation of urban areas and small towns as tourism destinations through public realm enhancement projects.
- Building on the water heritage of Sligo by raising the profile of the Garvogue River corridor from Lough Gill to the ocean through the core of Sligo.
- Development of greenways and related walking infrastructure, including the 'joining-up' and repositioning of existing assets.
- Development of cultural experiences and evening economy opportunities around music and heritage of traditional music in Sligo.
- Regional linkages through product development that can influence new visitors flows into the county such as greenways, Lough Gill links to Parkes Castle, coastal trails.
- Potential of the Neolithic landscapes as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Water based tourism experience development from coastal tourism to future Blueway development.
- Developing niche business tourism opportunities.
- Linking tourism industry development through digital capability building and Sligo's economic ambition around technology.
- Development of a Sligo Wellbeing experience base approach linked to food, place, community and culture.
- Building on the county's portfolio of iconic natural and cultural heritage such as Ben Bulbin.
- Elevate the food and drink opportunity for Sligo arising from new large scale investment in Lough Gill.

However, there are a number of **challenges** associated with this situation, including:

- Fragmented industry approach with limited levels of networking or collaboration to grow the appeal of the destination.
- Significant level of seasonality associated with Sligo tourism economy.
- Visitor dispersion across the county and reducing transient nature of destination with visitors associating it as a 'pass' through destination.
- Lack of coherent destination narrative and messaging in the marketplace.
- Limited destination 'cut through' in the international marketplace with significant dependency on the domestic market.
- No flagship visitor attraction associated with Sligo.
- Limited range and choice of accommodation options outside of Sligo town.
- Gaps in accommodation stock ranging from hotels to alternative sources of visitor accommodation across the county.
- Pace of delivery of large scale capital projects that have the scope to transform the tourism experience base.
- Low engagement with tourism opportunity outside of a number of core areas in the county.
- Key cultural assets and heritage not accessible to visitors due to limited number of experiences i.e. music.
- The need to balance environmental objectives versus creating new visitor experiences linked to the activity sector and meeting visitor expectations around sustainable tourism practice.
- Current levels of online and digital marketing among the tourism industry making it difficult for visitors to engage with the destination from pre visit information to booking experiences.
- Issue of insurance limiting the growth of outdoor activity providers in the destination.
- Ability to attract and retain staff into tourism and hospitality careers affecting ability to operate in off peak seasons.
- Reinvigorating the existing visitor attraction base to develop new visitor.

There are also various policies and plans that are already in place relating to the development of tourism, including:

- People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025 Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
- Fáilte Ireland Corporate Plan
- Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021–2025
- Tourism Action Plan 2019–2021
- Actions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Practices 2021–2023
- Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways



- County Sligo Tourism Strategy (2018–2023)
- Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016-2022, Fáilte Ireland
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme 2015-2019, Fáilte Ireland
- Fáilte Ireland’s Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027 for Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands, Ireland’s Ancient East and Dublin
- Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied and extended) and the new upcoming Sligo CDP 2024-2030 [in preparation] and any Local Area Plans currently in force in County Sligo

This current situation presents **Alternative 1 (Business as Usual)** to be considered by the SEA. Overtime, the numbers of visitors would continue to increase under this scenario – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades.

### **6.3 Prepare a Plan (Alternatives 2A and 2B: Prepare a Plan)**

The weaknesses presented by the current situation (see Section 6.2) establish a potential need for a plan that seeks to better manage tourism in County Sligo area; facilitating, promoting, supporting and coordinating stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. Such a Plan would not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent (such frameworks fall under the remit of other public authorities). Any projects would continue to be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

Features of such a Plan (in combination with the wider and extensive policy and planning framework planning framework) would include:

- Grow the year-round appeal of the Wild Atlantic Way domestically and internationally ensuring the area attracts and disperses high value visitors into and throughout the region.
- Raise the international profile of the Northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way to increase visitation and revenue.
- Increase tourism revenue, visitor dispersion and season extension across the Southern half of the Wild Atlantic Way.
- Protect the authenticity and “wildness” of the Wild Atlantic Way.
- Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability so that it can thrive over the period of this plan.
- Foster strong coalitions of industry and stakeholders with a common purpose in creating flourishing destinations and thriving communities.

Fáilte Ireland will track progress through a series of performance indicators that will be monitored annually. The existence of compelling and saleable visitor experiences is the vehicle for:

- Increase bed-nights by 2% year over year ahead of national average from year 3 of implementation of this Destination and Experience Development Plan.
- Increase revenue to attractions by 2% ahead of the national average from implementation.
- Increase length of stay.
- Increase in the saleable product (5 new saleable experiences), improved experiences and better distribution.
- Season extension: extend opening hours annually by 5% annually.
- Increased visitor satisfaction – benchmarked through measures such as Net Promoter Score.

Under Alternative 2 there are two separate alternatives:

#### **Alternative 2A: A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management**

Fáilte Ireland provides funding sustainable tourism projects including land use and infrastructural development and land use activities. In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, **Alternative 2A** would require Fáilte Ireland’s stakeholders to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 “Site Maintenance Guidelines” and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) would have to demonstrate compliance, as relevant, with various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the **Plan is not part and does not contribute towards**.

**Further environmental requirements would be integrated into the Plan under Alternative 2A, relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services.**

### **Alternative 2B: A Plan without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management**

Alternative 2B would not include the requirements for environmental protection and management described under Alternative 2A. Projects would continue to be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

## Section 7 Evaluation of Alternatives

### 7.1 Introduction

This section provides a comparative evaluation of the environmental effects of implementing the alternatives that are detailed under Section 6. This determination sought to understand whether each alternative was likely to improve, conflict with or have a neutral interaction with environmental components.

### 7.2 Methodology

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

The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 7.2 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 the SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species<sup>87</sup>'.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects<sup>88</sup>.

The degree to which effects can be fully determined at this level of decision-making is limited, as the Plan will be implemented alongside planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects. Nonetheless, a comparative evaluation of the various alternatives can be provided.

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<sup>87</sup> '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.

<sup>88</sup> These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

**Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives<sup>89</sup>**

Environmental Component	Code	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>B1</b>	To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>90</sup>
	<b>B2</b>	To contribute towards 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 (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
	<b>B3</b>	To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites <sup>91</sup> 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
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH1</b>	To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
<b>Soil</b>	<b>S1</b>	To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource
<b>Water</b>	<b>W1</b>	To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters
	<b>W2</b>	To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters
	<b>W3</b>	To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	<b>AC1</b>	To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives.
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>M1</b>	For development to be served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health
	<b>M2</b>	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and fisheries
	<b>M3</b>	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH1</b>	To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
	<b>CH2</b>	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L1</b>	To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

**Table 7.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives on SEOs**

Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with the status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated by complying with other measures included within the Plan		Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be fully mitigated
to the <b>Greatest</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	

<sup>89</sup> See Section 5 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

<sup>90</sup> '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.

<sup>91</sup> The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

## 7.3 Cumulative Effects

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

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

- Potential *intra-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise from the interactions between different types of potential environmental effects resulting from a plan, programme, etc. Where there are elevated levels of environmental sensitivities (such as those identified under Section 4), future development could result in environmental conflicts and lead to a deterioration in environmental integrity. The interrelationships between environmental components that help determine these potential effects are identified on Table 8.4 in Section 8 e.g. interrelationships between: human health and water quality; human health and air quality; human health and flood risk; and ecology and water quality.
- Potential *inter-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans, programmes, developments, etc.

In considering the relationship with legislation and other plans and programmes it is important to note that the Plan will form part of a wider and extensive policy and planning framework that covers sectors including tourism, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications and land use planning (see Section 2, 4 and 5 and Appendix III) for a range of sectors at a range of levels (e.g. National, Regional, County and Local). Legislation, plans and programmes from these other sectors also take into account demands from both residents and tourists when considering infrastructure and service needs. These plans, in turn, are also subject to their own SEA and AA requirements and include their own requirements relating to environmental protection and management. In this way, the environment is protected in a holistic manner so that the interactions of other uses and their associated plans and programmes are taken into account. Where they exist, the SEA recognises the existence of other environmental assessments with a view to avoid duplication of assessment, in compliance with the SEA Directive.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSEs for the Northern and Western Region (County Sligo is located within the Northern and Western Region) sets out objectives relating tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSEs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. These provisions are in addition to those that have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (see Section 9).

Effects<sup>92</sup> that may arise as a result of implementing the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, have been mitigated to the extent that the

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<sup>92</sup> Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services and infrastructure (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Plan – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

only residual adverse effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Plan are those that are identified under Table 8.3.

Cumulative effects that have been considered include those resulting from the Plan in-combination with the following:

- Land use policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Development Plans and Local Area Plans);
- Water services, waste management, transport and energy infrastructure plans (e.g. Uisce Éireann Water Services Strategic Plan and associated Capital Investment Plan, Regional Waste Management Plans, Transportation Policies and Strategies, Grid25 and associated Implementation Programme) and the Local Economic and Community Plans; and
- Environmental protection and management plans (e.g. River Basin Management Plans, National Mitigation Plan, National Adaptation Framework, and Flood Risk Management Plans).

Potential cumulative effects include the following arising from the alternatives in combination with the plans etc. detailed above (note that potential adverse cumulative effects will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 9):

- Contribution towards sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management – various provisions for which are provided for in the aforementioned plans (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Need for and use of services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism), including those related to water services, transport, access or accommodation, that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework – and associated potential adverse environmental effects on various environmental components including biodiversity and flora and fauna, the status of waters, human health, soil, emissions, cultural heritage and landscape (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures such as those relating to walking and cycling, charging infrastructure, flood risk management and resilience (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Contribution towards travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air as a result of increases in tourist numbers (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified (**Alternative 2A**). This would positively impact upon the protection and management of environmental components such as human health, water, soil, air and climatic factors.
- Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) through visitor management strategies, as relevant and appropriate (**Alternative 2A**).
- In combination with plans and programmes from all sectors potential adverse effects on all environmental components arising from all development in greenfield and brownfield areas (e.g. infrastructural, residential, accommodation, economic, forestry, agricultural etc.). The type of these effects are consistent with those described on Table 7.3. These plans and programmes from other sectors undergo SEA and comply with environmental legislation while projects are subject to EIA and AA, as relevant (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).

## 7.4 Detailed Consideration of Alternatives

Table 7.3 below describes effects common to all Alternatives (1, 2A and 2B).

**Table 7.3 Effects Common to All Alternatives**

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework <sup>93</sup>	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated occur
<b>Biodiversity and flora and fauna</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats).</li> <li>• Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green</li> </ul>	Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna.</li> <li>• Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects.</li> </ul>

<sup>93</sup> Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Effects would be to varying degrees – refer to Table 7.4 for comparative evaluation.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework <sup>93</sup>	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
	<p>infrastructure and its ecosystem services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</li> </ul>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of human health.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of amenity usage and access.</li> <li>Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities in County Sligo area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated.</li> <li>Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.</li> </ul>
<b>Soil</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards minimising land-take and loss of extent of soil resource.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination.</li> <li>Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource.</li> <li>Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites.</li> <li>Potential for increase in river bank erosion.</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters) and water-based designations.</li> <li>Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.</li> <li>Increase in flood risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Air and climatic factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions.</li> <li>Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels.</li> <li>The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Uisce Éireann to provide for such needs).</li> <li>Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments.</li> <li>Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage.</li> <li>Potential effects on architectural heritage.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in estuary areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape.</li> <li>Changes in the appearance of the landscape.</li> </ul>

### **Alternative 1: Business as Usual**

Sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection under Alternative 1 is provided through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. These measures would contribute towards positive effects on the protection and management of all environmental components (see Table 7.3).

Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.

In the absence of a Plan, there would continue to be an increase in tourist numbers – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades. The most popular locations in the County Sligo area would see the largest increases in visitors, which would occur during the peak season. This would give rise to a greater concentration of tourists during peak seasons and in the most popular locations thereby increasing potential environmental effects on all components and peak load additions on various infrastructure in particular locations/at particular times.

Contributions towards an increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation, would not occur as a result of a Plan that seeks to lengthen dwell time and grow visitor numbers however increases in tourist numbers would occur. Similarly, the positive mitigatory effects as a result of provisions of a Plan, such as those relating to sustainable mobility, traffic management and compliance with climate adaptation and management plans/strategies would not be provided for.

There would be one layer of mitigation under Alternative 1, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework.

### **Alternative 2A: A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management**

In addition to the measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection, environmental management (and associated effects - see Table 7.3), which are provided under all alternatives, and measures relating to seasonality and regionality, provided for by this alternative and Alternative 2B, this alternative would provide additional requirements for environmental protection and management, including those taken from the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme and those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) would have to demonstrate compliance, as relevant, with various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.

Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the County Sligo area. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree than would be the case if there was no Plan. This would be likely to contribute towards an increase in travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2023 (and emerging Climate Action Plan 2024) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions).

A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be three layers of mitigation, through:

- The existing statutory planning and consent framework;



- Visitor management strategies; and
- Additional environmental requirements for environmental protection and management, under this alternative.

### **Alternative 2B: A Plan without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management**

In addition to the measures relating to sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection (and associated effects - see Table 7.3), which are provided under all alternatives, this Alternative (2B) would provide measures to improve seasonality and regionality. Seasonality and regionality would provide a greater spread of tourists throughout the year and across the Sligo DEDP area thereby reducing potential environmental effects and peak load additions on various infrastructure in particular locations/at particular times.

Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.

Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the County Sligo area. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree than would be the case if there was no Plan.

This would be likely to contribute towards an increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases would be mitigated by the wider planning framework.

A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be one layer of mitigation, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework.

#### **7.4.1 Selected Alternative for the Plan**

Taking into account the environmental effects detailed above and the challenges and opportunities present for tourism across the Sligo DEDP area, Fáilte Ireland have proceeded with Alternative 2A "A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management". A comparative assessment of all three alternatives against SEOs is provided on Table 7.4 overleaf.

**Table 7.4 Comparative Evaluation of Alternatives against SEOs**

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated by complying with other measures included within the Plan		Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be fully mitigated
	to the <b>Greatest</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
Alternative 1: Business as Usual			<b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 Sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection</b> is provided through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. These measures would contribute towards positive effects on the protection and management of all environmental components (see Table 7.3).		<b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b> Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process. <b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b> In the absence of a Plan, there would likely to be a continuing increase in tourist numbers – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades. The most popular locations in Sligo DEDP area would be likely to see the largest increases in visitors, which would be likely to occur during the peak season. This would be likely to give rise to greater concentration of tourists during peak seasons and in the most popular locations thereby increasing potential environmental effects on all components and peak load additions on various infrastructure in particular locations/at particular times.	
Alternative 2A: A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management	<b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b> In addition to the measures relating to <b>sustainable development, environmental protection, environmental management</b> (and associated effects - see Table 7.3) and measures relating to <b>seasonality, regionality and visitor management strategies</b> , provided for by this alternative and Alternative 2B, this Alternative (2A) would provide <b>additional requirements for environmental protection and management.</b>			<b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b> Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process. <b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b> Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan’s objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the Sligo DEDP area. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase the numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree. A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects.  Notwithstanding these issues, there would be three layers of mitigation, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing statutory planning and consent framework;</li> <li>• Visitor management strategies; and</li> <li>• Additional environmental requirements for environmental protection and management, under this alternative.</li> </ul>		

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	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs			<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated by complying with other measures included within the Plan		<b>Probable Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be fully mitigated
	to the <b>Greatest</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
Alternative 2B: A Plan without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management		<p><b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b></p> <p>In addition to the measures relating to <b>sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection</b> (and associated effects - see Table 7.3), this alternative would provide measures relating to <b>seasonality and regionality</b> – such measures would also be provided for by Alternative 2A.</p>			<p><b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b></p> <p>Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.</p> <p><b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b></p> <p>Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the Sligo DEDP area. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree.</p> <p>A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, there would be two layers of mitigation, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing statutory planning and consent framework; and</li> <li>• Visitor management strategies.</li> </ul>	

## Section 8 Evaluation of Plan Provisions

### 8.1 Introduction

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Section 5 and Table 8.1) are used in the assessment of the Plan.

The provisions are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 8.2) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the Plan provisions 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 the SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species<sup>94</sup>'.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects<sup>95</sup>:

- 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.
- 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 will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan (see Section 9).
- 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.

The degree to which effects can be fully determined at this level of decision-making is limited, as the Plan will be implemented alongside planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects. More detailed environmental measures may emanate from such assessments, further facilitating the mitigation of adverse effects.

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<sup>94</sup> '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.

<sup>95</sup> These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

**Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Environmental Component	Code	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>B1</b>	To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>96</sup>
	<b>B2</b>	To contribute towards 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 (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
	<b>B3</b>	To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites <sup>97</sup> 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
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH1</b>	To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
<b>Soil</b>	<b>S1</b>	To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource
<b>Water</b>	<b>W1</b>	To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters
	<b>W2</b>	To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters
	<b>W3</b>	To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	<b>AC1</b>	To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives.
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>M1</b>	For development to be served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health
	<b>M2</b>	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and fisheries
	<b>M3</b>	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH1</b>	To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
	<b>CH2</b>	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L1</b>	To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

**Table 8.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of the Plan provisions on SEOs**

Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
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<sup>96</sup> '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.

<sup>97</sup> The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

## 8.2 Overall Findings (including Transboundary)

The overall findings of the SEA are that:

- **The Plan contributes towards Compliance with Environmental Legislation and Guidelines**

Fáilte Ireland are integrating all recommendations arising from the SEA and AA processes into the Plan (see Section 9 of this report), facilitating compliance of the Plan with various European and National legislation and Guidelines relating to the sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management.

Implementation of the Plan will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals<sup>98</sup> of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016.

- **The Plan provides for Environmental Protection and Management**

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>99</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. Such legislation, policies, plans and programmes include:

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g. Development Plans, such as the existing Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied and extended) and the new upcoming Sligo CDP 2024-2030 [in preparation] and any Local Area Plans currently in force in County Sligo and that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management<sup>100</sup>; and

<sup>98</sup> Including: Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

<sup>99</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

<sup>100</sup> For more information please refer to Appendix III of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

- The Climate Action Plan 2023 (and emerging Climate Action Plan 2024) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions)<sup>101</sup>.

Further requirements have been integrated into the Plan under the headings of “Infrastructure Capacity”, “Visitor Management” and “Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services” – see Section 1.1 of this Environmental Report.

- **The Plan is likely to contribute towards, in combination with other governmental policies, plans etc., an increase in greenhouse gas emissions – although such increases will be mitigated**

The Plan seeks to lengthen dwell time and grow visitor numbers to the Sligo DEDP area and would, in combination with other governmental policies, plans etc., be likely to contribute towards in an increase in travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2023 (and emerging Climate Action Plan 2024) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions).

- **The Plan is Consistent with the existing Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework**

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, stakeholders and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.

The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland’s planning policy up to 2040. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSES for the Northern and Western Region (that includes the area to which the Plan relates) sets out objectives relating to tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSESs set out various objectives relating to tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSESs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating to tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents, including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

- **Potentially Significant Adverse Effects to be mitigated**

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<sup>101</sup> For more information please refer to Section 4.10 and/or Appendix III of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

Potentially significant adverse environmental effects arising from the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, are detailed on Table 8.3. These effects will be mitigated by the various provisions that have been integrated into the Plan including those that have arisen through the SEA and AA processes (see Section 9).

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland, where relevant. Taking into account, *inter alia*, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9) and the status of the Plan (the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent – refer also to Section 2 or Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Table 8.3 details the various types of environmental effects likely to arise with respect to the Plan (as developed from the selected alternatives – see Section 7) as a direct result of activities under the Plan and in combination with the existing statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework. By complying with appropriate mitigation measures - including those that have been integrated into the Plan - potentially significant adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing the Plan would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.



**Table 8.3 Overall Findings – Environmental Effects arising from Plan Provisions**

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework <sup>102</sup>			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
<b>Biodiversity and flora and fauna</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitor management strategies; and</li> <li>Plan requirements for environmental protection and management.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Contributes towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil.</li> </ul>	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;</li> <li>Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and</li> <li>Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces arising from projects consented through the statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</li> <li>Losses or damage to ecology (these would be: in compliance with relevant legislation; and mitigated as projects would demonstrate compliance with various environmental protection and management measures)</li> </ul>	<b>B1 B2 B3</b>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of human health including through Plan requirements for environmental protection and management.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of human health as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection amenity usage and access.</li> <li>Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities in the Sligo DEDP area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated.</li> <li>Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management.</li> </ul>	<b>PHH1</b>

<sup>102</sup> Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Plan – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework <sup>102</sup>			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
<b>Soil</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various provisions (e.g. relating to maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed) help to minimise land-take and loss of extent of the soil resource.</li> <li>Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination.</li> <li>Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource.</li> <li>Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites.</li> <li>Potential for increase in river bank erosion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.</li> </ul>	<b>S1</b>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters) and water-based designations including through integrating requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan.</li> <li>Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.</li> <li>Increase in flood risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Plan; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</li> </ul>	<b>W1 W2 W3</b>
<b>Air and climatic factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures relating to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking and cycling; and</li> <li>Contribution towards European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures including those relating to resilience.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions.</li> <li>Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increase in travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2023 (and emerging Climate Action plan 2024) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions).</li> <li>Risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate and interactions with issues including flooding and material assets.</li> </ul>	<b>AC1</b>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>Contains clear objectives around seasonality and regionality which look not only to spread the benefits of tourism but also the potential impacts/ load associated with tourism.</li> <li>Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.</li> <li>Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels.</li> <li>The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Uisce Éireann to provide for such needs).</li> <li>Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments.</li> <li>Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies.</li> <li>Increased loading on critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) where no significant problems have been identified with this infrastructure.</li> <li>Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Plan; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</li> <li>Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</li> </ul>	<b>M1 M2 M3</b>

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework <sup>102</sup>			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage by encouraging greater levels of awareness and appreciation through, use, interpretation and access, in line with the requirements relating to the protection of cultural heritage including: entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context; and entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage.</li> <li>Potential effects on architectural heritage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential alteration to the context and setting of architectural heritage however, these will occur in compliance with legislation.</li> <li>Potential alteration to the context and setting of archaeological heritage however, this will occur in compliance with legislation.</li> <li>Potential loss of unknown archaeology however, this loss will be mitigated by measures integrated into the Plan.</li> </ul>	<b>CH1 CH2</b>
<b>Landscape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations as a result of: facilitating compliance with relevant plans; and maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in marine, island and ridge areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape.</li> <li>Changes in the appearance of the landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residual visual effects (these would comply with landscape designation provisions).</li> </ul>	<b>L1</b>

### **8.3 Appropriate Assessment**

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been undertaken alongside preparation of the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA. Various content has been integrated into the Plan through the SEA and AA processes (see Section 9).

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

The SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to include information on the likely significant effects on the environment, 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 that are identified include those that 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.

**Table 8.4 Potential for Interrelationships between Environmental Components**

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

## 8.5 More Detailed Assessment of Plan Provisions

The **Sligo DEDP** is a five-year plan designed to be a ‘road-map’ for enhancing the existing County Sligo visitor proposition to achieve the objectives of addressing seasonality, increasing visitor numbers and spend, and increasing dwell time and visitor dispersion across the destination. The Plan’s **Objectives** cover three overarching themes: “**Outdoor Adventures/Outdoor Wellbeing**”, “**Destination Axis Town**” and “**Distinctive Sligo Experiences – Cultural Rhythm**” under which a range of **Destination Catalyst Projects**, **Destination Enabling Projects** and **Supporting Projects** have been aligned that will contribute to the creation of the in-destination conditions for tourism growth.

