

# SLIGO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2017

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## APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT - SCREENING REPORT -

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
ARTICLE 6(3) OF THE EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE

**for: Sligo County Council**

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Sligo



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## Table of Contents

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1	Background .....	1
1.2	Legislative Context .....	1
1.3	Stages of Appropriate Assessment .....	2
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Description of the Plan</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Natura 2000 Sites in and within 15 km of the Plan Area</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b> .....	<b>22</b>
4.1	Is the Plan Necessary to Management of Natura 2000 Sites? .....	22
4.2	Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts .....	22
4.3	Elements of the Plan with Potential to Give Rise to Significant Effects .....	25
4.4	Elements of the Plan that will ensure the protection of the Natura 2000 network.....	25
<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Recommended Changes to the plan</b> .....	<b>32</b>
5.1	Changes to the Development Plan objectives and policies.....	32
5.2	Screening the Mini-plans.....	34
<b>Section 6</b>	<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>36</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 3.1: Natura 2000 Sites within Co. Sligo and 15km of the County Boundary.....	5
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## List of Tables

Table 3.1a: SPAs in County Sligo .....	6
Table 3.1a: SPAs in County Sligo .....	6
Table 3.1b: SPAs within 15km of the boundary of County Sligo .....	8
Table 3.2a: SACs in County Sligo .....	9
Table 3.2b: SACs within 15km of the boundary of County Sligo .....	17
Table 4.1: Potential Impacts - Natura 2000 Sites – SPAs .....	23
Table 4.2: Potential Impacts- Natura 2000 Sites – SACs.....	24
Table 5.1: Recommended Changes to Objectives and Policies .....	32
Table 5.2: Natura 2000 Sites Potentially Affected by Mini-plans .....	35

# Section 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This is the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for the Sligo County Development Plan (CDP) 2011-2017 in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC). This report is divided into six sections as follows:

- Section 1 Introduction
- Section 2 Description of the Plan
- Section 3 Natura 2000 Sites in and within 15 km of the Plan Area
- Section 4 Assessment Criteria
- Section 5 Recommended Changes to the plan
- Section 6 Conclusions

An appendix to the report contains the assessment of the individual Plan policies, objectives and mini-plans.

## 1.2 Legislative Context

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as “The Habitats Directive”, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA):

*“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public*

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

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

## 1.3 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

This Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009.
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission Environment DG, 2000.
- *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*: European Commission, 2000

AA comprises four stages :

### **Stage One: Screening**

The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

### **Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment**

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

### **Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions**

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

### **Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain**

An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. First, the plan should aim to avoid any impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan-making process and writing the plan in order to avoid such impacts. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the plan is still likely to result in impacts on European sites, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, then it must be rejected. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI test) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

This report documents the first of these stages. It's conclusion that significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites are unlikely means that further AA stages are not required.

## Section 2 Description of the Plan

Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 sets out Sligo County Council's vision for the sustainable growth of the County of Sligo. It also includes a wide range of policies and objectives designed to transpose this vision into reality. Sligo has been designated as a Gateway City under the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). As the national planning framework for Ireland, the NSS aims to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development across the state, supported by more effective planning. Within this context, Sligo is recognised as having the potential to build scale and critical mass to drive development in the North-West. The approach is to make the region competitive according to its strengths while ensuring a high-quality urban environment and vibrant rural areas.

Apart from the development of an enterprising and competitive Gateway, the vision for the future of County Sligo involves the creation of compact, liveable towns and villages, in a green and accessible County which offers affordable homes, healthcare, educational, cultural and recreational facilities set in a high-quality natural environment where heritage is protected and enhanced.

The core aims of the Plan are:

- CA-1 To develop the full potential of each part of County Sligo to contribute to the optimal performance of the County as a whole – economically, socially and environmentally;
- CA-2 To adequately provide for the growth of Sligo towards a target population of up to 74,000 by 2017, structured in a balanced manner between:
  - the Gateway City of Sligo (up to 34,000)
  - the wider area of County Sligo (up to 40,000), encompassing the consolidation of Key Support Towns and smaller settlements, and the maintenance of viable rural communities in the hinterlands of these towns and villages.
- CA-3 To support the implementation of the Gateway status for Sligo City, as set out in the NSS, the RPGs and as provided for in the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016, by ensuring the structured and orderly development of Sligo as a compact and sustainable city;
- CA-4 To sustain the vitality of urban and rural communities throughout the County in a way that will complement the vibrancy of the Gateway and reinforce the identity of Sligo, ensuring that culture is central to the County's identity and quality of life of all those who live, work and visit Sligo;
- CA-5 To ensure that the nationally – and internationally – renowned natural and cultural heritage of Sligo is wisely conserved and enhanced, both as a driver of Sligo's identity and attractiveness for investment and business activities, and as a key legacy to be handed forward to future generations.
- CA-6 To build up the regional-level linkages between County Sligo and other parts of the Border Region and adjoining regions, such as the Western Region and Northern Ireland, by supporting the implementation of regional spatial strategies, such as the Border Regional Planning Guidelines, collaborating on support for critical enabling infrastructure, such as inter-regional road and rail linkages, and co-operating on areas of mutual planning interest.

## Section 3 Natura 2000 Sites in and within 15 km of the Plan Area

### 3.1.1 SACs and SPAs

This section of the screening process describes the Natura 2000 sites within a 15km zone of impact of the plan area. A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the DoE document *DRAFT - Guidance for Planning Authorities* and as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected Natura 2000 sites are included in the screening process. A map indicating the locations of the sites is given in **Figure 3.1**.

**Tables 3.1 a & b** and **Table 3.2 a & b** list the Natura 2000 sites that are a) within County Sligo and b) within 15 km of the county boundary. The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the site synopses available from the NPWS website.

### 3.1.2 Conservation Objectives

It is the goal of NPWS to draw up conservation plans for all areas designated for nature conservation. These plans will, among other things, set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest within a site. Where site specific conservation objectives exist, these have been included in **Tables 3.1 a & b and Table 3.2 a & b**. Where no Management Plan is yet available, NPWS have provided generic Conservation Objectives for Natura 2000 Sites

One generic Conservation Objectives has been provided for SPAs, as follows:

- *To maintain the bird species of special conservation interest for which the SPA has listed, at favourable conservation status.*

Generic Conservation Objectives for cSACs have been provided as follows:

- *To maintain Annex I habitats and Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status.*
- *To maintain the extent species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.*
- *To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.*

Favourable conservation status of a species can be described as being achieved when: "population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis."

Favourable conservation status of a habitat can be described as being achieved when: 'its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable'