### 8.5.1 Plan’s Vision and Objectives

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs-likely to be mitigated	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs-unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<p>The Plan’s <b>Vision</b> is:  <i>"A year round adventure filled destination where the quality of the outdoor experience has put Sligo on the international stage. Spectacular coastal walks, long distance trails and greenways combined with epic off road biking experiences deliver anew blend of adventure and wellbeing experiences. It is recognised globally as a world class surfing destination where dabblers and enthusiasts share the waves with international surfers. Sligo town has developed into one of the country’s in demand visitor destinations. The vibrant urban hotspot is brought alive by the animation of its innovative placemaking investment, festivals, events and cultural experiences. The appeal of Sligo among international and domestic visitors has been central to the transformation of the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way. The quality of the Sligo destination experience has disrupted regional visitor flows linking the destination with other regions and cross border opportunities. Sligo has an always on destination vibe that has changed the mix of visitors, attracted by year round events, new attractions and ease of access to connected communities."</i></p> <p>The <b>Overall Objectives</b> of the Plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Sligo visitor experience is brought to life through the development of a mix of tourism products and experiences that will attract visitors and retain them for longer.</li> <li>• Unlock the economic potential of tourism in Sligo by progressing a range of key initiatives that will <b>disperse tourists across the wider destination</b>.</li> <li>• Strengthen the value of tourism to the local community by providing sustainable employment opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development</b> by enhancing and creating strong destination experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike.</li> <li>• Create the conditions to attract leisure visitors on a year round basis to Sligo and immerse themselves actively in the community while providing the opportunity to interact with local people as part of the Sligo experience.</li> <li>• Develop the role of Sligo as a key enabler for regional tourism development and transform how visitors engage with the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way.</li> </ul>	<p><b>B1 B2 B3</b>  <b>PHH1 S1 W1</b>  <b>W2 W3 AC1</b>  <b>M1 M2 M3 CH1</b>  <b>CH2 L1</b></p>	<p><b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1</b>  <b>S1 W1 W2 W3</b>  <b>AC1 M1 M2 M3</b>  <b>CH1 CH2 L1</b></p>		
<p><b>SEA Commentary:</b></p> <p><i>The assessment of the Plan’s Vision and Objectives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.</i></li> </ul>				

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

**Sustainability and environmental protection** have been integrated into the Plan's Vision and Objectives, for example: **"Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development by enhancing and creating strong destination experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike."**

**Seasonality and visitor management** have been integrated into the Plan's Vision and Objectives, for example: "Unlock the economic potential of tourism in Sligo by progressing a range of key initiatives that will disperse tourists across the wider destination."

The Sligo DEDP area shares borders with counties Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo. Provisions of the Sligo DEDP that have the potential to link with areas beyond the area to which the Plan relates (including regional and cross border opportunities) and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:

- Various greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes;
- Signature projects;
- Water sports facility centres; and
- Outdoor activities and outdoor infrastructure.

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland, where relevant. Taking into account, inter alia, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9) and the status of the Plan (the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent – refer also to Section 2 or Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be considered by Northern Ireland for permission would be subject to that country's planning and environmental legislation and rules.

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under the Sligo DEDP would need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Plan. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland DEDPs would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those DEDPs.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

## 8.5.2 Destination Catalyst Projects 1 - 6

The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of action.	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
	<b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b>	<b>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</b>		

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Project	Actions			
<b>Catalyst Project 1</b>	<b>National Outdoor Activity Centres</b>			
National Surf Centre	Develop and implement the commercial operating plan for the new National Surf Centre			
National Surf Centre	Develop visitor experiences on site to maximise the potential of this new flagship attraction			
Surfing Events and Festivals	Work to deliver large scale surfing events or festivals to increase the profile of the National Surf Centre			
Strandhill Beach	Address the needs for rescue service plan, and improved signage on the dangers of swimming at Strandhill Beach			
Surf Campers	Identify ways of meeting the needs of surf campers in winter			
Local Surfing Communities	Engage other local communities that are recognised for surfing (Enniscrone, Easkey and Mullaghmore) to assess sector needs			
Coolaney National Mountain Bike Centre	Continue to work collaboratively to develop the Coolaney National Mountain Bike Centre as a destination of choice for mountain bikers			
Coolaney National Mountain Bike Centre	Work with the local community to explore new business opportunities			
Outdoor Recreation	Work collaboratively to develop the outdoor recreational potential of emerging opportunities with the surrounding area			
Outdoor Recreation	Support the Sligo Rowing Club and the Sligo Kayak Club in the building of a new boat house at Doorly Park pier			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 1</b>	<b>National Outdoor Activity Centres</b>			
Outdoor Recreation	Explore ways of servicing the needs of commercial water-based operators at Doorly Park in developing new visitor experiences, as a result of this investment			
Outdoor Events	Work with operators and event organisers to promote new events and experiences			
Doorly Park Gate Lodge	Complete the refurbishment of Doorly Gate Lodge and identify a strategic role for the building			
Water Transportation	Explore the opportunity to develop seasonal water transportation from the new pontoon and sites of interest			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 2</b>	<b>Attraction of Scale - Hazelwood Demesne</b>			
Hazelwood House	Support the ongoing restoration of the Hazelwood House as a house of national importance, and Sazerac's potential plans for an immersive visitor experience within the house			
Distillery Experience	Support the ongoing development of a world-class distillery experience			
Outdoor Activities	Support the further leveraging of the estate's existing tourism assets through continuing to restore the gardens, and developing outdoor activities within the estate, including related interpretation			
Events and Festivals	Work with Hazelwood to develop a calendar of themed events			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 3</b>	<b>Enniscrone Regeneration</b>			
Bath House and Old Pavilion	Re-imagine the area between the Bath House and the Old Pavilion, and work towards developing a completely re-landscaped promenade			
Cliff Bath House	In refurbishing the Cliff Bath House, use the project to create a strong and renewed association with health and well-being, and highlight the significance of the Bath House by relocating the Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point to this building			
Green Coast Designation	Continue to prioritise beach safety and the maintenance of its Green Coast designation			
Shared Beach Facilities	Complete the construction of the new shared beach facility			
Boardwalk	Explore the opportunity to erect a boardwalk in the sand dunes to prevent ongoing erosion			



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Project	Actions			
<b>Catalyst Project 4</b>	<b>SLNCR Greenway</b>			
SLNCR Sligo to Enniskillen	Support the development and delivery of the proposed SLNCR Greenway. In the short to medium term, advance the current planning process, preliminary design, route selection and public consultation with land owners and communities within Co. Sligo			
SLNCR Sligo to Enniskillen	Councils to collaborate on a cross border basis, engaging with the local business community, local interest groups and landowners along the SLNCR route to explore related tourism development opportunities and maximise its tourism potential			
Sligo Greenway	Support ongoing efforts to advance the delivery of the Sligo Greenway project from Collooney to Mayo boundary			
Sligo Greenway Greenways	Assess the potential for extensions and loops along the proposed Greenways for Sligo Further assess the potential for developing a greenway between Ballina and Enniscrone			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 5</b>	<b>Sligo Town Experience</b>			
Queen Maeve Square	Complete the construction of the Queen Maeve Square and the enhancement of the immediate environs			
Queen Maeve Square	Establish a governance structure that will oversee the operational use of the facility			
Queen Maeve Square	Support appropriate open-air casual trading and casual event licenses along the riverside			
Events and Festivals	Deliver a large scale event or festival for Queen Maeve Square			
Garavogue River Walk	Complete the Garavogue River Walk from Queen Maeve Square to Lough Gill			
Interpretive Plan	Work with partners to create branded signage and develop an interpretive plan			
Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge	Pursue the development of a dedicated pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Cleveragh and Hazelwood Peninsula			
Lady Anne Trail	Continue to work on the development of the Lady Anne Trail from the hospital area to Hazelwood			
Visitor Experiences	Consolidate existing plans and regeneration strategies to create a fully integrated visitor experience development plan that looks at the urban core holistically			
Visitor Experiences	Reassess the existing elements of the visitor experience in Sligo Town, and ways of enhancing the delivery of experiences			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 5</b>	<b>Sligo Town Experience</b>			
Sligo Gaol	Prioritise conservation projects and continue to assess market demand for potential experiences			
The Model, Home of the Niland Collection	Continue to explore new approaches to raising its profile as a key national centre for contemporary culture and as a core attractor in Sligo			
The Museum	As part of the master planning of current town centre regeneration sites, explore the potential of a county museum to interpret the historical, cultural, landscape and literary strengths of Sligo as part of the library and other facilities			
Sligo Abbey	Work collaboratively to explore the opening up of the Abbey grounds			
Green Fort	Continue to implement The Green Fort Conservation Plan, and address interpretive needs			
Purple Flag	Collectively retain Purple Flag status for Sligo as the basis for developing the evening time economy			
Evening Time Experiences	Grow the range of evening time visitor experiences in Sligo			
Tidy Towns	Continue to support and promote the Tidy Towns initiative and community beautification projects			
Finisklin	Advance the remediation work at Finisklin and work towards developing the previously proposed concept of the Gibraltar District Park			
Sligo Rovers	Support Sligo Rovers Football Club in the implementation of their Masterplan to create a 6,050 all-seater UEFA Category 3 stadium, and in the development of the Soccer Academy			

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Project	Actions				
Catalyst Project 6	World Class Golf				
Golf Tourism	Use existing marketing channels to promote the collective strengths of golf across the county, and work with Tourism Ireland to build a similar profile for golf in Co. Sligo				
Golf Tourism	Work with the golf courses to develop exclusive packages that highlight compelling experiences				
Golf Tourism	Consider developing a multi-day/multi- course Co. Sligo Trophy event				
Golf Tourism	Prioritise addressing the extensive coastal erosion issues relating to natural links golf courses				

**SEA Commentary:**

The assessment of the Plan's Destination Catalyst Projects 1-6 against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:

- Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and
- Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through climate change adaptation and mitigation, such as:

- "Work with coastal zone management specialists at Strandhill to assess the issues of coastal erosion from a holistic perspective."
- "Prioritise addressing the extensive coastal erosion issues relating to natural links golf courses."

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the Sligo DEDP area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Plan measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Plan or integration of Plan provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The Sligo DEDP area shares borders with counties Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo. Provisions of the Sligo DEDP that have the potential to link with areas beyond the area to which the Plan relates (including regional and cross border opportunities) and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:

- Various greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes such as: SLNCR Sligo to Enniskillen, Sligo Greenway project from Collooney to Mayo boundary, greenway between Ballina and Enniscrone and coastal trail, including from Bundoran to Mullaghmore;
- Signature projects such as: Hazelwood Demense, Queen, Maeve Square;
- Water sports facility centres such as: Boat House Doorly Park; and
- Outdoor activities and outdoor infrastructure such as: Coolaney National Mountain Bike Centre, Cloonmahon Woodlands Recreational Park, Garavogue River Walk, Lady Anne Walk.

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under the Sligo DEDP would need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Plan. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland DEDPs would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those DEDPs.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the Sligo DEDP area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the coast or estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland, where relevant. Taking into account, inter alia, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9) and the status of the Plan (the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent – refer also to Section 2 or Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be considered by Northern Ireland for permission would be subject to that country's planning and environmental legislation and rules.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with the implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

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*Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.*

**8.5.3 8.5.2 Destination Catalyst Projects 7 - 9**

<p>The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of the action.</p>	<p>Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs</p>	<p>Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated</p>	<p>Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated</p>	<p><b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs</p>																																																		
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Project	Actions			
<b>Catalyst Project 8</b>	<b>Industry Development</b>			
County wide tourism leadership	Establish a new county-wide tourism leadership structure that brings together the public and private sectors and the various agencies that influence tourism into a unified partnership			
Governance	With the definition of a governance structure, develop clear terms of reference, roles and responsibilities for the emergent partnership			
Destination Stewardship	Embed an emphasis on destination stewardship into the terms of reference for the new governance structure			
Destination Stewardship	Promote the importance of destination stewardship in messaging to the visitor to encourage visitors to be more conscientious about their impact on the environment and the community			
Visitor Experiences	Grow the number of saleable visitor experiences (B2B and B2C) available in Sligo			
Visitor Experiences	Strengthen or develop experiences linked to distinctive Sligo themes (eg Yeats, traditional music, food and drink, Spanish Armada)			
Visitor Experiences	Work to increase the number of Sligo visitor experiences attending trade platforms and events each year			
Digital Capacity	Build the digital capacity of the Sligo tourism industry through initiatives such as the Digital that Delivers Programme			
Business Support	Create and deliver a focused tourism business support programme for Co. Sligo			
Business Support	Promote engagement with the new Climate Action Programme to reduce carbon emissions from the tourism sector across Sligo			
Business Support	Promote engagement with the Employer Excellence Programme to assist with attracting and retaining tourism staff			
Marketing	Define the appropriate mechanism and approach for marketing Co. Sligo			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 8</b>	<b>Industry Development</b>			
Marketing	Strengthen the Council's capacity and internal resources to strategically deliver on its enabling role in tourism development and promotion			
Marketing	Develop a marketing strategy for business tourism that aligns or is integrated within the leisure tourism marketing strategy			
Transport & Access Planning	Assess the short to long term requirements for Sligo to maximise its current accessibility through rail, bus and road networks and visitor dispersion across the county			
Transport & Access Planning	Work in partnership with Local Link to develop route options that can stimulate day and evening time visitor activity within our Sligo communities			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Catalyst Project 9</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>			
Gap Analysis	Work collaboratively to complete an assessment and gap analysis of all accommodation elements			
Accommodation	Develop an accommodation strategy aimed at attracting new investment and fostering growth in the sector			
Accommodation	Explore the opportunities to develop bespoke accommodation, camping and hospitality options			
Wild Camping	Work with local communities to develop a management policy for 'wild camping'			

**SEA Commentary:**

The assessment of the Plan's Destination Catalyst Projects against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:

- Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and
- Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:

**Sustainability, environmental protection and climate change awareness/reducing emissions e.g.:**

- "Assess the short to long term requirements for Sligo to maximise its current accessibility through rail, bus and broad networks and visitor dispersion across the county."
- "Work with local communities to develop a management policy for 'wild camping:'"

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the Sligo DEDP area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Plan measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Plan or integration of Plan provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The Sligo DEDP area shares borders with counties Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo. Provisions of the Sligo DEDP that have the potential to link with areas beyond the area to which the Plan relates (including regional and cross border opportunities) and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:

- Various greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes, such as: Miner’s Way and Historical Trail, Beara Breifne Way, Ballygawley Blueway, Lough Gill Blueway, Hazelwood Peninsula Looped Trail, Off road Trails, Ox Mountains trails, Lough Talt trail, Intercounty Trail, Gleniff Horseshoe Heritage Trail, Coolera Cultural Trail;
- Signature projects;
- Water sports facility centres, such as; and
- Outdoor activities and outdoor infrastructure.

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under the Sligo DEDP would need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Plan. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland DEDPs would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those DEDPs.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the Sligo DEDP area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland, where relevant. Taking into account, inter alia, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9) and the status of the Plan (the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent – refer also to Section 2 or Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be considered by Northern Ireland for permission would be subject to that country’s planning and environmental legislation and rules.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

## 8.5.4 Destination Enablers 1 - 7

<p>The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of the action.</p>	<p>Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs</p>	<p>Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated</p>	<p>Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated</p>	<p><b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs</p>
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Project		Actions	B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1	B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1		
<b>Destination Enabler 1</b>		<b>Yeats Story</b>				
Visitor Experiences		Reassess how this theme can be presented to the visitor, and explore ways of consolidating the family story which is currently spread over several locations including The Yeats Building, Drumcliffe Church, The Sligo Museum, and The Model, and ensuring that the experience is readily accessible to a wider audience				
Visitor Experiences		Continue to promote the new Yeats Trail, with its newly landscaped sites and upgraded visitor facilities, as a way to explore Co. Sligo				
Digital Experiences		Review how the Yeats theme can be further explored digitally through the Yeats Unwrapped app and online packaging and distribution				
<b>Destination Enabler 2</b>		<b>Rural and Community Tourism</b>				
Profiling Rural Traditions		Strengthen the focus on integrated experiences that profile the county's deep rooted rural traditions and music, and reinforce emerging clusters such as the Riverstown/Tubbercurry/Gorteen area.				
Great Houses		Continue to encourage owners to deliver quality bespoke experiences. The county has a number of estate homes that offer various experiences from accommodation and unique cuisine, to historic tours and bespoke wedding packages, including Temple House, Coopershill House, Lissadell House, Hazelwood House and Markee Castle				
Food and Drink Producers		Support the development of experiences based around food and drink producers in Sligo				
Regeneration Initiatives		Pursue current regeneration initiatives in Sligo, Strandhill, Rosses Point, Grange, Ballysadare, Tubbercurry, Ballymote, Keash and Enniscrone				
Regeneration Initiatives		Work with businesses and communities to explore ways of leveraging regeneration initiatives				
Drumcliffe		Support the ongoing efforts to manage and service the high volume of visitors and address conservation issues associated with the round tower and high cross at Drumcliffe				
Spanish Armada		Continue to build on the work of Spanish Armada Ireland and further explore their identified preferred options in line with Fáilte Ireland consumer insights				
<b>Destination Enabler 2</b>		<b>Rural and Community Tourism</b>				
Coleman Centre		Work with traditional music sector to identify ways of raising the profile of the Coleman Irish Music Centre and increasing the visibility of this form of music				
Sally Gardens and Ballysadare River		Continue to move forward on specific projects that will enhance the destination experience and key themes, including the restoration of the Sally Gardens and the opening up of the Ballysadare River				
Dolly's Cottage		Support efforts to promote Dolly's Cottage in Strandhill				
Historic Towns Initiative		Continue to advance heritage regeneration through the Historic Towns Initiative, and use these initiatives to stimulate new thinking leveraging these community heritage assets				
Farmers Markets		Continue to promote the exceptional range of farmers' markets across the county and explore ways of further developing the culinary experience at these events				
Tidy Towns		Continue to support and promote the Tidy Towns initiative and community beautification projects				
Easkey		Address/highlight potential liability issues associated with Rosslee Castle				
Local Communities		Work with local communities to identify and address destination management				
Public Awareness Campaign		Consider developing a public awareness campaign in local schools that highlights the significance of tourism to communities and the critical role of the environment				
Eco-certification		Work with and encourage local communities that are interested in pursuing community level eco-certification, and work towards reducing carbon emissions				
Traffic Congestion		Explore options to address localised tourism related seasonal traffic congestion				

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<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Destination Enabler 3</b>	<b>Passage Tomb Landscape</b>			
Passage Tomb Landscape	Continue to work within the local communities to raise awareness of the Passage Tomb landscape of Sligo and the World Heritage Nomination bid			
World Heritage Bid	Agree an MoU with DHLGH to frame and resource the preparation of the World Heritage bid for Sligo, and establish a World Heritage Team and World Heritage Steering Group in partnership with key stakeholders			
Carrowmore Visitor Centre	Complete the upgrades to the Carrowmore Visitor Centre and the interpretive content			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Destination Enabler 3</b>	<b>Passage Tomb Landscape</b>			
Sustainable Visitor Experiences	Utilise the baseline study of the Passage Tombs of County Sligo (2021) to identify key management issues and potential core sites for delivering sustainable visitor experiences – work collaboratively to develop integrated visitor management plans, including exploring options to interpret the landscape off-site			
Creevykeel Court Tomb	Creevykeel Court Tomb: Work with OPW to address the interpretive needs of this site			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Destination Enabler 4</b>	<b>Wellbeing</b>			
Seaweed	Work with businesses and communities to undertake an audit of all seaweed products, experiences and services, and highlight linkages with health and wellbeing			
Wellbeing activities	Promote the wide range of wellbeing activities available throughout Sligo, such as seaweed baths, sauna, yoga, foraging and regenerative experiences			
Surfing	Work with surf operators in Sligo to identify ways that surfing can further contribute to the county's positioning as a well-being destination			
Active Travel	Continue to support sustainable and active travel initiatives in Sligo			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Destination Enabler 5</b>	<b>Coastal Tourism Experiences</b>			
Rosses Point	Support Rosses Point Development Association in their efforts develop the marina			
Rosses Point	Extend the pontoon at Rosses Point; support the Association in attracting sailing events			
Rosses Point	Restore access to and from 'Second Beach' at Rosses Point			
Inishmurray	Continue the current assessment on access to the island and explore options for guided experiences and/or a virtual reality experience			
Boat Operators	Work with commercial boat operators that are licensed to provide tourism experiences, including chartered fishing, eco-wildlife tours and coastal sightseeing to explore ways of expanding the availability of marine- based experiences			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actions</b>			
<b>Destination Enabler 5</b>	<b>Coastal Tourism Experiences</b>			
Mullaghmore	Support/facilitate a planning discussion on tourism in Mullaghmore and explore opportunities to create a safe coastal walk, in addition to refreshing the Discovery Point signage			
Coastal Trail	Continue to assess the viability of developing a coastal trail, including from Bundoran to Mullaghmore			

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Project	Actions			
<b>Destination Enabler 6</b>	<b>Festivals and Events</b>			
Events and Festivals	Work with the festival and event organisers throughout the county			
Events and Festivals	Work towards raising the profile of food and drink through existing and new events – highlight provenance			
Events and Festivals	Support the ongoing development of themed events and festivals that align with key themes and stories			
Events and Festivals	Finalise and implement the Festivals and Events Strategy for Co. Sligo			
Music Festival	Explore opportunities for developing a new multi-faceted music festival that highlights key strengths of Co. Sligo alongside the music events, and work with all artistic sectors to develop and promote immersive experiences			
Arts and Culture	Extend and strengthen the emphasis on performing arts, music and cultural events across the entire county			
Outdoor Events	Continue to support and promote outdoor adventure events			
Cleveragh Regional Park	Continue to support the development of the outdoor event space, and support the future events schedule to activate the events space post-construction			
<b>Destination Enabler 7</b>	<b>Experience Clusters</b>			
Community Engagement	Promote a cluster-based approach to working with communities in rural areas to highlight the critical mass of experiences			
Sligo Food Trail	Explore opportunities to expand the trail/network into a stronger focus on developing food and drink clusters			
Cluster Development	Identify opportunities for strengthening linkages through the development of clusters around key Sligo themes			
Sligo Airport	Undertake a feasibility analysis of usage options for Sligo Airport that will support the tourism economy			

**SEA Commentary:**

The assessment of the Plan's Destination Enablers 1-8 against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:

- Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and
- Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:

**Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection and climate change adaptation and mitigation e.g.:**

- "Position the current work on the preparation of a county wide Cycle Strategy as infrastructure development that is multi-dimensional and relates to health, well-being, tourism, sustainability and active transport."
- "Explore the opportunity to erect a boardwalk in the sand dunes to prevent ongoing erosion."
- "Consider developing a public awareness campaign in local schools that highlights the significance of tourism to communities and the critical role of the environment"
- "Work with and encourage local communities that are interested in pursuing community level eco certification Consider a county wide certification and work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions."

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the Sligo DEDP area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Plan measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Plan or integration of Plan provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The Sligo DEDP area shares borders with counties Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo. Provisions of the Sligo DEDP that have the potential to link with areas beyond the area to which the Plan relates (including regional and cross border opportunities) and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:



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- Various greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes; such as a boardwalk and coastal walk;
- Signature projects such as Cleveragh Regional Park;
- Water sports facility centres; and
- Outdoor activities and outdoor infrastructure, such as those related to cycle strategy, Roses Point beach and marina

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under the Sligo DEDP would need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Plan. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland DEDPs would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those DEDPs.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the Sligo DEDP area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the coast or estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland, where relevant. Taking into account, inter alia, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9) and the status of the Plan (the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent – refer also to Section 2 or Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be considered by Northern Ireland for permission would be subject to that country's planning and environmental legislation and rules.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with the implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

## 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 Fáilte Ireland through the SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes.

By integrating all SEA and AA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with the implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

Mitigation was achieved through the following:

- Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework<sup>103</sup>; and
- Integrating Requirements for Environmental Compliance into the Plan<sup>104</sup>.

### 9.2 Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework<sup>105</sup>

The SEA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to help establish the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework.

Implementing the Sligo DEDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. **The Sligo DEDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.**

The Sligo DEDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSEs for the Northern and Western Region (that includes the area to which the Plan relates) sets out objectives relating tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSEs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

Implementation of the Sligo DEDP shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through

<sup>103</sup> This framework includes various environmental requirements.

<sup>104</sup> These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

<sup>105</sup> This framework includes various environmental requirements.

SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Sligo DEDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Sligo DEDP is not part and does not contribute towards.

Figure 9.1 provides a schematic of the relationship between Destination Experience Development Plan and the existing Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework. Also indicated is the hierarchy of accompanying environmental assessment in force. Note that the Overall Findings of this SEA are provided under Section 8.2 of this SEA Environmental Report.

## Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework

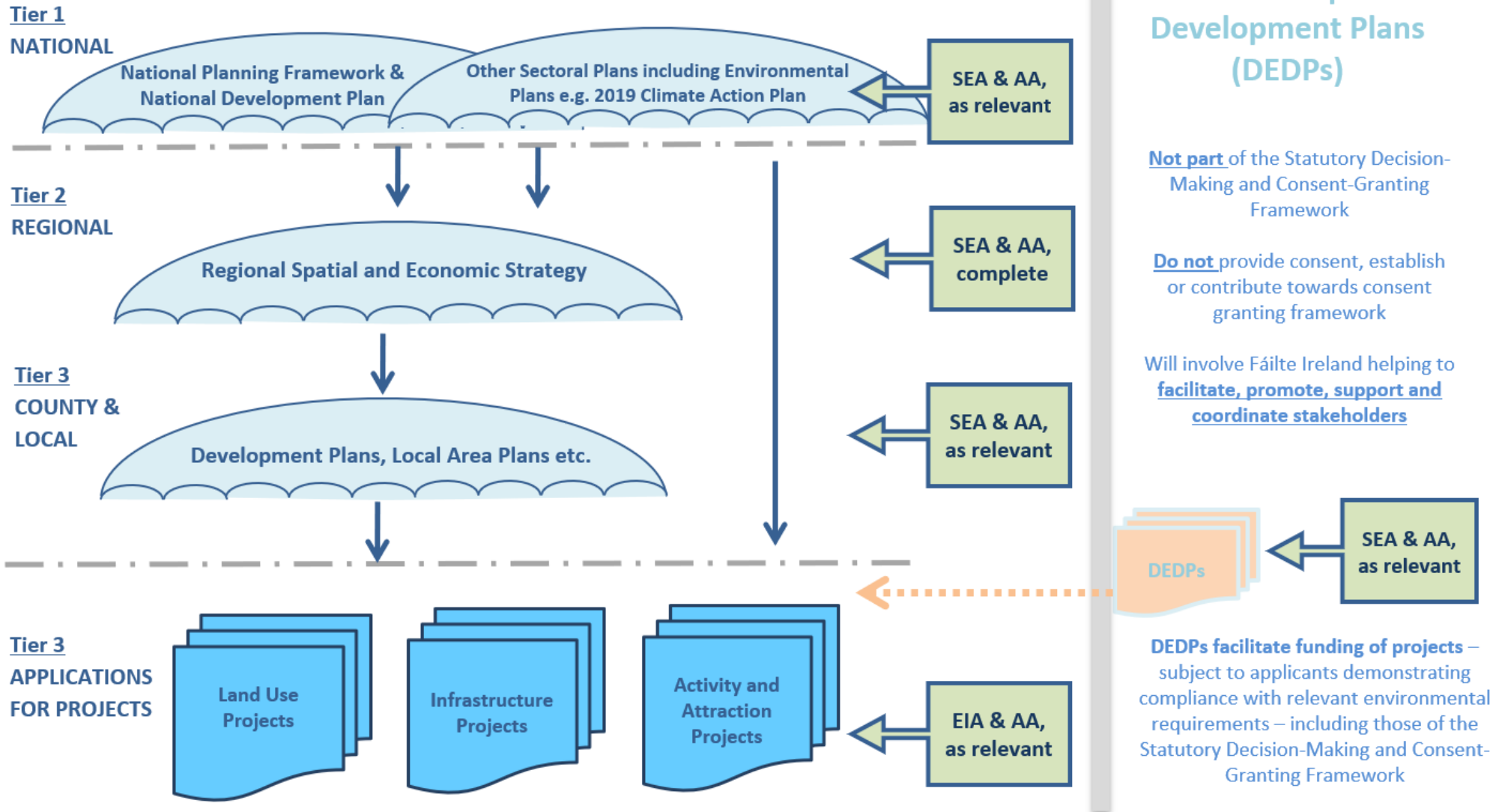


Figure 9.1 Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework, Sligo DEDP and Environmental Assessment Requirements

### 9.3 Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan<sup>106</sup>

The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>107</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the Sligo DEDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Sligo DEDP is not part and does not contribute towards. Such legislation, policies, plans and programmes include:

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g. Development Plans, such as the existing Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied and extended) and the new upcoming Sligo CDP 2024-2030 [in preparation] and any Local Area Plans currently in force in County Sligo) that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management<sup>108</sup>; and
- The Climate Action Plan 2023 (and emerging Climate Action Plan 2024) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions)<sup>109</sup>.

#### Infrastructure Capacity<sup>110</sup>

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) the potential impact on existing infrastructure as well as the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourism-related traffic volumes along any routes resulting from the relevant initiative shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate, where relevant. This consideration and associated mitigation shall take into account the need to provide for climate resilience. The promotion of developing visitor-friendly infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.

#### Visitor Management<sup>111</sup>

Those receiving funding shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including

<sup>106</sup> These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

<sup>107</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

<sup>108</sup> For more information please refer to Appendix III of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

<sup>109</sup> For more information please refer to Section 4.10 and/or Appendix III of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

<sup>110</sup> This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

<sup>111</sup> This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

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ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. This will include the preparation of Visitor Management Plans, including for Catalyst Projects, where relevant.

Extensive research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas with visitor management strategies. Where available, this research will continue to be used as part of a feedback loop to inform ongoing review of Fáilte Ireland activities, including within the Sligo DEDP area.

Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

### **Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services<sup>112</sup>**

Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

### **Climate Change**

Various provisions relating to climate change have been integrated into the Plan, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland. Such measures include those relating to:

- **Walking and cycling;** and
- Contribution towards European and national objectives for **climate mitigation and adaptation**, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures including those relating to resilience.

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<sup>112</sup> This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

## 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 that have been selected in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing relevant Fáilte Ireland Plans, Programmes, etc.

The monitoring programme is flexible to take account of specific environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise. It monitors all potential effects, including positive and negative ones (including cumulative effects – refer also to 7.3). Monitoring can demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of persistent significant adverse environmental effects which are directly attributable to tourism would necessitate consideration of the effects in the context of the Plan and a possible review of the part(s) of the Plan.

### 10.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators that 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) that were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions.

Table 10.1 overleaf shows the current indicators and targets that have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing relevant Fáilte Ireland Plans, Programmes, etc. These monitoring measures are updated on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring is an ongoing process and the programme allows for flexibility and further refinement of indicators and targets.

### 10.3 Sources

Confirmation of compliance with relevant environmental measures (see Section 9) will be a source of information for the Monitoring Programme. This documentation may include monitoring undertaken by beneficiaries to demonstrate compliance with the environmental requirements.

Other existing monitoring sources will be used, including:

- Information gathered through existing Fáilte Ireland environmental monitoring programmes (and any subsequent replacements), including the Monitoring Programme for the Wild Atlantic Way, a sub-programme of which will be extended to/reported on for the Sligo DEDP area in order to monitor any effects of visitors (see Section 4.6.3);
- Sources maintained by Sligo County Council (such as those arising from the SEA of land use plans) and the relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office; and
- Lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making – including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents – will also be utilised as a part of the Monitoring Programme.

### 10.4 Reporting and Responsibility

Reporting on environmental monitoring will address the indicators set out below. Fáilte Ireland 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, in combination with the relevant authorities.

Environmental monitoring for the Plan and other existing/future Fáilte Ireland plans, programmes, etc. may be undertaken and reported on at the same time. The findings of monitoring will be reported on periodically with frequencies to be determined during implementation.

**Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources**

Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	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 <sup>113</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities</li> <li>SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>Government report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years)</li> <li>Government National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years)</li> <li>Consultations with the NPWS</li> <li>CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years)</li> <li>Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from the Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from the Plan	
	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan  B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan  B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species resulting from the Plan	
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from 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 the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities</li> <li>SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>Consultations with the HSE and EPA</li> <li>Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
<b>Soil</b>	S1: Artificial surfaces land cover extent	S1: Contribute towards the target of the National Planning Framework's SEA (2018) to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision-making by local authorities</li> <li>SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years)</li> <li>Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	W1i: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009)  W1ii: Mandatory and Guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008)	W1i: No deterioration in the status of any surface water or adverse effect upon the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the Plan  W1ii: No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve Mandatory values and, where possible, Guide values as a result of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities</li> <li>Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual)</li> <li>SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
	W2: Interactions with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC resulting from development adhering to the Plan	W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD	

<sup>113</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) No alternative solution available; (b) Imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the programme to proceed; and (c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.



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Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
	W3: Compliance of relevant lower tier assessments and decision-making with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	W3: For lower tier assessments and decision making to comply with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	AC1: Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation have been integrated into the Plan	C1: To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>• Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities</li> <li>• SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>• Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	M1: Number of instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity is unavailable	M1: No instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity that does not present a danger to human health are unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>• Lower tier environmental assessment and decision-making by local authorities</li> <li>• SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>• Consultations with the partners such as the EPA, Uisce Éireann and/or Sligo County Council</li> <li>• Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
	M2: Number of significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure	M2: No significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure	
	M3: Preparation and implementation of construction and environmental management plans	M3: For construction and environmental management plans to be prepared and implemented for relevant projects	
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH1: No unauthorised adverse effects on archaeological heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>• Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities</li> <li>• SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>• Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>
	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH2: No unauthorised adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan	
<b>Landscape</b>	L1: Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9</li> <li>• Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities</li> <li>• SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)</li> <li>• Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes</li> </ul>

# Appendix I SEA Determination

## SEA Determination

### Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Determination

for the:

#### Draft Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan


Article 3 para. 2 of the SEA Directive<sup>1</sup>, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes, or modifications to these:

- a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive<sup>2</sup>, or
- b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive<sup>3</sup> i.e. the Directive requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)<sup>4</sup> is being undertaken on plans, programmes etc.

This tourism sector Plan does not contribute towards the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive and does not contain provisions or define rules that must be complied with when administrative consent of other projects is being granted.

The Plan does, however, fall under the definition of a "plan" contained within the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and therefore must be screened for the need to undertake AA. The Screening for AA has found that the Plan has the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the ecological integrity European sites and that measures to ensure that potential effects are avoided are required. Taking into account the requirements of the Habitats Directive and recent case law (including, European Court of Justice Judgement C323-17), Stage 2 AA must therefore be carried out for the Plan. As Stage 2 AA is being undertaken on the Plan, SEA must also be undertaken for this Plan - see requirement at b) above.

This determination has been made having regard to the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (S.I. No. 435 of 2004), as amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 200 of 2011).

Signatory: 

Date: 21.11.22

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

<sup>2</sup> Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification), as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU

<sup>3</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

<sup>4</sup> AA is provided for by the Habitats Directive and 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 European site in view of its conservation objectives.

## Appendix II Further Environmental Detail

SACs and SPAs within 15km of the Plan area		
Site Code	Site Name	Sensitive Features
000191	St. John's Point SAC	Sensitive features include: large shallow inlets and bays; reefs; vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils; alkaline fens; limestone pavements; submerged or partially submerged sea caves; and marsh fritillary.
000428	Lough Melvin SAC	Sensitive features include: oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> ; <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils; salmon; and otter.
000458	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC	Sensitive features include: estuaries; mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; annual vegetation of drift lines; vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Atlantic salt meadows; embryonic shifting dunes; shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes); fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation; humid dune slacks; narrow-mouthed whorl snail; sea lamprey; and harbour seal.
000492	Doocastle Turlough SAC	Sensitive features include: turloughs.
000497	Flughany Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; and depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> .
000516	Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC	Sensitive features include: <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Atlantic salt meadows; Mediterranean salt meadows; shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ; and fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation.
000584	Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC	Sensitive features include: Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains; natural dystrophic lakes and ponds; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; European dry heaths; Alpine and Boreal heaths; species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas; blanket bogs; transition mires and quaking bogs; petrifying springs with tufa formation; siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels; siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation; and slender green feather-moss.
000592	Bellanagare Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; and depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> .
000595	Callow Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; and depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> .
000604	Derrinea Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; and depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> .
000614	Cloonshanville Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> ; and bog woodland.
000622	Ballysadare Bay SAC	Sensitive features include: estuaries; mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; embryonic shifting dunes; shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ; fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation; humid dune slacks; narrow-mouthed whorl snail; and harbour snail.
000623	Ben Bulbin, Gleniff And Glenade Complex SAC	Sensitive features include: water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; European dry heaths; Alpine and Boreal heaths; <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas; <i>Hydrophilous</i> tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels; blanket bogs; transition mires and quaking bogs; petrifying springs with tufa formation; alkaline fens; siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels; calcareous and calcschist scree of the montane to alpine levels; calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation; geyer's short snail; and otter.
000625	Bunduff Lough And Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore SAC	Sensitive features include: mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; large shallow inlets and bays; reefs; shifting dune along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ; fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation; humid dune slacks; machairs; <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; alkaline fens; marsh fritillary; and petalwort.
000627	Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC	Sensitive features include: estuaries; mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; embryonic shifting dunes; shifting dunes with herbaceous vegetation; <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; petrifying springs with tufa formation; narrow-mouthed whorl snail; sea lamprey; river lamprey; and harbour seal.
000633	Lough Hoe Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains; blanket bogs; geyer's whorl snail; and white-clawed crayfish.
000634	Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: blanket bogs.
000636	Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Loughs SAC	Sensitive features include: hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp.</i> ; and water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation.
000637	Turloughmore (Sligo) SAC	Sensitive features include: turloughs.
000638	Union Wood SAC	Sensitive features include: old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles.
001403	Arroo Mountain SAC	Sensitive features include: Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; European dry heaths; Alpine and Boreal heaths; blanket bogs; petrifying springs with tufa formation; calcareous and calcschist scree of the montane to alpine levels; and calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation.
001571	Urlaur Lakes SAC	Sensitive features include: hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp.</i>
001656	Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC	Sensitive features include: turloughs; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; lowland hay meadows; calcareous and calcschist scree of the montane to alpine levels; marsh fritillary; and white-clawed crayfish.
001669	Knockalongy and Knockachree Cliffs SAC	Sensitive features include: Killarney Fern.
001673	Lough Arrow SAC	Sensitive features include: hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp.</i>

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001680	Streedagh Point Dunes SAC	Sensitive features include: mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; perennial vegetation of stony banks; Atlantic salt meadows; Mediterranean salt meadows; shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ; fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation; and narrow-mouthed whorl snail.
001898	Unshin River SAC	Sensitive features include: water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranuncullion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils; alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ; salmon; and otter.
001899	Cloonakillina Lough SAC	Sensitive features include: transition mires and quaking bogs.
001919	Glenade Lough SAC	Sensitive features include: natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation; white-clawed crayfish; and slender naiad.
001976	Lough Gill SAC	Sensitive features include: Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates; old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles; alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ; white-clawed crayfish; sea lamprey; brook lamprey; river lamprey salmon; and otter.
002006	Ox Mountains Bogs SAC	Sensitive features include: oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains; natural dystrophic lakes and ponds; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; European dry heaths; blanket bogs; transition mires and quaking bogs; depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> ; geyser's whorl snail; and marsh saxifrage.
002032	Boleybrack Mountain SAC	Sensitive features include: natural dystrophic lakes and ponds; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; European dry heaths; <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils; and blanket bogs.
002298	River Moy SAC	Sensitive features include: lowland hay meadows; active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> ; alkaline fens; old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles; alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ; white-clawed crayfish; sea lamprey; brook lamprey; salmon; and otter.
002303	Dunmuckrum Turloughs SAC	Sensitive features include: turloughs.
002338	Drumalough Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; and depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> .
002354	Tullaghanrock Bog SAC	Sensitive features include: active raised bogs; degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; and depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> .
004013	Drumcliff Bay SPA	Sensitive features include: sanderling; bar-tailed godwit; and wetland and waterbirds.
004035	Cummeen Strand SPA	Sensitive features include: light-bellied brent goose; oystercatcher; redshank; and wetland and waterbirds.
004036	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA	Sensitive features include: ringed plover; golden plover; grey plover; sanderling; dunlin; bar-tailed godwit; curlew; redshank; and wetland and waterbirds.
004048	Lough Gara SPA	Sensitive features include: whooper swan; and Greenland white-fronted goose.
004050	Lough Arrow SPA	Sensitive features include: little grebe; tufted duck; and wetland and waterbirds.
004068	Inishmurray SPA	Sensitive features include: shag; barnacle goose; herring gull; and Arctic tern.
004105	Bellanagare Bog SPA	Sensitive features include: Greenland white-fronted goose.
004115	Inishduff SPA	Sensitive features include: shag.
004129	Ballysadare Bay SPA	Sensitive features include: light-bellied brent goose; grey plover; dunlin; bar-tailed godwit; redshank; and wetland and waterbirds.
004133	Aughris Head SPA	Sensitive features include: kittiwake.
004135	Ardboline Island and Horse Island SPA	Sensitive features include: cormorant; and barnacle goose.
004151	Donegal Bay SPA	Sensitive features include: great northern diver; light-bellied brent goose; common scoter; sanderling; and wetland and waterbirds.
004187	Sligo/Leitrim Uplands SPA	Sensitive features include: peregrine; and choux.
004228	Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA	Sensitive features include: tufted duck; common scoter; common gull; Greenland white-fronted goose; and wetland and waterbirds.
004234	Ballintemple and Ballygilgan SPA	Sensitive features include: barnacle goose.

Other European sites (SACs and SPAs) connected to County Sligo via hydrological links but beyond 15 km buffer

Site Code	Site Name
000216	River Shannon Callows SAC
000440	Lough Ree SAC
001818	Lough Forbes Complex SAC
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC
002241	Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA
004064	Lough Ree SPA
004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA

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004096	Middle Shannon Callows SPA
004101	Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA

NHAs (11) and pNHAs (80) within 15km of the area to which the Plan relates

Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
000151	Inishduff NHA	002321	Corry Mountain Bog NHA	000191	St. John's Point pNHA	000482	Creevagh Head pNHA
000591	Bella Bridge Bog NHA	002415	Carrane Hill Bog NHA	000426	Kilgarrieff Marsh pNHA	000492	Doocastle Turlough pNHA
000603	Cornaveagh Bog NHA	002420	Cunnagher More Bog NHA	000427	Lough Allen, South End and Parts pNHA	000497	Flughany Bog pNHA
000617	Kilronan Mountain Bog NHA	002430	Aghavoghil Bog NHA	000428	Lough Melvin pNHA	000502	Gowlaun Bog pNHA
001652	Tullaghan Bog (Roscommon) NHA	002435	Crockauns/Keelogyboy Bogs NHA	000457	Derrynabrock Bog pNHA	000510	Kilgarrieff Bog pNHA
001902	Slieveward Bog NHA	000139	Erne Estuary/Finner Dunes pNHA	000458	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary pNHA	000511	Killaturly Turlough pNHA
000516	Lackan Saltmarsh And Kilcummin Head pNHA	000614	Cloonshanville Bog pNHA	000636	Templehouse And Cloonacleigha Loughs pNHA	001419	Owengar Wood pNHA
000519	Lough Conn And Lough Cullin pNHA	000620	Aughris Head pNHA	000637	Turloughmore (Sligo) pNHA	001421	Sheemore Wood pNHA
000523	Lough Gower pNHA	000622	Ballysadare Bay pNHA	000638	Union Wood pNHA	001485	Cloonagh Lough (Mayo) pNHA
000547	Tawnaghbeg Bog pNHA	000623	Ben Bulbin, Gleniff And Glenade Complex pNHA	001222	Ardagh Bog pNHA	001517	Killala Esker pNHA
000584	Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands pNHA	000625	Bunduff Lough And Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore pNHA	001403	Arroo Mountain pNHA	001527	Lough Alick pNHA
000587	Lough Gara pNHA	000627	Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) pNHA	001404	Bonet River pNHA	001571	Urlaur Lakes pNHA
000592	Bellanagare Bog pNHA	000630	Inishmurray pNHA	001412	Drumhierny Wood pNHA	001631	Drum Bridge (Lough Key) pNHA
000596	Corrigeenroe Marsh pNHA	000633	Lough Hoe Bog pNHA	001415	Kinlough Wood pNHA	001632	Drumalough Bog pNHA
000604	Derrinea Bog pNHA	000634	Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog pNHA	001418	O'Donnell's Rock Wood pNHA	001633	Drumman's Island (Lough Key) pNHA
001636	Fin Lough (Roscommon) pNHA	001670	Knocknarea Mountain And Glen pNHA	001907	Fin And Riskeen Loughs pNHA	001665	Easky River pNHA
001638	Hog's Island (Lough Key) pNHA	001673	Lough Arrow pNHA	001909	Ballygawley Lough pNHA	001669	Knockalongy And Knockachree Cliffs pNHA
001643	Lough Drumharlow pNHA	001677	Moylough Turlough pNHA	001919	Glenade Lough pNHA	001905	Feenagh And Bunnamuck Loughs pNHA
001644	Lough Glinn pNHA	001680	Streedagh Point Dunes pNHA	001920	Carrickaport Lough pNHA	001906	Lough Dargan pNHA
001651	Tawnytaskin Wood (Lough Key) pNHA	001898	Unshin River pNHA	001976	Lough Gill pNHA	001907	Fin And Riskeen Loughs pNHA
001656	Bricklieve Mountains & Keishcorran pNHA	001899	Cloonakillina Lough pNHA	002006	Ox Mountains Bogs pNHA	001909	Ballygawley Lough pNHA
001657	Cloongoonagh Bog pNHA	001900	Meharth Lough pNHA	002013	Tullaghanrock Bog pNHA	002078	Moy Valley pNHA
001658	Colgagh Lough pNHA	001901	Quarryfield West Turlough pNHA	002032	Boleybrack Mountain pNHA	001904	Knockmullin Fen pNHA
001664	Dunneill River pNHA						

Name and Code <sup>114</sup>	Type	WFD Surface Waterbody Status (2016 -2021) <sup>115</sup>
Templehouse	Lake	<b>Bad</b> – due to bad ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and forestry sources.</b>
Bunnanaddan Stream_010	River	<b>Poor</b> - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and urban waste water sources.</b>
Cartonkillerdoe_010	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Douglas (Sligo)_010	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural, forestry and urban run-off sources.</b>
Garavogue_010	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from forestry and urban run-off sources.</b>
Grange (Sligo)_010	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from abstractions, urban run-off and urban waste water sources.</b>
Owenmore (Sligo)_030	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.</b>
Owenmore (Sligo)_060	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and invasive species sources.</b>
Owenmore (Sligo)_080	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from urban waste water sources.</b>
Tubbercurry Stream_010	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from hydromorphological, urban run-off and urban waste water sources.</b>
Tubbercurry_010	River	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from urban run-off sources.</b>
Gill SO	Lake	<b>Poor</b> – due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from abstractions, agricultural and invasive species sources.</b>
Ballymote Stream_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> No pressures identified.
Ballysodare_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> No pressures identified.
Bahy (North Mayo)_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> No pressures identified.
Boyle_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural, domestic waste water, forestry and hydromorphological sources.</b>
Boyle_020	River	<b>Moderate.</b> No pressures identified.
Buncrowey_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from forestry sources.</b>
Charlestown Stream_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.</b>
Cloonen (Sligo)_020	River	<b>Moderate.</b> This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.</b>
Derrymaquirk_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> No pressures identified.
Doonflin_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> This waterbody is also identified to be <b>under significant pressure from agricultural sources.</b>
Drumcliff_010	River	<b>Moderate.</b> No pressures identified.

<sup>114</sup> The number at the end of each river water body name indicates where the water body is located along the main river channel. For example, the water body at the source is coded ‘\_010’, the next water body downstream is coded ‘\_020’ and the final water body before the river becomes transitional is ‘\_180’.

<sup>115</sup> There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the area to which the Plan relates with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term “*unassigned status*” applies in respect of these waterbodies.

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Dunneill_020	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Feorish (Ballyfarnon)_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Feorish (Ballyfarnon)_030	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Killoran Lough Stream_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Lugdoon Stream_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Mad_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from forestry and hydromorphological sources.
Moy_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, forestry and hydromorphological sources.
Moy_040	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Mullaghmore_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Owenbeg (Coolaney)_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Owenmore (Sligo)_020	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, forestry and urban run-off sources.
Owenmore (Sligo)_040	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Owenmore (Sligo)_050	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Scurmore_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Shannon (Upper)_040	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from anthropogenic pressures and hydromorphological sources.
Tubbercurry_020	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Unshin_020	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from anthropogenic pressures sources.
Willsborough Stream_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Arkedy	Lake	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Cloonacleigha	Lake	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Dargan	Lake	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Gara	Lake	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and invasive species sources.
Labe	Lake	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Skean	Lake	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Ballysadare Estuary	Transitional	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and urban waste water sources.
Garavogue Estuary	Transitional	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Moy Estuary	Transitional	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, domestic waste water and urban waste water sources.
Portavaud West, Ballysadare Bay	Transitional	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Portavaud East, Ballysadare Bay	Coastal	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Sligo Bay	Coastal	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from anthropogenic pressures sources.
Arigna (Roscommon)_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Ballybeg (Sligo)_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Barnabrack_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Bellanamean_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Bellawaddy_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Bellawaddy_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Black (Sligo)_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Breaghwy35_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Brusna (North Mayo)_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Carrowrusher_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Clooneen (Sligo)_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Cloonen (Sligo)_030	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Corsallagh Stream_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Cregg (Sligo)_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Doonbeakin_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Doonowney_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Dooyeaghny Or Cloonloughan_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Drumbaun_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Drumcliff_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Drumfin_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Duff_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Duff_030	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Dunmorán_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and anthropogenic pressures sources.
Dunmorán_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Dunneill_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Easky_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Easky_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Eignagh_020	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Eignagh_030	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Fallsollus_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Feorish (Ballyfarnon)_020	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Finned_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, forestry and extractive industry sources.
Finned_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.

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Gowlan (Sligo) 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Killanummery 010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, forestry and hydromorphological sources.
Killanummery 020	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Kilrusheighter 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Kilshalvy 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Knappagh (Sligo) 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Knocknahur 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Leaffony 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Leaffony 020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Moy 020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Moy 030	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Mullaghanoe 010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, forestry and hydromorphological sources.
Owenbeg (Coolaney) 030	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Owengarve (Sligo) 010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Owengarve (Sligo) 020	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Owenmore (Sligo) 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Quigabar 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Unshin 010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Unshin 030	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Arrow	Lake	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from invasive species sources.
Bellanascarrow	Lake	Good. No pressures identified.
Easky	Lake	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from anthropogenic pressures sources.
Glencar	Lake	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and invasive species sources.
Kilsellagh	Lake	Good. No pressures identified.
Talt	Lake	Good. No pressures identified.
Easky Estuary	Transitional	Good. No pressures identified.
Killala Bay	Coastal	Good. No pressures identified.
Brusna (North Mayo) 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Easky 030	River	High. No pressures identified.
Easky 040	River	High. No pressures identified.
Eignagh 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Glenree 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Lenyvee 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Liskeagh 010	River	High. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from forestry sources.
Loughanaboll 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Moy 050	River	High. No pressures identified.
Moy 060	River	High. No pressures identified.
Owenaher 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Owenaher 020	River	High. No pressures identified.
Owenbeg (Coolaney) 020	River	High. No pressures identified.
Owengarve (Sligo) 030	River	High. No pressures identified.
Owenmore (Sligo) 070	River	High. No pressures identified.
Unshin 040	River	High. No pressures identified.
Unshin 050	River	High. No pressures identified.
Yellow (Foxford) 010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Hoe	Lake	High. No pressures identified.
Tullyvella	Lake	High. No pressures identified.
Duff Estuary	Transitional	High. No pressures identified.
Donegal Bay (Erne)	Coastal	High. No pressures identified.
Donegal Bay Northern	Coastal	High. No pressures identified.
Donegal Bay Southern	Coastal	High. No pressures identified.
Drumcliff Estuary	Transitional	Unassigned. No pressures identified.
Tanrego Intake	Transitional	Unassigned. No pressures identified.

National Monuments in State Care				
Name	Description	Townland	Status	
Inishmurray Island	Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Site	Inishmurray	Ownership	
Creevykeel Court Tomb	Megalithic Court Tomb	Creevykeel	Guardianship	
Gortnaleck Court Tomb	Megalithic Court Tomb	Gortnaleck	Ownership	
Drumcliffe High Crosses & Round Tower	High Cross and Round Tower	Drumcliffe South	Ownership	
Court Cairns	Megalithic Court Tomb	Cummeen	Ownership	
Dominican Friary	Religious House – Dominican Friars	Abbeyquarter	Ownership	
Knocknarea Passage Tomb & Cairns	Passage Tomb and Cairns	Knocknarea South	Ownership	

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Queen Maeve's Tomb	Passage Tomb and Cairns	Knocknarea South	Ownership
Carrowmore Passage Tomb Cemetery	Stone circle, Ring barrow, Passage tomb, Ringfort, Megalithic structure, Cashel	Carrowmore (Carbury By.), Graigue, Tobernaveneen	Ownership
Cairn	Megalithic Court Tomb	Carns (Carbury By.)	Ownership
Court Tomb	Megalithic Court Tomb	Magheraghanrush or Deer Park	Ownership
Church Island Church	Church	Church Island	Ownership
Cabragh Wedge Tomb	Boundary Cairn	Cabragh (Levny By.), Gortakeeran	Ownership
Gortlowanan	Castle - Motte	Gortlowanan	Ownership
Cashel	Ringfort - Cashel	Castleore	Ownership
Carricknagat Megalithic Tombs	Megalithic Tombs	Carricknagat (Tirerrill By.)	Ownership
Ballymote Castle	Castle	Carrownanty	Ownership
Cairn	Megalithic Tomb	Heapstown	Ownership
Castlebaldwin Castle	Castle	Bellanagarrigeeny or Castlebaldwin	Ownership
Moytirra East Court Tomb	Megalithic Tomb	Moytirra East	Ownership
Carrowreagh Court Tomb	Megalithic Tomb	Carrowreagh	Guardianship
Carrowkeel Passage Tomb Cemetery	Passage Tomb Cemetery	Carrowkeel (Tirerrill By., Ballynakill ED), Cloghoge Lower, Doonaveeragh, Carricknahorna East, Tully (Corran By.)	Guardianship
Ballinafad Castle	Castle	Ballinafad	Guardianship
Cashelmore	Ringfort - Cashel	Clogher	Ownership

Scenic Routes in County Sligo		Views
Route	National Primary Roads	
N-15 from Bunduff Bridge (Leitrim County boundary) to Sligo		Views of Atlantic Ocean, Ben Bulben, Kings Mountain and Benwiskin
N-16 from Leitrim County boundary to Sligo		Views of Glencar Lake, Ben Bulben and Atlantic Ocean
N-4 Castlebaldwin to Ballinafad		Views of Bricklieve Mountains, Lough Arrow and Curlew Mountains
N-4 Collooney By-Pass from northern roundabout at Collooney to Carrowroe		Views of Ballysadare Bay, Knocknarea, Union Wood, Slieve Daeane, Slieve Dargan
N-4 Curlew By-Pass from Roscommon County boundary to Ballinafad		Views of Lough Arrow, Bricklieve Mountains and Curlew Mountains
National Secondary Roads		
N-59 Beltra to Ballysadare		Views of Ballysadare Bay, Slieveveard and Knocknarea
N-59 Dromore West to Beltra		Views of Atlantic Ocean and Ox Mountains
Regional Roads		
R-279 Mullaghmore to Clifffoy		Views of Atlantic Ocean, Donegal Bay and Benwiskin
R-291 from Sligo to Rosses Point		Views of Sligo Bay and Harbour, Coney Island, Knocknarea and Coolera Peninsula, Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane, Killery Mountain and Ox Mountains
12. R-284 from Carrowroe to junction with road L-3605 north of Ballygawley		Views of Ballygawley Lough, Slieve Dargan and Slieve Daeane
R-286 from Sligo to Leitrim County boundary		Views of Lough Gill and Colgagh Lough
R-287 from Carrowroe to junction with road L-3605 at Correagh		Views of Lough Gill, Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane and Killery Mountain
R-292 from Ransboro to Culleenamore House		Views of Knocknarea, Ballysadare Bay, Sligo Bay, Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane and Ben Bulben
R-292 at Larass, Strandhill, immediately north of St. Anne's Church and Rectory, to junction with road L-3502 at Scardan		Views of Sligo Harbour, Sligo Bay and Ben Bulben
R-292 at Larass, Strandhill, between St Anne's Church and Sligo Rugby Club (south side)		Views of Knocknarea
R-292 at Carrowdough and Culleenamore, between the southern development limit and the Plan limit of Strandhill Local Area Plan at Culleenamore House		Views of Sligo Bay, Ballysadare Bay and Knocknarea
R-294 from The Gap (Mayo County boundary) to Mullany's Cross		Views of Lough Talt and Ox Mountains
R-295 from Carrowmacleaney Crossroads to Carrowcroy Crossroads		Views of Kesh Corran and the Bricklieve Mountains
R-297 from Scurmure to Dromore West		Views of Killala Bay and Atlantic Ocean
R-278 from Calry (Doonally road junction) to Leitrim County boundary at Carrickoneileen.		Views of Keelogyboy Mountain
Local Roads		
L-7101 around Mullaghmore Head		Views of Atlantic Ocean and Donegal Bay
'The Hill' (L-7103) from junction with L-7101 on northside of Mullaghmore Head, onto L-7102 as far as junction with L-7101 on south side of Head		Views of Atlantic Ocean, Donegal Bay, the Dartry Range (Ben Bulben, Benwiskin, Truskmore) and Knocknarea
L-3104 from junction with R-279 (Mullaghmore/Clifffoy road) turning east onto Lower Bunduff road (L-3101) to junction with N15 at Castlegal		Views of Bunduff Lake, the Dartry Range and Mullaghmore Harbour
Loop road (L-7121) between N-15 and coast at Mountemple, and south-east from N-15 to junction with Derrylehan road (L-3205)		Views of Atlantic Ocean, Donegal Bay, Dernish Island, Conors Island, Inishmurray, Milk Harbour and the Dartry Range
Upperwood road (L-7202) from junction with N-15 down to sea shore		Views of the Dartry Range, Streedagh Point, Conors Island and Inishmurray
Grange to Streedagh Point (L-3203 turning west onto L-3202 and north onto L-32022)		Views of Atlantic Ocean and Ben Bulben
Benwiskin Horseshoe (L-7130)		Views of Benwiskin, Ben Bulben and Donegal Bay
Ballaghnastrillick Bridge northwards to Leitrim County boundary (L-7126 & L-3102) and southwards to N-15 at Mullaghneane (L-3105, L-3205 & L-7216)		Views of Benwiskin, Ben Bulben and Donegal Bay
Glencar Lake to Carney (L-3404, L-3403 & L-3402)		Views of Glencar Lake, Kings Mountain and Ben Bulben
Kintogher road (L-3306) from junction with N-15, at Tully (Rathcormack) down to Lower Rosses road (L-7311) via L-7309 and Cregg road (L-3307)		Views of Drumcliff Bay, the coast Ben Bulben, Kings Mountain, Sligo Bay, Knocknarea, Killery Mountain, Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane, Cope's Mountain and Glencar Valley



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L-3311 as far as junction at Yeats County Hotel turning south onto Rosses Point Promenade Road (R-291) to mini-plan development limit	Views of Sligo Bay and Harbour, Coney Island, Knocknarea and Coolera Peninsula, Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane, Killery Mountain and Ox Mountains
Glencar Lake to N-16 (L-3404)	Views of Glencar Lake and Kings Mountain
L-3602 along Garvoge River and Lough Gill from Sligo to junction with R-287	Views of Garavoge River and Lough Gill
From junction of L-3409 and R-286 at Ballynamona, northwards through Loughanelteen to Keelogyboy (L-3409 & L-7418), then south to R-278 via Fermoyle (L-7420 & L-3407)	Views of Keelogyboy Mountain, Cope's Mountain, Lough Anelteen, Killery Mountain, Lough Gill, Ox Mountains, Slieve Daeane, Slieve Dargan, Kings Mountain, Ben Bulben, Knocknarea, the coast, Sligo Bay and Atlantic Ocean
L-7417 from junction with L-7418 north to junction with L-7416 at Glackbaun and along L-7416 from its eastern extremity near Leitrim County boundary to junction with N-16 at Drumkilsellagh	Views of Cope's Mountain, Keelogyboy Mountain, Lough Gill, Slieve Dargan, Kings Mountain, Knocknarea, Ox Mountains, Sligo Bay and Atlantic Ocean
L-3502 from junction with R-292 at Scardan to Ransboro.	Views of Knocknarea
Ransboro road (L-3503) at Larass, Strandhill, between St Anne's Church and the eastern Plan limit of Strandhill Local Area Plan	Views of Sligo Bay and Knocknarea
Airport Road, Strandhill (L-35052), between southern boundary of Business and Enterprise Park and northern boundary of new Village Centre	Views of Knocknarea
Road network to east and south of Knocknarea, between junctions of R292 and L-3502: specifically, the Glen Road (L-3507) and L-3506	Views of Knocknarea, Kings Mountain, Ben Bulben, Cope's Mountain, Killery Mountain, Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane, Keelogyboy Mountain, Ox Mountains, Ballysadare Bay, Atlantic Ocean, Culleenamore Strand, Sligo Bay, Drumcliff Bay, the coast and Coney Island
L-6101 from junction with N-59 at Corhawnagh Church extending westward to Streamstown and south to N-59 via Lisduff	Views of Ballysadare Bay, Knocknarea and Slievevard (Little Ox Mountains)
L-6101 between junction with N-59 at Corhawnagh Church and junction with R-290 (old N-4) south of Ballysadare	Views of Slievevard (Little Ox Mountains)
Easkey coastal scenic road (L-2401) between junctions with Dromore West - Easkey road (R297)	Views of Sligo Bay, the coast, Ox Mountains and Donegal Bay.
Coast road from R-297 at Dromore West to N-59 at Beltra (L-2302 & L-2204)	Views of Atlantic Ocean, Sligo Bay, Ballysadare Bay, Ox Mountains, Knocknarea and Ben Bulben.
Aughris Head (L-2301 turning onto L-6301) between junctions with Beltra - Dromore West coastal road (L-2302)	Views of Knocknarea, Ben Bulben, the coast and Sligo & Donegal Bays
Derk road (L-6215) from junction with Beltra - Dromore West coastal road (L-2204) to sea shore	Views of Ballysadare Bay, Knocknarea, Coolera Peninsula, Coney Island, Rosses Point, Sligo Bay and Ben Bulben
Dromore West to Mullany's Cross (L-2702, L-4701 & L-4702)	Views of Lough Easkey, Ox Mountains and Atlantic Ocean
L-8701 & L-8702 from junction with L-4701 at Masshill to junction with R-294 at Largin	Views of Lough Talt and Ox Mountains
Ladies Brae road from Carroweden (L-4602 & L-2205) leading to N-59 via L-2304 and L-2303 and continuing northwards to Beltra - Dromore West coastal road (L-2302) via L-6205	Views of Ox Mountains and Atlantic Ocean
Carroweden to Coolaney and continuing to junction with N59 at Lugnadeffa (L-8601, L-6804 & L-2801)	Views of Ox Mountains and Atlantic Ocean
Coast road from Mayo County boundary at Rathmurphy northwards to its junction with R-297 at Scurmure	Views of Killala Bay
L-6102 from junction with N-59 west of Cooney Lough, continuing on L-2101 to junction with L-2801 south of Tullaghan Hill	Views of Ox Mountains, Atlantic Ocean and Cooney Lough
L-3605, south of Slieve Daeane and Slieve Dargan, between junctions with R-284 and R-287	Views of Slieve Dargan, Slieve Daeane and Lough Dargan
Lakeshore drive around Lough Arrow from Castlebaldwin to Roscommon County boundary (L-1404, L-1403 & L-1905)	Views of Lough Arrow and Bricklieve Mountains
Old N-4 along western shore of Lough Arrow from Aghanagh through Ballinafad village to junction with new N-4 south of Ballinafad	Views of Lough Arrow, Bricklieve Mountains and Curlew Mountains
Carrowcroy crossroads to Ballinafad (L-1806)	Views of Bricklieve Mountains, Curlew Mountains and Lough Arrow
Ladies Brae to Beltra via Chapel Street (L-6213)	Views of Ox Mountains, Coolera peninsula and Ballysadare Bay
From Castlebaldwin southwards to junction with R-295, southwest of Templevanny Lough (L-1404 & L-5801)	Views of Bricklieve Mountains, Kesh Corran and Lough Arrow
Heapstown Crossroads to Killadoon Crossroads (L-1901)	Views of Lough Arrow and Bricklieve Mountains
Ballindoon Crossroads to Killadoon Crossroads (L-1904)	Views of Lough Arrow and Bricklieve Mountains
Highwood road (L-1904) from Ballindoon Crossroads to junction with L-5902 & L-59021 north of Kilmactranny	Views of Lough Arrow, Bricklieve Mountains and Kesh Corran
L-18011 south of Lough Arrow and L-18012 through Lecarrow (Aghanagh ED) to junction with Curlew Bypass (N-4)	Views of Lough Arrow, Bricklieve Mountains and Carran Hill (north-east of Lough Arrow)
Killadoon Crossroads to junction with L-1101 north of Conways Cross (L-1901)	Views of Lough Arrow, Lough Nasool and Lough Bo
L-1101 from north of Conways Cross extending along southside of Carran Hill to Roscommon County boundary	Views of Carran Hill
From Monasteraden eastward to Roscommon County boundary (L-4105)	Views of Lough Gara
Road west of St Aidan's church (L-8107 & L-4103) from junction at Monasteraden village, to Gorteen-Boyle road (R-294) at Mullaghroe	Views of Lough Gara
Derrinoghlan loop - from junction off R-294 west of Cloonloogh onto L-5707, turning north onto L-5708, then east onto L-5705, and proceeding south on L-5706 to join up again with L-5707	Views of Lough Gara
L-1906 from junction with L-1905 to junction with L-5904, north of Kilmactranny	Views of Lough Arrow, Bricklieve Mountains and Kesh Corran

## Appendix III Relationship with Legislation and Other Plans and Programmes

### Relevance to the Plan (applicable to all Legislation, Plans and Programmes identified in Appendix III on the table below)

Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
<b>European Level</b>		
<b>SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.</li> <li>Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out an environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive.</li> <li>Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.</li> <li>Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission.</li> <li>Consult the other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects.</li> <li>Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme.</li> <li>Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive.</li> <li>Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.</li> <li>Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA.</li> <li>For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case-by-case examination. This should take into account Annex III.</li> <li>The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor.</li> <li>Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made.</li> </ul>
<b>Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.</li> <li>Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.</li> <li>Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest.</li> <li>Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species.</li> <li>Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.</li> <li>Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present.</li> <li>Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV.</li> </ul>
<b>Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats.</li> <li>Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation.</li> <li>The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1.</li> <li>Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas).</li> <li>Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes.</li> <li>Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance.</li> </ul>
<b>EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution.</li> </ul>	<p>Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and groundwater from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Ireland's third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State's NAP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year</li> <li>set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk</li> <li>set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure</li> </ul>
<b>EU Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (2008/1/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of this Directive is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from the activities listed in Annex I. It lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from the abovementioned activities, including measures concerning waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole, without prejudice to Directive 85/337/EEC and other relevant Community provisions.</li> </ul>	<p>The IPPC Directive is based on several principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an integrated approach</li> <li>best available techniques,</li> <li>flexibility; and</li> <li>public participation</li> </ul>

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<b>EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products.</li> <li>Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment.</li> </ul>
<b>EU Renewables Directive (2009/28/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU.</li> <li>It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets.</li> <li>All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets.</li> <li>The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables.</li> <li>EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans.</li> <li>Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports.</li> </ul>
<b>Indirect Land Use Change Directive (2012/0288(COD))</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article 3(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) requires Member States to ensure that the share of energy from renewable energy sources in all forms of transport in 2020 is at least 10 % of their final energy consumption.</li> <li>The blending of biofuels is one of the methods available for Member States to meet this target, and is expected to be the main contributor.</li> <li>Other methods available to meet the target are the reduction of energy consumption, which is imperative because a mandatory percentage target for energy from renewable sources is likely to become increasingly difficult to achieve sustainably if the overall demand for energy for transport continues to rise, and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit the contribution that conventional biofuels (with a risk of ILUC emissions) make towards attainment of the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive;</li> <li>Improve the greenhouse gas performance of biofuel production processes (reducing associated emissions) by raising the greenhouse gas saving threshold for new installations subject to protecting installations already in operation on 1st July 2014;</li> <li>Encourage a greater market penetration of advanced (low-ILUC) biofuels by allowing such fuels to contribute more to the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive than conventional biofuels;</li> <li>Improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by obliging Member States and fuel suppliers to report the estimated indirect land-use change emissions of biofuels.</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020.</li> <li>Under the Directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy distributors or retail energy sales companies have to achieve 1.5% energy savings per year through the implementation of energy efficiency measures</li> <li>EU countries can opt to achieve the same level of savings through other means, such as improving the efficiency of heating systems, installing double glazed windows or insulating roofs</li> <li>The public sector in EU countries should purchase energy-efficient buildings, products and services</li> <li>Every year, governments in EU countries must carry out energy efficient renovations on at least 3% (by floor area) of the buildings they own and occupy</li> <li>Energy consumers should be empowered to better manage consumption. This includes easy and free access to data on consumption through individual metering</li> <li>National incentives for SMEs to undergo energy audits</li> <li>Large companies will make audits of their energy consumption to help them identify ways to reduce it</li> <li>Monitoring efficiency levels in new energy generation capacities.</li> </ul>
<b>EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner.</li> </ul>	<p>The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals;</li> <li>The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism;</li> <li>The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure;</li> <li>Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law;</li> <li>Safety of offshore oil and gas operations.</li> </ul>
<b>European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aims to put Europe's biodiversity on the path to recovery by 2030.</li> <li>Aims to build resilience to future threats such as the impacts of climate change, forest fires, food insecurity, disease outbreaks and protecting wildlife and fighting illegal wildlife trade.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea;</li> <li>Launching an EU nature restoration plan;</li> <li>Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative stage; and</li> <li>Introducing measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge.</li> </ul>
<b>EU Green Infrastructure Strategy</b>	<p>Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas.</li> <li>Supporting EU-level GI projects.</li> <li>Improving access to finance for GI projects.</li> <li>Improving information and promoting innovation.</li> </ul>
<b>UN Kyoto Protocol (2<sup>nd</sup> Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)</b>	<p>The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II).</li> <li>EU member states implement measures to improve on or compliment the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP.</li> <li>Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system.</li> </ul>

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<b>EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020.</li> <li>Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels.</li> <li>Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%.</li> <li>Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.</li> </ul>	<p>Four pieces of complimentary legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps.</li> <li>Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU.</li> <li>Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020.</li> <li>Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage.</li> </ul>
<b>EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries.</li> <li>Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario.</li> </ul>	<p>To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS).</li> <li>New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries.</li> <li>First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive)</b></p> <p><b>Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive).</li> <li>Sets new air quality objectives for PM<sub>2.5</sub> (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure-related objectives.</li> <li>Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values.</li> <li>Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM<sub>10</sub>) or up to five years (NO<sub>2</sub>, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission.</li> <li>The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole.</li> <li>Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria.</li> <li>Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures.</li> <li>Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public.</li> <li>Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases.</li> <li>Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution.</li> </ul>
<b>Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)</b>	<p>The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from the source.</p>	<p>The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels;</li> <li>Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and</li> <li>Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise.</li> </ul> <p>The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.</p>
<b>Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks</li> <li>Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment</li> <li>Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at the River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3.</li> <li>Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above.</li> <li>Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process.</li> </ul>
<b>Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats.</li> <li>Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain the "good status" of water bodies.</li> <li>Promote sustainable water usage.</li> <li>The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive</li> <li>Sampling Drinking Water Directive</li> <li>Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive</li> <li>Shellfish Directive</li> <li>Freshwater Fish Directive</li> <li>Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive</li> <li>Dangerous Substances Directive</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive.</li> <li>Achieve "good status" for all waters.</li> <li>Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts.</li> <li>Involve the public and streamline legislation.</li> <li>Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas.</li> <li>Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas.</li> <li>Recover costs for water services.</li> </ul>
<b>Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect, control and conserve groundwater.</li> <li>Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater.</li> <li>Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive.</li> <li>Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II.</li> </ul>
<b>Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve and maintain the quality of water intended for human consumption.</li> <li>Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set values applicable to water intended for human consumption for the parameters set out in Annex I.</li> <li>Set values for additional parameters not included in Annex I, where the protection of human health within national territory or part of it so requires. The values set should, as a minimum, satisfy the requirements of Article 4(1) (a).</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement all measures necessary to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out, in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and in particular the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5.</li> <li>Ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause.</li> <li>Ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken as soon as possible to restore its quality and shall give priority to their enforcement action.</li> <li>Undertake remedial action to restore the quality of the water where necessary to protect human health.</li> <li>Notify consumers when remedial action is being undertaken except where the competent authorities consider the non-compliance with the parametric value to be trivial.</li> </ul>
<b>Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater and the treatment and discharge of wastewater from certain industrial sectors.</li> <li>The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of wastewater discharges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban wastewater entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment.</li> <li>Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges.</li> <li>Establishes minimum requirements for urban wastewater collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent.</li> <li>Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures.</li> <li>Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7.</li> <li>The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive.</li> <li>The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator.</li> <li>The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met.</li> <li>The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives that are not of significant relevance to the SEA for the Guidelines. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing knowledge and new needs.</li> </ul>
<b>European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.</li> </ul>	<p>The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.</p>
<b>Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties.</li> <li>The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co-operation between states and regions.</li> </ul>
<b>Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.</li> <li>A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</li> <li>Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage.</li> <li>Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal.</li> <li>Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society.</li> <li>Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned.</li> </ul>
<b>European Landscape Convention 2000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. It aims to respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes.</li> <li>Organise European co-operation on landscape issues.</li> </ul>
<b>The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)</b>	<p>It identifies three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital</li> <li>to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy</li> </ul>	<p>Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better implementation of legislation.</li> <li>Better information by improving the knowledge base.</li> <li>More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies.</li> </ul> <p>Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To make the Union's cities more sustainable.</li> <li>To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)</b>	<p>The convention has three main aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats</li> <li>to promote cooperation between states</li> <li>to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species</li> </ul>	<p>The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control.</li> <li>Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.</li> <li>Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies.</li> <li>Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon.</li> <li>Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co-operation with other organisations.</li> <li>Created the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest.</li> </ul>
<b>Bali Road Map (2007)</b>	<p>The overall goals of the project are twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and</li> <li>To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities.</li> </ul>	<p>The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mitigation</li> <li>adaptation</li> <li>technology</li> <li>financing</li> </ul>
<b>Cancun Agreements (2010)</b>	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigation</li> <li>Transparency of actions</li> <li>Technology</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Adaptation</li> <li>Forests</li> <li>Capacity building</li> </ul>	<p>Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.</p>
<b>Doha Climate Gateway (2012)</b>	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.</p>	<p>The following actions were committed to by governments at this conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020);</li> <li>Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets;</li> <li>Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt;</li> <li>Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and</li> <li>Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries.</li> </ul>
<b>EU Common Agricultural Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and</li> <li>To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise considerably in the future;</li> <li>Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources;</li> <li>Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive.</li> </ul>
<b>EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances.</li> </ul>	<p>The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration,</li> <li>Evaluation,</li> <li>Authorisation; and</li> <li>Restriction of chemicals.</li> </ul> <p>REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.</p>
<b>Stockholm Convention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention</li> <li>Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention</li> <li>Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention</li> <li>Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner</li> <li>To target additional POPs</li> <li>Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information, awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance</li> </ul>
<b>Ramsar Convention</b>	<p>The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".</p>	<p>Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands;</li> <li>Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure their effective management;</li> <li>Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.</li> </ul>

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<b>OSPAR Convention</b>	The mission of OSPAR is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution; by protecting the marine environment from the adverse effects of human activities; and by contributing to the sustainable use of the seas.	OSPAR's work is organised under six strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy</li> <li>• Eutrophication Strategy</li> <li>• Hazardous Substances Strategy</li> <li>• Offshore Industry Strategy</li> <li>• Radioactive Substances Strategy</li> <li>• Strategy for the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme</li> </ul> These six strategies fit together to underpin the ecosystem approach. For each strategy a programme of work is designed and implemented annually.
<b>European 2020 Strategy for Growth</b>	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;</li> <li>• Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy;</li> <li>• Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.</li> </ul>	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed;</li> <li>2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&amp;D;</li> <li>3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right);</li> <li>4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree;</li> <li>5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.</li> </ol>
<b>Marine (Northern Ireland) Act 2013</b>	Aims to provide for marine plans in relation to the Northern Ireland inshore region; to provide for marine conservation zones in that region; to make further provision in relation to marine licensing for certain electricity works in that region; and for connected purposes.	The Marine Act sets out a new framework for Northern Ireland's seas based on: a system of marine planning that will balance conservation, energy and resource needs; improved management for marine nature conservation and the streamlining of marine licensing for some electricity projects. The main provisions of the Act are outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Planning</li> <li>• Nature Conservation</li> <li>• Marine Licensing</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland)</b>	Spatial strategy for the future development of Northern Ireland. Strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide public and private sectors.	Aims to provide long-term policy direction with a strategic spatial perspective.
<b>NI Regional Landscape Character Assessment</b>	In recognising the importance of sustaining local identity, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has commissioned Landscape Character Assessments of Northern Ireland from environmental consultants, which resulted in the identification of distinct character areas within Northern Ireland.	The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape in Northern Ireland and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique.
<b>NI Regional Seascape Character Assessment</b>	The aim of this study is to provide a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast, complementing similar assessments undertaken elsewhere in the UK. This will contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support the European cooperation in landscape issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and map the different regional seascape character areas.</li> <li>• Describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area.</li> </ul> Relate the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the NI Landscape Character Assessment, 2000) and take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline.
<b>European 2020 Strategy for Growth</b>	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;</li> <li>• Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy;</li> <li>• Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.</li> </ul>	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed;</li> <li>2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&amp;D;</li> <li>3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right);</li> <li>4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree;</li> <li>5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.</li> </ol>
<b>European Parliament resolutions, including: The European Green Deal (EGD) 2020</b>	The deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people's quality of life, caring for nature and leaving no one behind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It sets out a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restore biodiversity and cut pollution.</li> <li>• It outlines investments required, financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition.</li> </ul> In order to meet the goal to become climate neutral by 2050 as part of the European Green Deal, the European Union (EU) Commission proposed on 4th March 2020 to bring about the first European Climate Law and legally bind the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
<b>European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</b>	Aims to put Europe's biodiversity on the path to recovery by 2030. Aims to build resilience to future threats such as the impacts of climate change, forest fires, food insecurity, disease outbreaks and protecting wildlife and fighting illegal wildlife trade.	The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea, building upon existing Natura 2000 areas, with strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value.</li> <li>• An EU Nature Restoration Plan - a series of concrete commitments and actions to restore degraded ecosystems across the EU by 2030, and manage them sustainably, addressing the key drivers of biodiversity loss.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A set of measures to enable the necessary transformative change: setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress, improving knowledge, financing and investments and better respecting nature in public and business decision-making.</li> </ul> <p>Measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge, demonstrating that the EU is ready to lead by example towards the successful adoption of an ambitious global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity.</p>
<b>EU (2018) Clean Air Policy Package</b>	Aims to substantially reduce air pollution across the EU.	The proposed strategy sets out objectives for reducing the health and environmental impacts of air pollution by 2030 and contains legislative proposals to implement stricter standards for emissions and air pollution.
<b>Leaders Pledge for Nature 2020</b>	Political leaders (including Taoiseach Michael Martin) participating in the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity in September 2020, representing 75 countries from all regions and the European Union, have committed to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030.	<p>As part of the UN Decade of Action to achieve sustainable development, the leaders commit to achieve the vision of Living in Harmony with Nature by 2050 by undertaking ten actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Putting biodiversity, climate, and the environment at the heart of COVID-19 recovery strategies and investments as well as national and international development and cooperation;</li> <li>Developing and implementing an ambitious and transformational post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Kunming, China, as a key instrument to reach the SDGs;</li> <li>Raising ambition and aligning domestic climate policies with the Paris Agreement on climate change, with enhanced nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and long-term strategies consistent with the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, and the objective of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by mid-century, and strengthen climate resilience of economies and ecosystems; and</li> </ul> <p>Mainstream biodiversity into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral policies at all levels, including in food production, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, energy, tourism, infrastructure and extractive industries, and trade and supply chains, as well as into key international agreements and processes.</p>
<b>Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011</b>	The aim of the Act is to create a planning system which is quicker, clearer and more accessible, with resources better matched to priorities. The Act also gives effect to local government reform changes which transferred the majority of planning functions and decision-making responsibilities for local development plans, development management plus planning enforcement to locally accountable councils	The enactment of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 provided the legislative basis for the most significant reforms of the Northern Ireland planning system in a generation. These reforms impacted on every aspect of planning, including how development plans are drawn up, how development proposals and applications are managed and the way in which these functions are delivered. The key reforms set out to deliver the complete overhaul and redesign of the development plan and development management systems with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness. Significant changes were also made in relation to planning appeals and enforcement.
<b>Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995</b>	The Order is one of the primary pieces of legislation used to protect archaeological sites and built heritage.	State Care sites and monuments are those in the ownership of NIEA. The Order (Article 13) provides the statutory remit for NIEA to acquire historic monuments to secure their protection and manage them for the benefit of present and future generations, by providing public access. The Order (Article 3) allows NIEA to schedule monuments for protection. These monuments remain in their existing ownership, but give NIEA powers to control works through Scheduled Monument consent, help to look after sites through Management Agreements or pursue prosecution where damage has been caused.
<b>Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 (NI)</b>	An Act to secure the protection of wrecks in territorial waters and the sites of such wrecks, from interference by unauthorised persons; and for connected purposes.	Section 1 of the act provides for wrecks to be designated because of historical, archaeological or artistic value. Section 2 provides for designation of dangerous sites. Wreck sites must have a known location in order to be designated.
<b>Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 - Spatial strategy for Northern Ireland</b>	The RDS provides an overarching strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide the public and private sectors. It does not redefine other Departments' strategies but complements them with a spatial perspective.	<p>The 8 aims of the RDS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland;</li> <li>Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West;</li> <li>Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential;</li> <li>Promote development which improves the health and well-being of communities;</li> <li>Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places;</li> <li>Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake;</li> <li>Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change; and</li> <li>Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world.</li> </ul>
<b>Archaeology 2030 - A Strategic Approach for Northern Ireland</b>	This document sets out a strategic approach and recommendations as to how society develop engagement with and understanding of archaeology.	This document is the collaborative product of four cross-sectoral working groups, co-ordinated by a steering group, and involved people from a wide range of disciplines working in, or related to archaeology. Convened as 'The Way Forward for Archaeology in Northern Ireland', the aim was to conduct a review of the current position of archaeology in NI, and through a series of workshops, survey and dialogue, to develop a sector-wide, strategic approach, with recommendations for the future.
<b>The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) and relevant Planning Policy Statements (PPS) for Northern Ireland</b>	The Department of the Environment's 'Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland' - Planning for Sustainable Development (SPPS), sets out the Department's regional planning policies for securing the orderly and consistent development of land in Northern Ireland.	<p>The provisions of the SPPS must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans, and are also material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.</p> <p>Statements of national policy and principles towards certain aspects of the town planning framework. (It should be noted that the PPS's will be superseded by Local Development Plans when they are adopted).</p>
<b>Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020</b>	A strategy for Northern Ireland to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy.	The Strategy sets out how Northern Ireland plans to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy. It builds upon the first Biodiversity Strategy published in 2002 but adopts the modern and internationally agreed approach that emphasises the management of biological systems to deliver the materials and services upon which people depend – the ecosystem services approach.
<b>Draft Environment Strategy (NI)</b>	The Environment Strategy is intended to be an overarching document setting out Northern Ireland's environmental priorities for the coming decades and will form part of the Green Growth agenda.	<p>The Environment Strategy covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air and water quality</li> <li>A healthy environment we can enjoy</li> <li>Nature and wildlife</li> <li>Using our environment to make things without</li> <li>damaging it</li> <li>Waste and recycling</li> <li>Our changing climate</li> </ul>



## SEA Environmental Report for the Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
<b>The Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040</b>	The draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040 Consultation Document provides an outline of the policy drivers for the development of this strategy, the ecosystem services that semi-natural peatlands in Northern Ireland provide, details the current factors affecting our semi-natural peatlands and sets out the objectives and actions which we consider necessary to ensure that our semi-natural peatlands are conserved and restored to functioning ecosystems.	The Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy provides information on a series of Strategic Objectives and Actions that the Department and its partner organisations intend to take forward. The UK Peatland Strategy was published in 2018 and identifies a common way forward and sets the context for the devolved administrations strategic peatland action plans.
<b>The Draft Green Growth Strategy Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland</b>	This Green Growth Strategy sets out an ambitious vision and a framework for delivery with which all other NI government policies and strategies must align. It provides us with a vitally important opportunity to embed wider climate change, a green economy and environmental considerations into decision-making.	This draft Strategy establishes the NI Green Growth vision and principles and sets out commitments to tackling the climate crisis. A detailed Climate Action Plan is currently being developed, which will set out what will be delivered.
<b>Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050</b>	The long-term vision of the Energy Strategy is to have net zero and affordable energy, compatible with the 2015 Paris Agreement, and one which makes a fair contribution to the UK Government's legally binding target of "net zero" emissions by 2050.	The Energy Strategy sets out a pathway for energy to 2030 that will mobilise the skills, technologies and behaviours needed to take us towards our vision of net zero carbon and affordable energy by 2050. It outlines a roadmap to 2030 aiming to deliver a 56% reduction in our energy-related emissions.
<b>The UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS)</b>	The UK Marine Policy Statement provides the policy framework for the marine planning system and taking decisions affecting the marine environment.	The Marine Policy Statement will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom marine area. It has been prepared and adopted for the purposes of section 44 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The Guidance to the UK Marine Policy Statement from 1 January 2020 explains how references to EU law in the UK MPS should be interpreted from 1 January 2021 following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.
<b>Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland</b>	The Marine Plan for Northern Ireland will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of our marine area. It is a single document made up of two plans, one for the inshore region and one for the offshore region.	The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 (The Marine Act), require the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as the Marine Plan Authority (MPA), to prepare marine plans. The Marine Plan has been developed within the framework of the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS). This will facilitate the sustainable development of the marine area. The UK Government has published a 25-year Environment Plan that aims to having UK Marine Plans in place by 2021.
<b>Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2026</b>	Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) aims to establish sustainable levels of economic and social activity in our coastal areas while protecting the coastal environment.	ICZM seeks to reconcile the different policies that have an effect on the coast and to establish a framework that facilitates the integration of the interests and responsibilities of those involved in the development, management and use of the coast.
<b>Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022</b>	The Act sets targets for the years 2050, 2040 and 2030 for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland.	The Act commits Northern Ireland to a target of 48% reduction in emissions and 80% renewable electricity by 2030 and carbon net zero by 2050.
<b>The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002</b>	Aims to prevent and control pollution in Northern Ireland.	The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution prevention and control</li> <li>• Air pollution prevention and control</li> <li>• Pollution prevention and control in areas of special scientific interest (ASSI)</li> </ul>
<b>The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.</b>	The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity.	The Act defines the functions of Northern Irish public bodies in relation to the conservation of biodiversity as well as containing provisions for the conservation of flora, fauna and habitats.
<b>Northern Irelands River Basin Management Plans</b>	River Basin Management Plans are the key tools for implementing the Water Framework Directive and to achieving its objectives.	DAERA has published the Draft River Basin Management Plan for the 3rd cycle period which runs from 2021-2027. The draft plan covers the North Western, Neagh Bann and North Eastern river basin districts (RBD) and includes detailed status updates on each RBD.  The 3rd cycle of River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the period of 2022-2027 is currently being prepared by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in line with the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC) at the time of compiling this report.
<b>The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009</b>	The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced a revised system of Marine Management and Licensing, including marine planning.	The eight key elements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)</li> <li>• Creation of a strategic marine planning system</li> <li>• A streamlined marine licensing system</li> <li>• Marine nature conservation</li> <li>• Fisheries management and marine enforcement</li> <li>• Migratory and freshwater fisheries</li> <li>• Coastal access</li> <li>• Coastal and estuarine management</li> </ul>
<b>The Marine Strategy Regulations 2010</b>	The UK Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 require the UK to take the necessary measures to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) through the development of a UK Marine Strategy.	The UK Marine Strategy, made up of Parts One, Two and Three, sets out a comprehensive framework for assessing, monitoring and taking action across our seas to achieve the UK's shared vision for 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse ocean and seas'. In October 2019, the updated UK Marine Strategy Part One: UK updated assessment and Good Environmental Status was published. In March 2021 the updated UK Marine Strategy Part Two: UK updated monitoring programmes was published and the UK Marine Strategy Part 3: Programme for Measures is being reviewed after being out for consultation (6/09/21-29/11/21).

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<b>Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985</b>	The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order provides for the protection of certain animals, birds and plants.	Attention is drawn to Article 10 of the Wildlife ( <i>Northern Ireland</i> ) Order 1985 ( <i>as amended</i> ) under which it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb, capture, injure a Common seal ( <i>Phoca vitulina</i> ), Grey seal ( <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> ) or Basking shark ( <i>Cetorhinus maximus</i> ). In addition it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly, injure or kill a wild animal included in Schedule 5 of this Order. This includes Angel shark ( <i>Squatina squatina</i> ), Common skate ( <i>Dipturus batis</i> ), Short snouted seahorse ( <i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i> ), Spiny seahorse ( <i>Hippocampus guttulatus</i> ), Spiny lobster ( <i>Palinurus elaphus</i> ) and Fan mussel ( <i>Atrina fragilis</i> ).  It is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection,</li> <li>• damage or destroy, or obstruct access to, any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection,</li> <li>• damages or destroys anything which conceals or protects any such structure; or</li> <li>• to have in possession or control any live or dead wild animal included in Schedule 5 or any part of, or anything derived from, such an animal.</li> </ul>
<b>Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995</b>	The Regulations aim to transpose the Habitats Directive in relation to Northern Ireland to provide protection to habitats and species in need of conservation.	Attention is drawn to regulation 34 of The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), which states that it is an offence to deliberately disturb, capture, injure or kill a wild animal of a European Protected Species included in Schedule 2 to these Regulations. This includes all species of dolphins, porpoises and whales and the marine turtle species.  It is also an offence to; (a) deliberately obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, (b) damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, (c) keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead wild animal of a European protected species, or any part of, or anything derived from, such an animal.
<b>UNWTO Barcelona Declaration and the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism</b>	The Glasgow Declaration is a catalyst for increased urgency about the need to accelerate climate action in tourism and to secure strong commitments to support the global goals to halve emissions over the next decade and reach Net Zero emissions as soon as possible before 2050.	Over 450 organizations have become signatories of the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism to accelerate climate action. By becoming signatories, organizations agree to implement the commitments detailed in the Glasgow Declaration, notably: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the global commitment to halve emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050.</li> <li>• Deliver climate action plans within 12 months from becoming a signatory (or updating existing plans), and implement them.</li> <li>• Align plans with the five pathways of the Declaration (Measure, Decarbonise, Regenerate, Collaborate, Finance) to accelerate and co-ordinate climate action in tourism.</li> <li>• Report publicly on an annual basis on progress against interim and long-term targets, as well as on actions being taken.</li> <li>• Work in a collaborative spirit, sharing good practices and solutions, and disseminating information to encourage additional organizations to become signatories and supporting one another to reach targets as quickly as possible.</li> </ul>
<b>OSPAR Convention</b>	The mission of OSPAR is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution; by protecting the marine environment from the adverse effects of human activities; and by contributing to the sustainable use of the seas.	OSPAR's work is organised under six strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy</li> <li>• Eutrophication Strategy</li> <li>• Hazardous Substances Strategy</li> <li>• Offshore Industry Strategy</li> <li>• Radioactive Substances Strategy</li> <li>• Strategy for the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme</li> </ul> These six strategies fit together to underpin the ecosystem approach. For each strategy a programme of work is designed and implemented annually.
<b>Water Reuse Regulation (2020/741)</b>	The purpose of this Regulation is to facilitate the uptake of water reuse whenever it is appropriate and cost-efficient, thereby creating an enabling framework for those Member States who wish or need to practise water reuse.	Regulation (EU) 2020/741 of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for water reuse. This Regulation lays down minimum requirements for water quality and monitoring and provisions on risk management, for the safe use of reclaimed water in the context of integrated water management.
<b>NEC Directive 2016/2284/EU</b>	Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants.	National Emissions Ceilings (NEC) Directive (2016/2284/EU) entered into force on 31 December 2016. Replacing earlier legislation, ( Directive 2001/81/EC ), the new NEC Directive sets 2020 and 2030 emission reduction commitments for five main air pollutants.
<b>UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979)</b>	The first international treaty to deal with air pollution on a broad regional basis. The Convention entered into force in 1983, laying down the general principles of international cooperation for air pollution abatement and setting up an institutional framework which has since brought together research and policy.	The Convention has substantially contributed to the development of international environmental law and has created the essential framework for controlling and reducing the damage to human health and the environment caused by transboundary air pollution.
<b>Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (2009/128/EC)</b>  <b>Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the sustainable use of plant protection products and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/2115</b>	The Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD) establishes a framework for European Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides by setting minimum rules to reduce the risks to human health and the environment that are associated with pesticide use.  The Directive aims to achieve a sustainable use of pesticides in the EU by reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment and promoting the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and of alternative approaches or techniques,	The main actions relate to training of users, advisors and distributors of pesticides, inspection of pesticide application equipment, the prohibition of aerial spraying, limitation of pesticide use in sensitive areas, and information and awareness raising about pesticide risks. EU countries must also promote Integrated Pest Management, for which, general principles are laid down in Annex III to the Directive.  The European Commission has adopted a proposal for a new Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products, including EU wide targets to reduce by 50% the use and risk of chemical pesticides by 2030, in line with the EU's Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies. The proposal, adopted on 22 June 2022, is part of a package of measures to reduce the environmental

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Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
	such as non-chemical alternatives to pesticides. EU countries have drawn up National Action Plans to implement the range of actions set out in the Directive.	<p>footprint of the EU's food system and help mitigate the economic losses that we are already suffering due to climate change and biodiversity loss.</p> <p>The proposal transforms the existing Directive into a Regulation which will be directly binding and uniformly applicable to all Member States. It overhauls the existing rules on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (see Directive 2009/128/EC) to bring them in line with the ambitions set in the EU Green Deal, Biodiversity and Farm to Fork strategies. The proposals must be approved by Member States in the Council and the European Parliament, under the normal legislative procedure.</p>
<b>Directive on arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and PAH in ambient air (2004/107/EC)</b>	Directive 2004/107/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air.	The objective of this Directive is to establish a target value for the concentration of arsenic, cadmium, nickel and benzo(a)pyrene in ambient air so as to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects of arsenic, cadmium, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons on human health and the environment as a whole. It determines common methods and criteria for the assessment of concentrations of arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air as well as of the deposition of such substances.
<b>National Level</b>		
<b>Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan (2021-2030)</b>	<p>The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between.</p> <p>As part of Project Ireland 2040 the National Development Plan sets out the Government's over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030. It is an ambitious plan that balances the significant demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland with a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure speed of delivery and value for money.</p>	<p>The National Planning Framework published alongside the National Development Plan yields ten National Strategic Outcomes as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compact Growth</li> <li>2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility</li> <li>3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities</li> <li>4. Sustainable Mobility</li> <li>5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills</li> <li>6. High-Quality International Connectivity</li> <li>7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage</li> <li>8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society</li> <li>9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources</li> <li>10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services</li> </ol>
<b>National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland [in preparation]</b>	<p>The high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network.</p> <p>This new framework is the Department of Transport's contribution to Project Ireland 2040, Government's long-term strategy for accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner and making Ireland a better country for all of its people. It has been developed to ensure that our transport sectoral strategy is underpinned by and supports the achievement of the spatial objectives and National Strategic Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework.</p>	The draft framework establishes high-level investment priorities to efficiently and effectively address key transport challenges identified by the background analysis and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government's overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan.
<b>Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)</b>	The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2009 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas.</li> <li>• There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission.</li> <li>• Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large scale projects.</li> <li>• Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage.</li> </ul>
<b>National Climate Action Plan 2023 and Climate Action Plan 2024</b>	<p>The National Climate Action Plan 2023 (the second annual update to Ireland's Climate Action 2019) provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting Ireland on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.</p> <p>The emerging Climate Action Plan 2024 builds upon the 2023 Plan by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings.</p>	The Climate Action Plans list the actions needed to deliver on Ireland's climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated periodically to ensure alignment with Ireland's legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings.
<b>Marine Planning Development Management Bill (General Scheme), 2019</b>	The Bill seeks to establish in law a completely new regime for the maritime area which will replace existing State and development consent regimes and streamline arrangements on the basis of a single consent principle.	One of the aims is to establish a legal basis for An Bord Pleanála and coastal local authorities to consent to development in the maritime area, while retaining existing foreshore and planning permission provisions for aquaculture and sea fisheries related development. It will also provide for a single environmental impact assessment (EIA) and a single appropriate assessment (AA), where applicable.
<b>European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011</b>	The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment — commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning.</li> <li>• These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning.</li> <li>• Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).</li> </ul>
<b>European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011, as amended)</b>	These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites.</li> <li>• The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.</li> </ul>

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<b>Waste Management Act 1996, as amended</b>	To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters.	The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery.
<b>European Communities Environmental Objectives (FPM) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 296 of 2009)</b>	The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997).</li> <li>Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives.</li> <li>Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure</li> </ul>
<b>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 9 of 2010), as amended (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)</b>	To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration.	<p>The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution.</li> <li>Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values</li> <li>Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established</li> </ul>
<b>European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 31 of 2014)</b>	These Regulations, which give effect to Ireland's 3rd Nitrates Action Programme, provide statutory support for good agricultural practice to protect waters against pollution from agricultural sources	<p>The Regulations include measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited</li> <li>Limits on the land application of fertilisers</li> <li>Storage requirements for livestock manure; and</li> <li>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (and Amendment Bill 2021)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.</li> <li>The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021 seeks to amend the principle Act of 2015 (outlined below) by reinforcing Ireland's transition to Net Zero and achieve its commitment to a climate neutral economy by no later than 2050. It establishes a legally binding framework with clear targets and commitments set in law, and ensure the necessary structures and processes are embedded on a statutory basis to ensure Ireland achieves its national, EU and international climate goals and obligations in the near and long term.</li> </ul>	<p>When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective,</li> <li>The policy of the Government on climate change,</li> <li>Climate justice,</li> <li>Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any international agreement referred to in section 2; and</li> <li>The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency.</li> </ul>
<b>The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan (2018 – 2020)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</li> <li>The Plan provides a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets.</li> </ul>	<p>The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness: raise public awareness of the SDGs;</li> <li>Participation: provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals;</li> <li>Support: encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and</li> <li>Policy alignment: develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence.</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)</b>	€27 billion multi-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Capital Plan reflects the Government's commitment to supporting strong and sustainable economic growth and raising welfare and living standards for all.</li> <li>It includes allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained.</li> </ul>
<b>Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006: (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3))</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 (23/1997)</li> <li>Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4</li> <li>Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001 (40/2001)</li> <li>Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 101</li> </ul>	The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.	<p>The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture &amp; Foreshore Management Division are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities;</li> <li>to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities;</li> <li>to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications.</li> </ul>
<b>Foreshore Acts 1933 to 2011</b>	The Foreshore Acts require that a lease or licence must be obtained from the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government for the carrying out of works or placing structures or material on, or for the occupation of or removal of material from, State-owned foreshore, which represents the greater part of the foreshore. Construction of permanent structures on privately owned foreshore also required the prior permission of the Minister under the Foreshore Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developments on the foreshore require planning permission in addition to a Foreshore Lease/Licence/Permission. All Foreshore Leases, Licences and</li> <li>Permissions are without prejudice to the powers of the local planning authority. Applicants should, therefore, consult initially with the local planning authority regarding their proposal.</li> <li>In the case of developments on foreshore for, by or on behalf of a Local Authority where an EIS is required, applications should be made to An Bord Pleanála under Part XV, Planning and Development Act 2000.</li> </ul>

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<b>National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF)</b>	<p>The NMPF details how marine activities will interact with each other in an ocean space that is under increasing spatial pressure, ensuring the sustainable use of Ireland's marine resources to 2040.</p> <p>The NMPF has been prepared with an ecosystem-based approach and informed by best available knowledge.</p>	<p>The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) brings together all marine-based human activities for the first time, outlining the Government's vision, objectives and marine planning policies for each marine activity.</p> <p>The NMPF is intended as the marine equivalent to the National Planning Framework. This approach will enable the Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set a clear direction for managing our seas</li> <li>• clarify objectives and priorities</li> <li>• direct decision makers, users and stakeholders towards strategic, plan-led, and efficient use of our marine resources</li> </ul>
<b>European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 290 of 2013)</b>	<p>These regulations have been drafted to implement the responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine in relation to sea fisheries in Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation 3 provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura Plan in relation to planned fisheries;</li> <li>• Regulation 4 provides for a screening of a Fisheries Natura Plan to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required;</li> <li>• Regulation 5 provides for an appropriate assessment of a Fisheries Natura Plan and also provides for public and statutory consultation;</li> <li>• Regulation 6 provides for the Minister to make a determination to adopt a Fisheries Natura Plan. The Minister may amend, withdraw or revoke a plan;</li> <li>• Regulation 7 provides for publication of the adopted Fisheries Natura Plan;</li> <li>• Regulation 8 provides for a Risk Assessment of unplanned fisheries and also provides for public and statutory consultation on the assessment;</li> <li>• Regulation 9 provides for the issue of a Natura Declaration to prohibit, restrict including restricting by permit, control, etc. of sea fishing activities;</li> <li>• Regulation 10 provides for Natura Permits to be issued where required by Natura Declarations; and</li> <li>• Regulations 11 to 31 deal with functions of authorised officers and related matters, offences, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>National Seafood Operational Programme (2010-2020)</b>	<p>The Operational Programme (OP) supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in Ireland aims at achieving key national development priorities along with the EU's "Europe 2020" objectives. The OP supports the general reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the development of its Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) in Ireland.</p> <p>The OP strategy is designed around the Irish national priorities in the agri-food sector: 'Act Smart' by encouraging knowledge and innovation, 'Think Green' through a responsible and sustainable use of resources, 'Achieve Growth' in order to maintain and create jobs.</p>	<p>The OP is organised around the following priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union Priority 1 (UP1): €67 million (28% of the total allocation) aim at assuring the sustainable development of fishing activities, while protecting the marine environment</li> <li>• Union Priority 2 (UP2): €30 million (12% of the total allocation) will support the Irish National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture that aims at boosting the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector.</li> <li>• Union Priority 3 (UP3): €84.8 million (35.4% of the total allocation) will go towards compliance with CFP rules regarding control and data collection.</li> <li>• Union Priority 4 (UP4): €12 million (5% of the total allocation) will support local development initiatives — a substantial, eleven-fold increase compared to the 2007-2013 funding period.</li> <li>• Union Priority 5 (UP5): €33 million (13.8% of the total allocation) will go towards creating scale in the Irish marketing and processing sectors, starting from the base of very small-scale businesses.</li> <li>• Union Priority 6 (UP6): €10.6 million (4% of the total allocation) will be used on measures to improve the knowledge on the state of the marine environment and the level of protection of marine areas</li> </ul>
<b>Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth: An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012</b>	<p>Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth is an Integrated Marine Plan (IMP), setting out a roadmap for the Government's vision, high-level goals and integrated actions across policy, governance and business to enable our marine potential to be realised. Implementation of this Plan will see Ireland evolve an integrated system of policy and programme planning for our marine affairs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable economic growth of marine/ maritime sectors;</li> <li>• Increase the contribution to the national GDP;</li> <li>• Deliver a business friendly yet robust governance, policy and planning framework;</li> <li>• Protect and conserve our rich marine biodiversity and ecosystems;</li> <li>• Manage our living and non-living resources in harmony with the ecosystem;</li> <li>• Implement and comply with environmental legislation;</li> <li>• Building on our maritime heritage, strengthen our maritime identity;</li> <li>• Increase our awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits; and</li> <li>• Engagement and participation by all.</li> </ul>
<b>Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission)</b>	<p>The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government's strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland's 16% target under Directive 2009/28/EC.</p>	<p>The NREAP sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.</p>
<b>Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012-2020)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Government's overarching strategic objective is to make renewable energy an increasingly significant component of Ireland's energy supply by 2020, so that at a minimum it will achieve its legally binding 2020 target in the most cost efficient manner for consumers.</li> <li>• Of critical importance is the role which the renewable energy sector plays in job creation and economic activity as part of the Government's action plan for jobs.</li> </ul>	<p>This document sets out five strategic goals, reflecting the key dimensions of the renewable energy challenge to 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing on and offshore wind,</li> <li>• Building a sustainable bioenergy sector,</li> <li>• Fostering R&amp;D in renewables such as wave &amp; tidal,</li> <li>• Growing sustainable transport; and</li> <li>• Building out robust and efficient networks.</li> </ul>
<b>National Climate Mitigation Plan 2017</b>	<p>The Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the deep decarbonisation required in Ireland by mid-century in line with the Government's policy objectives.</p>	<p>The National Mitigation Plan focuses on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Action Policy Framework</li> <li>• Decarbonising Electricity Generation</li> <li>• Decarbonising the Built Environment</li> <li>• Decarbonising Transport</li> <li>• An Approach to Carbon Neutrality for Agriculture, Forest and Land Use Sectors</li> </ul>
<b>National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050.</li> <li>• Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.</li> </ul>	<p>National climate policy in Ireland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognises the threat of climate change for humanity;</li> <li>• Anticipates and supports mobilisation of a comprehensive international response to climate change, and global transition to a low-carbon future;</li> <li>• Recognises the challenges and opportunities of the broad transition agenda for society; and</li> </ul>

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<b>National Clean Air Strategy</b>	The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims, as a fundamental national objective, to achieve transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.</li> <li>• Having a National Strategy will provide a policy framework by which Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation.</li> <li>• The Strategy should also help tackle climate change.</li> <li>• The Strategy will consider a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture.</li> <li>• In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount and this will be a strong theme of the Strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Eirgrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2011 -2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eirgrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland.</li> <li>• <i>"Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way."</i></li> </ul>	Grid25, EirGrid's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020.
<b>Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users.</li> <li>• It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high-capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure;</li> <li>• Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity;</li> <li>• Greenways that provide a substantially segregated off-road experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and</li> <li>• Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and</li> <li>• Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice.</li> </ul>
<b>National Water Resources Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NWRP is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment.</li> <li>• The objective of the NWRP is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment.</li> </ul> <p>The preparation of the NWRP has been divided into two phases, the combination of which will become the final NWRP. The NWRP Framework Plan (Phase 1) has now been adopted. Phase 2 of the NWRP (four Regional Water Resources Plans), currently in preparation, will address the needs across the 535 individual water supplies and identify the solutions to address these needs.</p>	<p>The key objectives of the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions</li> <li>• Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry</li> <li>• Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland's water resources</li> <li>• Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events</li> <li>• Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water</li> <li>• Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies</li> <li>• Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater</li> </ul>
<b>National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)</b>	Vision: <i>"Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological development of the sector is among the best in the EU."</i>	<p>General development and growth objectives of marine and freshwater aquaculture (2014 – 2020):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the social, business and administrative environment for aquaculture development</li> <li>• Increase in the total production to 24,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability</li> <li>• Improvement of the perception and increase in the national consumption of National products</li> </ul>
<b>Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006 (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3)) Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 (23/1997) Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4 Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001 (40/2001) Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006)</b>	The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.	<p>The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities;</li> <li>• to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities;</li> </ul> <p>to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications.</p>
<b>Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry.</li> <li>• The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated.</li> </ul>	<p>This Strategy therefore addresses issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong;</li> <li>• Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements;</li> <li>• The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects;</li> <li>• Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms;</li> <li>• Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety;</li> <li>• Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and</li> <li>• Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall aim of this Strategy is to ensure that economy and society in Ireland can develop to their full potential within a well-protected environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategy addresses all areas of Government policy, and of economic and societal activity, which impact on the environment. It seeks to re-orientate policies as necessary to ensure that the strong growth Ireland enjoys and seeks to maintain will be environmentally sustainable.</li> </ul>

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Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
<p><b>National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and National Landscape Character Assessment (pending preparation)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions.</li> <li>Landscape Strategy Vision: <i>"Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning."</i></li> </ul>	<p>The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development;</li> <li>Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape;</li> <li>Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape;</li> <li>Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2021-2027</b></p>	<p>This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published.</p> <p>Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally;</li> <li>To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste;</li> <li>To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export;</li> <li>To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management.</li> </ul>	<p>The Environmental Protection Agency has a statutory responsibility to prepare National Hazardous Waste Management Plans. The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the period 2014-2020 was the third such national plan and had 27 recommendations with the following objectives: to prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste; to maximise the collection of hazardous waste; to strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; and to minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management.</p> <p>The Environmental Protection Agency has prepared a revised National Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the period 2021 to 2027.</p>
<p><b>Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines</b></p>	<p>The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density.</p>	<p>The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions.</p>
<p><b>HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025</b></p>	<p>The vision is: <i>"A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility."</i></p>	<p>These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life</li> <li>Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities</li> <li>Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing</li> <li>Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012</b></p>	<p>A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 (2009)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines a policy for how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved.</li> <li>Sets out five key goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce overall travel demand.</li> <li>To maximise the efficiency of the transport network.</li> <li>To reduce reliance on fossil fuels.</li> <li>To reduce transport emissions.</li> <li>To improve accessibility to transport.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Others lower level aims include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment</li> <li>ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking</li> <li>improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies</li> <li>strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Investing in our Future: A Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (SFILT) – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport</b></p>	<p>SFILT sets out a set of priorities to guide the allocation of the State's investment to best develop and manage Ireland's land transport network over the coming decades.</p>	<p>The three priorities stated in SFILT are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority 1: Achieve steady state maintenance (meaning that the maintenance and renewal of the existing transport system is at a sufficient level to maintain the system in an adequate condition);</li> <li>Priority 2: Address urban congestion; and</li> <li>Priority 3: Maximise the value of the road network.</li> </ul> <p>In delivering on the steady state maintenance objective set out in SFILT, the Plan includes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned replacement programme for the bus fleet operated under Public Service Obligation ("PSO") contracts;</li> <li>Tram refurbishment and asset renewal in the case of light rail; and</li> <li>To the extent within the Authority' remit, support for the operation of the existing rail network within the GDA.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (2007)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White paper setting out a framework for delivering a sustainable energy future in Ireland.</li> <li>Outlines strategic Goals for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security of Supply</li> <li>Sustainability of Energy</li> <li>Competitiveness of Energy Supply</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The underpinning Strategic Goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that electricity supply consistently meets demand</li> <li>Ensuring the physical security and reliability of gas supplies to Ireland</li> <li>Enhancing the diversity of fuels used for power generation</li> <li>Delivering electricity and gas to homes and businesses over efficient, reliable and secure networks</li> <li>Creating a stable attractive environment for hydrocarbon exploration and production</li> <li>Being prepared for energy supply disruptions</li> </ul>

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<b>National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018, emerging 2024 NAF, and associated regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans</b>	NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change.</li> <li>Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g., increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance-based actions.</li> <li>Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change.</li> <li>Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance</li> </ul>
<b>Governments White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future' (2015 – 2030)</b>	The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.	2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95%</li> <li>Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010)</b>	Sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.	Including Ireland's 16% target of gross final consumption to come from renewables by 2020.
<b>National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland (2009 – 2020)</b>	This is the second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plan reviews the original 90 actions outlined in the first Plan and updates/renews/removes them as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Wildlife Act of 1976</b>  <b>Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000</b>  <b>Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2023</b>	The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.  The Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2023 introduced a new public sector duty on biodiversity. The legislation provides that every public body, as listed in the Act, is obliged to have regard to the objectives and targets in the National Biodiversity Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems</li> <li>Give statutory protection to NHAs</li> <li>Enhances wildlife species and their habitats</li> <li>Includes more species for protection</li> </ul>
<b>Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030</b>	Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) sets the national biodiversity agenda for the period 2023-2030 and aims to deliver the transformative changes required to the ways in which we value and protect nature. The 4th NBAP strives for a "whole of government, whole of society" approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. The aim is to ensure that every citizen, community, business, local authority, semi-state and state agency has an awareness of biodiversity and its importance, and of the implications of its loss, while also understanding how they can act to address the biodiversity emergency as part of a renewed national effort to "act for nature".	This National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 builds upon the achievements of the previous Plan. It will continue to implement actions within the framework of five strategic objectives, while addressing new and emerging issues:  Objective 1 - Adopt a Whole of Government, Whole of Society Approach to Biodiversity Objective 2 - Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs Objective 3 - Secure Nature's Contribution to People Objective 4 - Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity Objective 5 - Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity
<b>National Broadband Plan (2012)</b>	Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland.	The Plan sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High-Speed Broadband.</li> <li>Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high-speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered.</li> <li>The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets.</li> <li>A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area.</li> </ul>
<b>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process.</li> <li>Ensures flood risk is a key consideration in preparing land use plans and in the assessment of planning applications.</li> <li>Implementation of the Guidelines is through actions at national, regional, local authority and site-specific levels.</li> <li>Planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the Guidelines in carrying out their functions under the Planning Acts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.</li> <li>Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off.</li> <li>Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains.</li> <li>Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth.</li> <li>Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.</li> </ul> The 2009 Flood Risk Management Guidelines were amended by Circular PL 2/2014 (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government) that provides advice on the use of OPW flood mapping in assessing planning applications and clarifies some advice from the 2009 Guidelines.
<b>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003)</b>  <b>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014)</b>  <b>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (S.I. 272 of 2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation.</li> <li>Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water.</li> <li>Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans.</li> <li>Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs.</li> <li>Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies.</li> <li>Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body.</li> <li>Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances.</li> <li>Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater.</li> <li>Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies.</li> <li>Outlines surface water quality standards.</li> <li>Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality.</li> </ul>
<b>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations of 2010 (S.I. 9 of 2010)</b>	Transpose the requirements of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC into Irish Legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for groundwater bodies of groundwater against pollution and deterioration in quality.</li> <li>Sets groundwater quality standards.</li> <li>Outlines threshold values for the classification and protection of groundwater.</li> </ul>
<b>Water Pollution Acts 1977 to 1990</b>	The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division.	The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prosecute for water pollution offences.</li> <li>Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters.</li> </ul>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution.</li> <li>Issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices;</li> <li>Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects.</li> <li>Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Water Services Act 2007</b></p> <p><b>Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012</b></p> <p><b>Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the water services infrastructure.</li> <li>Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services.</li> <li>Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and wastewater supply.</li> <li>Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and wastewater services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland.</li> </ul>	<p>Key strategic objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector.</li> <li>Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services in the gateways and hubs listed in the National Spatial Strategy, and in other locations where services need to be enhanced.</li> <li>Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards</li> <li>Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary wastewater treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)</b></p>	<p>This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.</p>	<p>Six strategic objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet Customer Expectations.</li> <li>Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply.</li> <li>Provide Effective Management of Wastewater.</li> <li>Protect and Enhance the Environment.</li> <li>Support Social and Economic Growth.</li> <li>Invest in the Future.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas</b></p>	<p>Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning.</li> <li>Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan</b></p>	<p>Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment</p>	<p>not applicable</p>
<p><b>Agri-Food Strategy 2030</b></p>	<p>This 10-year Strategy sets out four high-level "Missions" to be achieved in order to develop such a system in Ireland:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri-Food Sector</li> <li>2. Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Wellbeing</li> <li>3. Food that is Safe, Nutritious and Appealing, Trusted and Valued at Home and Abroad</li> <li>4. An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Sector, driven by Technology and Talent</li> </ol>	<p>Each of the Missions has a set of Goals which are underpinned by a series of Actions.</p>
<p><b>Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS)</b></p> <p><b>Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS)</b></p> <p><b>Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection.</li> <li>GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation.</li> <li>Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats.</li> <li>Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment.</li> <li>Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans.</li> <li>Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Rural Development Programme</b></p>	<p>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</p>	<p>At a more detailed level, the programme also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation;</li> <li>Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and</li> <li>Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Forestry Programme (2014-2020)</b></p>	<p>Represents Ireland's proposals for 100% State aid funding for a new Forestry Programme for the period 2014 – 2020.</p>	<p>Measures include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afforestation and Creation of Woodland</li> <li>NeighbourWood Scheme</li> <li>Forest Roads</li> <li>Reconstitution Scheme</li> <li>Woodland Improvement Scheme</li> </ul>
<p><b>River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle [in preparation]</b></p>	<p>This draft River Basin Management Plan sets out the measures that are necessary to protect and restore water quality in Ireland. The overall aim of the plan is to ensure that our natural waters are sustainably managed and that freshwater resources are protected so as to maintain and improve Ireland's water environment.</p>	<p>The River Basin Management Plan sets out the measures necessary to protect and improve the quality of Ireland's waters. These plans are prepared in 6-year cycles, during which a programme of measures must be implemented so as to achieve water quality objectives. Good water quality contributes to protecting human health by improving the quality of drinking water sources and bathing waters.</p> <p>UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 6 'ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all' have been integrated into the measures and the governance arrangements for the proposed River Basin Management Plan.</p>

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Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
<b>National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)</b>	This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.	Objectives of the Strategy include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To give direction to Ireland’s approach to peatland management.</li> <li>To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils.</li> <li>To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state-owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions.</li> <li>To ensure that Ireland’s peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsibly.</li> <li>To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use</li> </ul>
<b>Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme</b>	The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive.	CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.
<b>Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020</b>	The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows:  Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner.	Three high level goals of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs.</li> <li>To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy.</li> <li>To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCA) 2016</b>	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC. On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.
<b>National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030</b>	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AFV forecasts</li> <li>Electricity targets</li> <li>Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets</li> <li>Hydrogen targets</li> <li>Biofuels targets</li> <li>LPG targets</li> <li>Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets</li> </ul>
<b>All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025</b>	The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is an island-wide attempt to reverse declines in pollinating insects in order to ensure the sustainability of our food, avoid additional economic impacts on agriculture, and protect the health of the environment.  The main objectives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making farmland, public land and private land in Ireland pollinator friendly;</li> <li>Raising awareness of pollinators and how to protect them;</li> <li>Managed pollinators – supporting beekeepers and growers;</li> <li>Expanding our knowledge of pollinators and pollination service; and</li> <li>Collecting evidence to track change and measure success.</li> </ul>	This voluntary Plan identified 81 actions, shared out between over 100 governmental and non-governmental organisations. A large focus of the Plan is to identify actions to improve the quality and amount of flower-rich habitat. Actions range from creating pollinator highways along our transport routes, to supporting pollinators on farmland, in gardens, businesses, and on public land.
<b>Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)</b>	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten-year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector’s unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>85% increase in exports to €19 billion.</li> <li>70% increase in value added to €13 billion.</li> <li>60% increase in primary production to €10 billion.</li> <li>The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high end value added product development.</li> </ul>
<b>National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland</li> <li>Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets a target where 10% of all journeys will be made by bike by 2020</li> <li>Proposes the planning, infrastructure, communication, education and stakeholder participations measures required to implement the initiative</li> </ul>
<b>National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer-term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable.</li> <li>By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors.</li> </ul>	This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce overall travel demand</li> <li>Maximise the efficiency of the transport network</li> <li>Reduce reliance on fossil fuels</li> <li>Reduce transport emissions</li> <li>Improve accessibility to transport</li> </ul> <p>These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.</p>

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<b>Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021</b>	The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out actions that the Tourism Leadership Group has identified as priorities to be progressed until 2021 in order to maintain sustainable growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment. Each action involves specific tourism stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, all of whom we expect to proactively work towards the completion of actions within the specified timeframe.	The Plan contains 27 actions focusing on the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Context</li> <li>• Marketing Ireland as a Visitor Destination</li> <li>• Enhancing the Visitor Experience</li> <li>• Research in the Irish Tourism Sector</li> <li>• Supporting Local Communities in Tourism</li> <li>• Wider Government Policy</li> <li>• International Context</li> <li>• Co-ordination Structures</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025</b>	Growing Tourism to 2025 is a policy framework for the development of tourism within the Country.  The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.	The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year net of inflation excluding carrier receipts;</li> <li>• 250,000 people employed in tourism; and</li> <li>• 10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year.</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016-2022, (Fáilte Ireland, 2016)</b>	This strategy sets out the framework and mechanism for the delivery of investment to cities, towns, villages, communities and businesses across the country. It identifies priorities to support innovation in the sector to retain and grow the country's competitiveness in the marketplace. Its ultimate aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland for international visitors.	The objectives of the Tourism Development and Innovation Strategy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To successfully and consistently deliver a world class visitor experience;</li> <li>• To support a tourism sector that is profitable and achieves sustainable levels of growth and delivers jobs;</li> <li>• To facilitate communities to play an enhanced role in developing tourism in their locality, thereby strengthening and enriching local communities; and</li> <li>• To recognise, value and enhance Ireland's natural environment as the cornerstone of Irish tourism.</li> </ul>
<b>National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland</b>	The high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network. This new framework is the Department of Transport's contribution to Project Ireland 2040, Government's long-term strategy for accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner and making Ireland a better country for all of its people. It has been developed to ensure that our transport sectoral strategy is underpinned by and supports the achievement of the spatial objectives and National Strategic Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework.	The framework establishes high-level investment priorities to efficiently and effectively address key transport challenges identified by the background analysis and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government's overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan.
<b>Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan 2016-2020</b>	The Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan provides a strategic framework for the integration of built, natural and cultural heritage into the future management of waterways.  The overarching aim of the Plan is to: <i>"Identify and protect the unique waterways heritage and promote its sustainable use for the enjoyment of this and future generations"</i> .	Four objectives of the Plan include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective 1: Fostering partnerships to continue building waterway heritage knowledge through storing information, undertaking research and developing best practice.</li> <li>• Objective 2: Promoting awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of our waterway heritage with a focus on community engagement.</li> <li>• Objective 3: Promoting the integrated management, conservation, protection and sustainable use of the inland navigable waterway asset.</li> <li>• Objective 4: To develop Waterways Ireland as a heritage organisation committed to achieving the aim of this plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Waterways Ireland "Reimagining Our Waterways" 10-Year Plan 2023</b>	10-Year Plan is a visionary roadmap for reimagining historical waterways, greenways and blueways.  Waterways Ireland's Vision is to be recognised as having enabled the creation of inspirational inland navigations and waterways experiences, through conservation and sustainable development for the benefit of all.	At the core of our 10-year plan is set of six strategic priorities. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation Development &amp; Governance</li> <li>• Sustainable Funding Model</li> <li>• Asset Portfolio Management</li> <li>• Participation and Reputation</li> <li>• Sustainable Development</li> <li>• Climate Action, Environment and Heritage</li> </ul>
<b>S.I. No. 232/2018 – European Union (National Emission Ceilings) Regulations 2018</b>	The Regulations require the Minister to ensure that emissions of the specified pollutants are limited in accordance with the ceilings set out in Schedule 2. Annex III part 2 includes a set of measures to reduce emissions from agriculture.	The Regulations provide that the Environment Protection Agency shall prepare an annual inventory report of emissions of 5 specified pollutants (sulphur dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> ), nitrogen oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> ), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOC), ammonia (NH <sub>3</sub> ), and fine particulate matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )), and in certain years a report on projections of emissions.  The Regulations also require the preparation of a national air pollution control programme Referring, among other things, to the 1979 UNECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution), and the establishment of a network to monitor the negative impacts of air pollution upon ecosystems based on a network of monitoring sites that is representative of Ireland's freshwater, natural and semi-natural habitats and forest ecosystem types. The Programme shall contain elements on the use of nitrogen fertilizer and soil protection. In fulfilling the requirements of subparagraph (b) the Minister shall ensure coordination with other monitoring programmes established pursuant to Union legislation including Directive 2008/50/EC, Directive 2000/60/EC and Council Directive 92/43/EEC and, if appropriate, the LRTAP Convention and, where appropriate, make use of data collected under those programmes.
<b>Regional/ County/Local Level</b>		
<b>Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 Eastern and Midland Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy 2019-2031</b>	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	The Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy includes provisions for its 10 constituent local authorities: Donegal County Council; Galway County Council; Galway City Council; Sligo County Council; Leitrim County Council; Cavan County Council; Monaghan County Council; Mayo County Council; and Roscommon County Council. The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy includes provisions for its 10 constituent local authorities: Cork City Council; Cork County Council; Clare County Council; Kerry County Council; Limerick City and County Council; Tipperary County Council; Waterford County Council; Carlow County Council; Kilkenny County Council; and Wexford County Council. The Eastern and Midland Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its 12 constituent local authorities: Fingal County Council; Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Louth County Council;

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Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
<b>Wild Atlantic Way Regional Tourism Development Strategy</b> <b>Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy</b> <b>Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy</b> <b>Dublin Regional Tourism Development Strategy</b>	Regional Tourism Development Strategies are a roadmap for the tourism industry and all stakeholders involved in tourism in the region to navigate the current challenges and steer a course towards sustainable recovery and continued success. The Strategies set out a strategic approach to unlocking the commercial potential of the regions. It will ensure focus on tourism development is sustainable and regenerative and that the benefits accrue to local communities and to nature.	The strategic framework has been developed to achieve the vision of each of the Strategies. It consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Strategy</li> <li>• Visitor and Brand Strategy</li> <li>• Destination Development Strategy &amp; Product Development Strategy</li> <li>• Industry Development Strategy</li> <li>• Distribution and Business Development Strategy</li> <li>• Marketing Strategy</li> <li>• Community Strategy</li> <li>• Environmental Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Integrated Implementation Plan 2019-2024</b>	The priorities in the Integrated Infrastructure Plan align with the objectives and priorities set out in the Greater Dublin Transport Strategy 2016-2035, focused on improving public and sustainable transport. While the bulk of the Plan relates solely to the Greater Dublin Area, certain areas such as public transport services and activities related to small public service vehicles are dealt with on a national basis.	The Implementation Plan identifies investment proposals for a number of areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus;</li> <li>• Light Rail;</li> <li>• Heavy Rail;</li> <li>• Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport Investment;</li> <li>• Integrated Service Plan; and</li> <li>• Integration and Accessibility.</li> </ul>
<b>NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs</b>	Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site</li> <li>• To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest</li> <li>• To describe the site and its management</li> <li>• To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site</li> <li>• To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives</li> </ul>	Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected. These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites.
<b>Groundwater Protection Schemes</b>	A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.	A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development.
<b>Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)</b>	The overarching vision for each LECP is: <i>"to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities"</i>	The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.
<b>Land Use Plans, including County Development Plans and Local Area Plans in force within the area to which the Plan relates, including Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied and extended) and the new upcoming Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 [in preparation] and in adjoining planning authorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline planning objectives for land use development (including transport objectives).</li> <li>• Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies.</li> <li>• Set out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify future infrastructure, development and zoning required.</li> <li>• Protect and enhances amenities and environment.</li> <li>• Guide planning authority in assessing proposals.</li> <li>• Aim to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development.</li> <li>• Aim to promote sustainable development.</li> <li>• Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage.</li> </ul>
<b>Green Infrastructure Plans/Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes the maintenance and improvement of green infrastructure in an area.</li> <li>• Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats.</li> </ul>	not applicable
<b>Landscape Character Assessments, including those in force within the area to which the Strategy relates and Local Authorities in adjoining counties</b>	Characterises the geographical dimension of the landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the quality, value, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape area.</li> <li>• Guide strategies and guidelines for the future development of the landscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021</b>	The plan gives effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.
<b>Sligo County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023</b>	The Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.	The purpose of this Action Plan is to endeavour to manage the existing noise environment and protect the future noise environment within the action planning area. Management of the existing noise environment may be achieved by prioritising areas for which further assessment and possible noise mitigation may be required. Protection of the future noise environment may be achieved by acoustical planning, which further incorporates noise into the planning process via measures such as land-use planning, development planning, sound insulation measures, traffic planning and control of environmental noise sources.
<b>Sligo County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024</b>	Climate Change Adaptation Strategies represent a proactive step by Local Authorities in the process of adaptation planning to build resilience and respond effectively to the threats posed by climate change.	The Climate Change Adaptation Strategies takes on the role as the primary instrument at local level to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a proper comprehension of the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change;</li> <li>• Bring forward the implementation of climate resilient actions in a planned and proactive manner; and</li> <li>• Ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all plans and policies and integrated into all operations and functions of County Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Sligo County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029</b>	It sets out how the local authority will promote a range of mitigation, adaptation and other climate action measures, to help deliver on the national climate obligations and the Government's overall National Climate Objective, which seeks to pursue and achieve, by	The Climate Action Plan sets a clear pathway for Sligo County Council to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actively translate national climate policy to local circumstances with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures;</li> <li>• assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels; and</li> <li>• identify and deliver a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) within the local authority area to</li> </ul>

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Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower-level objectives, actions etc.
<b>Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES) prepared by Local Authority within the area to which the Strategy relates and Local Authorities in adjoining counties</b>	no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. The Strategy sets out the framework for the delivery of sustainable and renewable energies throughout the County.	act as a test bed for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures in a specifically defined area, through the identification of projects and outcomes that will assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective. The LARES outlines the potential for a range of renewable energy resources and developments and acknowledges the significant contribution that they can make to the county in terms of energy security, reduced reliance on traditional fossil fuels, enabling future energy exports, meeting assigned national targets and the transition to a low carbon economy.
<b>Shannon Tourism Masterplan 2020-2030</b>	The Shannon Tourism Masterplan is the first dedicated plan undertaken on the entire Shannon Region, setting out a bold and integrated framework for sustainable tourism development along the Shannon across 2020 – 2030.  The Masterplan is a collaborative project led by Waterways Ireland with Fáilte Ireland and 10 Local Authorities along the River Shannon and Shannon-Erne Waterway.	The Masterplan has examined the potential for positioning the Shannon as a hub destination for international and domestic tourism. It identifies the scale and scope of this challenge and has identified the measures needed to develop the necessary infrastructure, products, and experiences to reposition the Shannon Region as a key tourism destination within Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands.  Three key themes are identified in the plan, The Shannon, Mighty River of Ireland, Shannon Journey’s and Adventures and The Natural Timeless Shannon.
<b>Fáilte Ireland plans, strategies etc. relating to the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Ancient East and Dublin or other brands or initiatives, including the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme, VEDPs and DEDPs and Visitor Management Plans</b>	Fáilte Ireland’s work includes preparing various plans and strategies for the Wild Atlantic Way and other brands and initiatives. These plans are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment. The vision for the Wild Atlantic Way brand is: To create a world class, sustainable and unmissable experience brand that engages and energises the visitor so that they become powerful advocates and leaves them wanting to return for more.	Some of Fáilte Ireland’s plans and strategies include various projects relating to land use and infrastructural development, including those relating to development of land or on land and the carrying out of land use activities. Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence.  The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.
<b>Fáilte Ireland’s Corporate Strategy 2021-2023</b>	Fáilte Ireland’s Corporate Strategy seeks to guide the industry back to recovery following the Covid-19 global pandemic.	It sets out a course of action based on the following seven strategic pillars, from which this Regional Tourism Strategy takes its cue: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To sustain tourism businesses in the short term so they can thrive over the long term. (Survive to Thrive)</li><li>2. To support industry to attract and retain talent to support sustainable growth. (Supporting Tourism Careers)</li><li>3. To achieve a sustained step change in Irish staycations. (Accelerate Domestic Tourism)</li><li>4. To transform Ireland’s outdoor tourism experience. (Opening the Outdoors)</li><li>5. To transform Irish tourism’s online presence and ecommerce capability. (Digital that Delivers)</li><li>6. To enhance the destination experience and support the industry in building a pipeline of future international business. (Destination Development and Distribution)</li><li>7. To reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism sector and make it much more sustainable. (Driving Climate Action)</li></ol>
<b>Various existing, planned and emerging projects provided for by the above plans and programmes</b>	Various other plans and projects which are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment	Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.

## **Appendix IV Fáilte Ireland published documents referenced in the DEDP/SEA Environmental Report**

Contents of this Appendix:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme **Appendix 5** "Site Maintenance Guidelines" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme **Appendix 6** "Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others" (and any subsequent replacements).



**WILD ATLANTIC WAY**

SLÍ FHIÁIN AN ATLANTAIGH

# Site Maintenance Guidelines

*for launching the  
Wild Atlantic Way*



**Fáilte Ireland**

National Tourism Development Authority

the **paulhogarth** company



BRADY SHIPMAN MARTIN





## INTRODUCTION

The *Wild Atlantic Way* will be the longest coastal driving attraction in the world, inviting greater tourism numbers to the west coast of Ireland from overseas tourist markets to explore this unique and varied, but wild landscape and seascape.

**The Vision** for the *Wild Atlantic Way* is to build on the existing international reputation of the West Coast of Ireland, and to develop an all encompassing World Class tourism product that will invite visitors to experience the unique wild and natural seascape and landscape of the Atlantic Coast.

It will be at once wild, natural, vibrant and authentic; unspoilt, intriguing, exciting and memorable. It will showcase the wild landscapes and seascapes, and the heritage and history of the places along it.

### What does it look like?

The *Wild Atlantic Way* is a route along the Atlantic coast from Kinsale in County Cork to the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal, and will be fully developed over a period of 10 years.

Along the **Route** there are **159 Discovery Points**, large and small, each chosen for their potential to offer visitors an authentic and intimate experience of the natural and wild landscape and seascape. The majority of these Discovery Points are alongside or accesses by rural roads, with others being located within village and harbour settings. Additionally, there are **22 Embarkation Points** to island Discovery Points.

Each Discovery Point already has a parking facility in the form of a lay-by or car park, and these will serve as the **Arrival Points** for each site. A number of these Discovery Points will be further enhanced to improve the quality of the visitor experience, subject to compliance with the relevant environmental and habitats regulations.

*At this stage, we want the help of the Local Authorities to prepare the Arrival Points to the Discovery Points for the launch of the Wild Atlantic Way in 2014.*

*This document provides guidelines as to the works that may be required to meet a minimum standard of presentation of these sites. The Guidelines also include an Ecological Method Statement which sets out the ecological standards and procedures which must be complied with by the Local Authorities in implementing any works.*

In relation to the further development of the *Discovery Points*, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment are currently being undertaken of the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme and the findings of these assessments will determine the scope, extent and nature of future works, if any.

These Guidelines, therefore, relate only to the parking facilities at the *Discovery Points*.



Ferry to Island

**P** Car parks & Lay-bys

 Potential Discovery Points

## OVERVIEW

The parking facilities are the **Arrival Points** for vehicles and provide pedestrian access for visitors to the *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers, and in the longer term, to the *Discovery Points*.

In some cases, the parking facility will incorporate the *Discovery Point*, either because there is no access from it into the surrounding landscape for a variety of reasons, or that it is considered that the best view of the surrounding landscape and seascape is to be had from the parking facility.

**Parking facilities are not authentic landscape elements**, however, it is important that they are well presented and do not compromise visitor experience of the natural landscape or seascape attraction.

By virtue of their remote and unsheltered locations, many are highly exposed to the excesses of wind and rain, and have endured damage to surfaces, boundaries and facilities - in some cases giving rise to a sense of dereliction. **Poor presentation and dereliction** will undermine visitor experience of the sites.

The purpose of this document is to assist Local Authorities in identifying appropriate repair works that **will enhance the presentation** and visitor experience of parking facilities. Included as part of these guidelines is an Ecological Method Statement. All remedial works undertaken by Local Authorities should comply with these Guidelines and the Ecological Method Statement.

**All parking facilities should be effective, visually discreet, and compatible with their natural context.**



## SITE APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The extent of what is considered the Site Approach will be determined by the particular characteristics and context of each site.

- In the case of lay-bys, the approach will probably only include the section of road alongside it and any defined entrance.
- For small car parks at the end of cul-de-sacs or along very minor roads, the approach may include some or all of the minor road linking to the main route, as well as any defined entrance.
- Car parks adjacent to settlements, beaches and harbours vary considerably in size, and may incorporate and service other facilities or attractions. In such cases, it may be appropriate that the approach be limited to the part of the car park where the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker is to be located.

### Typical maintenance works may include:

- Repair of broken road surfaces;
- Repair of rutted road edges;
- Cutting roadside grass verges;
- Trimming of hedgerows;
- Weeding and removal of inappropriate species and dead planting;
- De-cluttering and removal of excessive or obsolete signage;
- Repairing or removing broken or inappropriate entrance structures including height restrictions;
- Removal or tidying up of derelict or abandoned equipment in adjoining fields or areas.



## PARKING SURFACES

The site car parks, by virtue of their exposed locations, are prone to physical damage by high volumes of drainage, high winds and temperature change, giving rise to broken and uneven surfaces, potholes and surface drainage problems.

Parking surfaces should be **continuous, reasonably firm and durable, be free of tripping hazards**, incorporating free flowing drainage, and should also be **visually compatible** with the surrounding context.

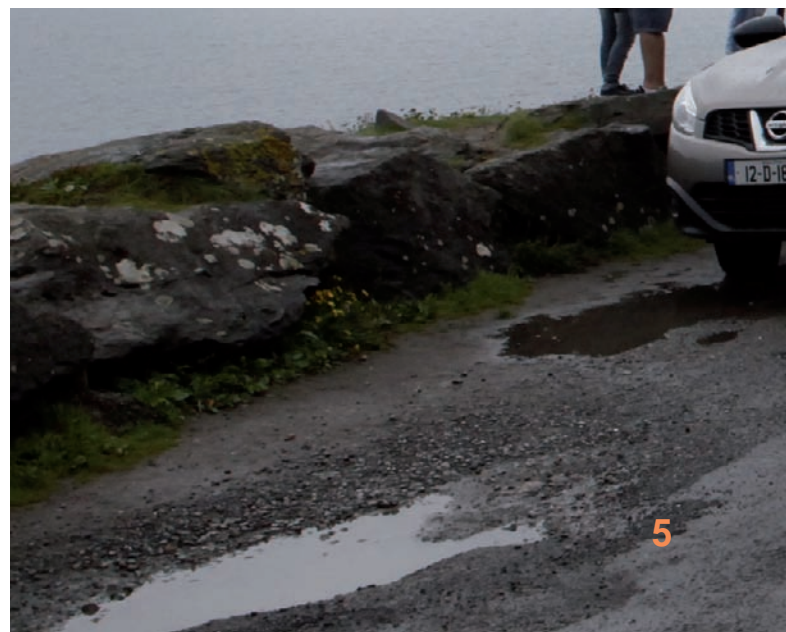
Surface materials will typically include tar and chip or compacted stone for rural sites, whereas village and harbour sites might include bitumen macadam, tar and chip, and possibly concrete.

Hot rolled asphalt incorporating drainage channels, gullies, painted line markings, concrete edgings etc are not generally appropriate, but may be required at specific sites where higher volumes of visitors are anticipated.

### Issues to Consider

- General:** Tidy up sites by removing **debris and gravel piles**, and repairing broken elements.
- Drainage:** Examine the effectiveness of the site drainage, by considering site levels and gradients, the source and direction of cross flows, and the optimum outlet routes. Determine free **flowing discreet drainage system** that will assist in ensuring the integrity of the parking surface and edges.
- Surfaces:** Repair any broken surfaces, potholes, sudden level changes or broken or rutted edges that may give rise to tripping and difficulties for buggies and wheelchair users. Use materials that are consistent with the local road, existing car park or surrounding landscape context as appropriate.
- Vegetation:** Grass and other vegetation can break through compact surfaces after a number of years. In some cases this might be considered part of the **character**; for others, it might be considered **derelict**. An assessment of what is appropriate must be made, and such vegetation either left alone, or the surface renewed to eliminate it. If renewing surfaces, the specification should consider the likelihood of vegetation re-establishing itself.

In general, **do not introduce urban traffic solutions** such as highly finished tarmac, paint marking, bollards, kerbs, barriers or traffic signage in areas that are distinctly rural and natural in appearance.



## SITE BOUNDARIES

Boundaries for parking facilities vary significantly, and typically in rural settings include earth mounds, sod and stone banks, hedgerows, post and wire fencing etc., that are consistent with the wider landscape setting. In some cases, they may also include examples of local craftsmanship, such as dry stone walls.

Rural boundaries have an **inherent rugged and almost natural appearance**. Undulating lines, off-plumb fence posts, and weathered appearances are perfectly acceptable authentic elements of the landscape.

### Repair and maintenance works for improved presentation may require:

- Earth mounds:** Any broken or eroded parts should be repaired to match the original.
- Sod and Stone banks:** Reinststate any damaged sections and remove overgrown or dead planting, or any inappropriate species;
- Hedgerows:** In general, annual trimming to maintain vistas should be undertaken outside bird nesting season, ideally in autumn to allow recovery in advance of the tourism season.
- Dry stone walls:** Repair any broken or fallen sections to match the original
- Post & wire fence:** Replace and missing or broken posts or sections of wire
- Sand dunes:** Natural features with marram grass should not need maintenance.

Inappropriate boundaries might include bollards (concrete, steel, painted timber), boulders, chain link fencing, painted timber fences, crash barriers, and walls made from blockwork, modular materials or concrete.

Where inappropriate boundary treatments are present they should be removed and replaced with an alternative that is consistent with the surrounding landscape context. If vehicular constraints are necessary for safety or for restricting access, consider solutions derived from typical appropriate boundaries.



## SIGNAGE

Sites should be free of all unnecessary clutter, so as not to detract from the setting and visitor experience. Excesses of signage, for direction, safety, information, interpretation and other purposes needs to be rationalised and simplified.

**In many instances, typical actions required that may include:**

- Removal of abandoned or derelict signage and signage infrastructure;
- Removal of any urban or otherwise inappropriate signage structures;
- Removal of all commercial advertising;
- Repair and repainting of signage infrastructure.

Local Authorities, in consultation with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant bodies, should seek to remove other tourism and interpretive signage, and if appropriate and necessary, to seek to incorporate other information in conjunction with the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker.

The *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker will incorporate interpretation signage, the content for which will be agreed by means of a separate consultative process.

The objective is that upon arrival, the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker should be readily visible, not confused amongst other signage, and be close to the point of interaction (or departure to) the natural and wild experience identified with each site.



## SITE FURNITURE

Where site furniture is provided, it is important that it is appropriate to the natural landscape setting, and well maintained so as to enhance visitor experience of the site.

### Actions required may include:

- Removal, replacement or repair of any furniture that is broken or appears derelict;
- Removal of any urban style seating or other site furniture that detracts from the authenticity of the site;
- Removal of any makeshift site furniture such as picnic tables and seating made of block, brick or concrete structures;
- Removal of bins comprising re-used oil barrels and other containers, moulded plastic, and urban council type bins.

Picnic tables and seating should generally be understated, robust and well maintained. Easy access is important, including the approach route and base installation.

Bins, where provided, should be convenient without being prominent, and should generally be of naturally bleaching timber construction. Consideration should be given where possible to the provision of dual bins for rubbish and recycling.

Particular attention should be given to the most appropriate location for the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker. It should be obvious at the point of arrival by car, and also at the point of leaving the car park behind and proceeding by foot to the natural setting, and in time, to the Discovery Point.

Local Communities, themselves part of the *Wild Atlantic Way* experience, may have implemented community projects and in some cases, memorial plaques. It is important that the Local Authority identifies such interventions and their origins, and undertakes any improvement works in a manner that engages with such community participation.





## SITE FACILITIES

The majority of sites do not typically incorporate extensive visitor facilities. Toilet facilities are provided at many of the village, beach and harbour locations, either on a permanent or seasonal basis. In addition, some of the parking facilities double as the location for community recycling facilities.

### Actions required:

#### Toilet Blocks

Ensure toilet blocks in use are properly presented and maintained, internally and externally, so as not to undermine visitor experience;

Some sites incorporate disused and derelict toilet blocks. Where there is a demand, these should be refurbished and well presented. Otherwise, derelict toilet facilities should be demolished and their sites reinstated.

#### Temporary Toilets

Portaloos, whether temporary or permanent, are substantially below any international or local visitor expectation and should be removed.

Where there is a demand for toilet facilities, consideration should be given to the provision of proper facilities.

In exceptional circumstances, if temporary facilities are provided, they should always be fully screened by timber panelling and hedgerows.

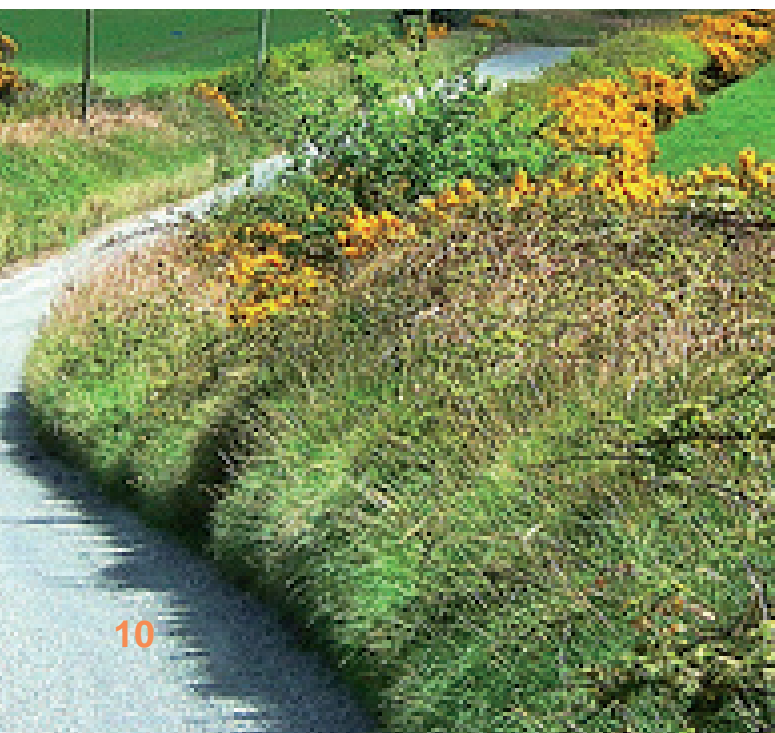
#### Recycling:

Consider possible alternative sites

Ensure they are located out of sight of visitors;

Provide screening, perhaps using timber panels and hedgerow surrounds





## SITE LIGHTING

The majority of sites are distinctly rural in character with the exception of those located in villages and harbours. In this regard, sites should have no lighting provided as frequently, the dusk, dawn or night time experience of the seascape and skyline is part of the experience.

Inappropriate lighting installations should be removed.

In village, harbour or promenade locations, lighting may be a reasonable expectation and appropriate. Local Authorities should ensure that such fittings and illumination levels are suitable to the location. Bollard lighting might be considered a good alternative, perhaps in conjunction with lamp standards, to provide suitable wayfinding lighting without compromising the village or harbour character.

## SOFT LANDSCAPING

In general, vegetation at sites in the form of indigenous hedgerows, shrubs, grass, marram grass and seasonal flowers is entirely appropriate.

Any vegetation that is dead, not indigenous, or inconsistent with the local landscape context, should be removed and replaced as appropriate in order to reinforce the authenticity of sites.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The authenticity of the wild and natural environments being showcased along the *Wild Atlantic Way* is an essential part of the experience. In this regard, sites should be maintained and repaired in a sustainable manner, using, as appropriate, locally sourced materials and indigenous planting, as well as management techniques that are environmentally responsible. Particular regard should be given to safeguarding ecological characteristics, including flora and fauna, and the protection of the natural environments.





## MAINTENANCE & SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

All sites that are brought up to an acceptable standard will be awarded a *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers and an interpretative panel, both of which will be placed in a suitable location at the Arrival Point. The high quality presentation of the sites however, will be an ongoing requirement, in order to maximise visitor experience and match expectations.

Fáilte Ireland will require a Service Level Agreement for each site with the relevant Local Authority.

This will serve as a contract between Fáilte Ireland and the Local Authority to ensure that investment in the sites now will continue to be effective for the *Wild Atlantic Way*.

### What will the Service Level Agreement include?

Following the identification and agreement of the scope of works required for each site at this stage, a site specific Service Level Agreement will also be prepared. In essence, the Service Level Agreement will seek to ensure that maintenance and improvement works undertaken in the short term are kept at an acceptable standard by the Local Authority into the future.

Typically, they are likely to include:

- Periodic reporting on site condition, including photographs
- Defined management regimes and programmes
- Sites to be kept clean and tidy
- Bins to be emptied and any loose rubbish picked up
- Vegetation to have scheduled seasonal management plans
- Signage is kept clear and well presented, and unauthorised signage or advertisements removed
- Any painted structures should be re-painted as required to maintain good presentation
- Toilet facilities, where provided, are kept clean and stocked with necessary supplies
- Lighting, if appropriate, is maintained in full working order
- Site furniture is kept in good condition
- Parking surfaces to be maintained in good order
- Items that are broken, including by vandalism, are repaired quickly
- Graffiti is removed

Local Authorities will be required to commit to allocating appropriate resources to ensure that the appropriate standard is maintained.



# ECOLOGICAL METHOD STATEMENT

## 1.1 Introduction

All projects must be undertaken in accordance with the Wild Atlantic Way candidate Discovery Points Remedial Works Guidelines, including this Ecological Method Statement, and in accordance with the requirements of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

The purpose of the Ecological Method Statement is to identify what ecological control methods need to be specified to avoid adverse ecological effects arising from remedial works. All projects must comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project.

Remedial works are proposed at a number of sites. The works vary in scale and are specific to the individual sites and incorporate a combination of the proposed works outlined on Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 Proposed Works for Wild Atlantic Way candidate Discovery Points**

<b>Proposed works</b>
Extend surfacing in car park
Enlargement of car park/lay-by
Provision of footpath
Provision of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Provide Wild Atlantic Way site marker
Lay-by reshaping
Removal/replacement of bollards
Extension of timber boardwalks to create access locations within car park to boardwalks
<b>Proposed Management Activities</b>
Road repairs (e.g. pot holes)
Repair stone walls, fencing, concrete posts, and furniture
Repair surfacing in car park
Removal of vegetation, tree and hedgerow cutting
Repair and maintain verge around car park and along access road
Rationalise existing information signage, removal of existing barriers, general tidy up of area
Undertake maintenance of grassed amenity areas
Maintenance of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Repair works to paths, slipways, kerbs, steps, etc. due to storm damage
Reinstate rock armour
Drainage clearance works

The locations of these sites are often within areas of high ecological sensitivity and therefore it will be necessary to consider the potential effects of such works on the natural environment. Depending on the site and the specific complexities, the works could potentially give rise to the following adverse ecological effects:

- Habitat loss and disturbance
- Disturbance of species
- Introduction and spread of invasive alien species.
- Increased runoff of silt and pollutants to surrounding aquatic ecosystems, which could impact on aquatic habitats and species

## 1.2 Ecological Control Measures

A number of Ecological Control Measures are to be integrated into the design of each site. The Ecological Control Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. Particular measures (see Table 1.2 below) are listed against each type of works being proposed for each site. It will be necessary for the Local Authority to specify that, when planning works at individual sites, the measures are adhered to and appropriately incorporated into the construction approach. Site specific detail on how these measures will be incorporated into the construction design will vary depending on the characteristics of each site and will need to be considered prior to the commencement of construction.

**Table 1.2 Ecological Control Measures**

No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
<b>G1</b>	<p>All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be segregated to prevent contamination, stored appropriately and covered where required. Removal of waste materials from site shall be undertaken by an approved contractor for treatment/disposal.</p> <p>Hazardous waste material shall be stored separately from other inert waste materials and kept covered in an appropriate area/container(s) to ensure that the material does not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network materials. The hazardous waste materials shall be removed from site by an approved contractor for treatment at a licenced facility - as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works.</p> <p>Particular care shall be taken in the removal of stockpiles of material such as gravel and chippings. (Such stockpiles are frequently sources of non-native invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed). Disposal of contaminated material may require transport to an approved, licensed facility.</p>
<b>G2</b>	<p>All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be removed in such a manner as to ensure that none of the material is contaminated and/or released inadvertently to watercourses and other sensitive ecological habitats.</p>
<b>G3</b>	<p>Prior to removal, all vegetation shall be checked by the Ecological Clerk of Works to ensure that it is free of non-native invasive species, such as Japanese knotweed. Should any such species be encountered, the area shall be treated as directed by expert advice on the management of invasive species.</p>
<b>G4</b>	<p>Works involving the removal or clearing of vegetation that would have any impacts on nesting birds shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (i.e. outside the period 1st March to 31st August).</p> <p>In addition, the possible presence of roosting bats shall be considered prior to the undertaking any works that may disturb the roosts. Any further safeguards shall be included and provided for subject to the supervision of the Ecological Clerk of Works</p>
<b>G5</b>	<p>Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be stored on-site in a secure, dry and contained area and isolated from drainage connections to any existing surface water drainage network</p>



No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
<b>G6</b>	Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be used in a manner that ensures that contamination of other materials does not occur and that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network
<b>G7</b>	Where possible, machinery shall only operate from existing parking or built surfaces, and shall not enter any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G8</b>	All resurfacing works shall be undertaken within the existing or formerly paved areas
<b>G9</b>	All resurfacing and other minor construction or demolition works (including removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables) should be undertaken in a manner that ensures that no materials can inadvertently enter any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat, and in a manner that ensures there are no impacts on fauna such as birds and bats – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G10</b>	Prior to use, resurfacing materials, including hardcore and sub-surface fill material will be stored in a manner that ensures that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network, or any sensitive ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G11</b>	All timber to be used in works shall be sustainably sourced
<b>G12</b>	<p>Works to define boundary edges shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat on the natural environment – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works and shall consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Proposed low earth bunds shall be placed within the existing parking or built surface areas.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All material used, including rock, soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting</li> </ul>
<b>G13</b>	Removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat.
<b>G14</b>	Works to provide a natural surface to bare areas shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on the natural environment. All material used, including soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting.
<b>G15</b>	Where possible, site markers shall be placed within existing hard standing areas and installed in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G17</b>	An Ecological Clerk of Works shall be retained to advise on and monitor works associated with construction, demolition, resurfacing and/or drainage

### 1.3 Advisory Measures

Advisory Measures, in addition to the requirements to comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project are detailed in Table 1.3 below.

**Table 1.3 Advisory Measures**

No.	Description
<p><b>1. Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network</b></p>	<p>Contribute as appropriate towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Ramsar Sites, Salmonid Waters and Wicklow National Park.</p> <p>The protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, will be supported in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)<sup>1</sup>, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)<sup>2</sup>, the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)<sup>3</sup>, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).</li> <li>• National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976<sup>4</sup>, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008<sup>5</sup> and the Flora Protection Order 1999.</li> <li>• National policy guidelines, including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.</li> <li>• Catchment and water resource management Plans.</li> <li>• Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: and Ireland’s National Biodiversity Plan;</li> <li>• Ireland’s Environment 2012 (EPA, 2012), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report’s goals and challenges.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

<sup>2</sup> Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur)

<sup>3</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats

<sup>4</sup> Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

<sup>5</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats

No.	Description
<p><b>2. Appropriate Assessment</b></p>	<p>All projects will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and an Appropriate Assessment report to the relevant level of detail, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or</li> <li>2. The project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or</li> <li>3. The project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.</li> </ol> <p>The methodology followed by the Appropriate Assessment should follow, as relevant and appropriate, that outlined in DEHLG (2009) <i>Appropriate Assessment of Plans &amp; Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities</i>.</p>

No.	Description
<b>3. AA and Exemptions</b>	<p>Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42). A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.</p> <p>If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought<sup>6</sup>. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.</p>
<b>4. Environmental Control Measures</b>	<p>A number of Environmental Control Measures have been integrated into the design of each site. The Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. These measures should be taken into account by any Appropriate Assessments and are part of the design and are not mitigation.</p>
<b>5. Protection of Natura 2000 Sites</b>	<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 (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects<sup>7</sup>).</p>
<b>6. Coastal Focus</b>	<p>Works undertaken in coastal areas will be in accordance with best practice and support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats. Protect, enhance and conserve the beaches from inappropriate development. Facilitate and Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.</p>
<b>7. Biodiversity and Ecological Networks</b>	<p>Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p>

<sup>6</sup> As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.

<sup>7</sup> 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 project to proceed; and
- c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

No.	Description
<b>8. Waters</b>	Protect the water resources, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU <i>Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC)</i> , the <i>European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended)</i> , the <i>North Western International</i> , the <i>Western</i> , the <i>Shannon International</i> and the <i>South Western River Basin Management Plans 2009-2015</i> (or any such plans that may supersede same) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same).
<b>9. Non-Designated Sites</b>	Recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve biological diversity.
<b>10. Non-native invasive species</b>	Support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.
<b>11. Environmental Assessment</b>	Ensure, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) - and relevant transposing Regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>12. Cumulative/In-combination effects</b>	Any new development that could interact with projects for remedial works would have to comply with the provisions contained in relevant land use and other sectorial plans e.g. Development Plans, River Basin Management Plans. These provisions have been subject to and informed by Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment which have considered in-combination effects.  With respect to events (such as a vehicle collision) that are not reasonably foreseeable, contingency plans and procedures are already in place at various levels e.g. emergency plans, local response arrangements.  As part of the wider Wild Atlantic Way project, environmental monitoring is being coordinated at a number of levels – this includes monitoring related to habitats.
<b>13. Works to be carried out at candidate Discovery Points and potential impacts</b>	The methodology for the incorporation of environmental control measures will require consideration at project level for each site to account for individual complexities with regards to the sensitivities and layout of the individual site.



**WILD ATLANTIC WAY**

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## Appendix 6

### 'Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others'

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA which has been undertaken for the Operational Programme, the findings of which have been informed by the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and are presented in an SEA Environmental Report which accompanies Operational Programme, has resulted in the integration of this Appendix into the Operational Programme in order to facilitate environmental protection and sustainable development at lower levels of decision making.

This appendix includes various provisions with which local authorities and others will demonstrate compliance at lower levels of decision making in order to get funding. These decision making processes will include project level Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and AA as appropriate.

Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42).

A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.

If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought<sup>1</sup>. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.

Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.

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<sup>1</sup> As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.

Topic <sup>2</sup>	Requirement <sup>3</sup>
All	<p><b>Regulatory framework for environmental protection and management</b></p> <p>Local authorities and others shall cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. Local authorities and others will demonstrate, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.</p>
All	<p><b>Information to be considered by local authorities and others at lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment</b></p> <p>Lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment by local authorities and others, as relevant, should consider the sensitivities identified in Section 4 of the SEA Environmental Report, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas;</li> <li>• Features of the landscape that provide linkages/connectivity to designated sites (e.g. watercourses, areas of semi-natural habitat such as linear woodlands etc)</li> <li>• Salmonid Waters;</li> <li>• Shellfish Waters;</li> <li>• Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments;</li> <li>• Nature Reserves;</li> <li>• Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas;</li> <li>• Areas likely to contain a habitat listed in annex 1 of the Habitats Directive;</li> <li>• Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and Zones of Archaeological Potential;</li> <li>• Entries to the Record of Protected Structures;</li> <li>• Un-designated sites of importance to wintering or breeding bird species of conservation concern;</li> <li>• Architectural Conservation Areas; and</li> <li>• Relevant landscape designations.</li> </ul>
All	<p><b>Construction and Environmental Management Plan</b></p> <p>Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) shall be prepared in advance of the construction of larger projects and implemented throughout. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures indicated in this Appendix to the Operational Programme and any lower tier Environmental Impact Statement or Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse,</li> <li>b. location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities,</li> <li>c. details of site security fencing and hoardings,</li> <li>d. details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction,</li> <li>e. details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage,</li> <li>f. measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network,</li> <li>g. measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris,</li> <li>h. alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during the course of site development works,</li> <li>i. details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels,</li> <li>j. containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater,</li> <li>k. disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil,</li> <li>l. a water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains,</li> <li>m. details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan.</li> <li>n. if peat is encountered - a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan.</li> <li>o. measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed).</li> <li>p. appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases.</li> </ol>
All	<p><b>Maintenance Plan</b></p> <p>Lower tier assessments should examine the need for Maintenance Plans informed by environmental considerations to be prepared and implemented.</p>
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<p><b>Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network</b></p> <p>Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); UNESCO World Heritage and UNESCO Biosphere sites; Ramsar Sites; Salmonid Waters; Shellfish Waters; Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves); Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas; Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs); Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979) ; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).</p>

<sup>2</sup> The SEA Directive identifies a number of environmental topics which must be considered in the assessments being undertaken for plans and programmes. These topics are listed in this column and comprise biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape.

<sup>3</sup> The provisions listed under this column are the requirements which the local authorities and others will have to comply with in order to get funding.



	<p>Local authorities and others shall demonstrate compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)<sup>4</sup>, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)<sup>5</sup>, the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)<sup>6</sup>, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).</li> <li>• National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976<sup>7</sup>, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008<sup>8</sup> and the Flora Protection Order 1999.</li> <li>• National policy guidelines (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same), including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.</li> <li>• Catchment and water resource management Plans, including River Basin District Management Plans 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same).</li> <li>• Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland's 2<sup>nd</sup> National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same).</li> <li>• Ireland's Environment 2014 (EPA, 2014, including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Appropriate Assessment</b></p> <p>All projects and plans arising from this programme will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or</li> <li>2. The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or</li> <li>3. The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Protection of Natura 2000 Sites</b></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 programme (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects<sup>9</sup>).</p>
	<p><b>NPWS &amp; Integrated Management Plans</b></p> <p>Regarding, integrated management plans, Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for Special Area of Conservation involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done.</p> <p>Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for all Natura sites (or parts thereof), Fáilte Ireland and local authorities shall engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Operational Programme and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard to local communities.</p>

<sup>4</sup> Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

<sup>5</sup> Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur).

<sup>6</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats.

<sup>7</sup> Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

<sup>8</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats.

<sup>9</sup> 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 project to proceed; and

c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

	<p><b>Coastal Zone Management</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and local authorities and others shall, as appropriate: support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats; and facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity and Ecological Networks</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate, as appropriate, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p><b>Protection of Riparian Zone and Waterbodies and Watercourses</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that waterbodies and watercourses are protected from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine, wetland and coastal areas, as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Non-Designated Sites</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate the appropriate protection of non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity.</p> <p><b>Non-native invasive species</b> Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.</p>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<p><b>Human Health</b> Local authorities and others shall assess proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, local authorities and others shall ensure the introduction of mitigation measures in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.</p>
<b>Soil</b>	<p><b>Soil Protection and Contamination</b> Local authorities and others shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p> <p><b>Areas of geological interest</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate protection and maintenance of the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest.</p>
<b>Water</b>	<p><b>Water Framework Directive and associated legislation</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute towards, as appropriate, the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009), the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same). Local authorities and others shall support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development.</p> <p><b>River Basin Management Plan</b> Local authorities and others shall support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the various River Basin Management Plans 2009 – 2015, and associated Programmes of Measures, or any such plans that may supersede same during the lifetime of the Operational Programme, as well as relevant recommendations contained in the Water Quality in Ireland 2007 – 2009 (EPA, 2011, and any updated/superseding document). Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that proposals for development would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands and coastal waters. Also local authorities and others shall have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 which provides guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p><b>Bathing Water</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute towards the achievement of the requirements of the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008) and EU Mandatory Values, as a minimum, and EU Guide Values, where possible.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk Management Guidelines</b> Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, 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), the DEHLG/OPW publication <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines</i> (2009) (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same) and relevant outputs of the Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS).</p> <p><b>Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)</b> Local authorities and others shall ensure that new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as appropriate.</p>
<b>Air and Climatic</b>	<p><b>Infrastructure for Walking, Cycling and Water-based activities</b> Local Authorities and others shall work with Fáilte Ireland, the National Trails Office, Coillte, the</p>

<b>Factors</b>	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking, cycling and water-based activities along the Wild Atlantic Way.
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>Construction Waste</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that all waste arising during construction phase will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts and regulations and Regional Waste Management Plans. Construction Waste Management Plans will be implemented by local authorities and others to minimise waste and ensure correct handling and disposal of construction waste streams in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, July 2006.
	<b>Waste Creation</b> Local authorities and others shall support the minimisation of waste creation and promote a practice of reduce, reuse and recycle where possible.
	<b>Waste Disposal</b> Local authorities and others shall safeguard the environment by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.
	<b>Irish Water</b> Local authorities and others shall co-operate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its new role as the lead authority for water services.
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>Archaeological Heritage</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and sympathetic enhancement of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended).
	<b>Protection of Archaeological Sites</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, in the ownership/guardianship of the State, or that are subject of Preservation Orders or have been registered in the Register of Historic Monuments. Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
	<b>Consultation</b> Local authorities and others shall consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.
	<b>Underwater Archaeological Sites</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of underwater archaeological sites in riverine, intertidal and sub-tidal locations.
	<b>Architectural Heritage</b> Local authorities and others shall help to ensure the appropriate protection of architectural heritage by complying, as appropriate, with the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any updated/superseding document).
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Landscape Designations</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of county and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments. Proposals for development that have the potential to significantly adversely impact upon these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape character and visual impacts of the proposed development - demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation. Such assessments should be prepared having regard to the relevant aspects of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013 Landscape Institute).
	<b>Coastal Areas and Seascapes</b> Local authorities and others shall protect the character and visual potential of the coast and conserve the character and quality of seascapes.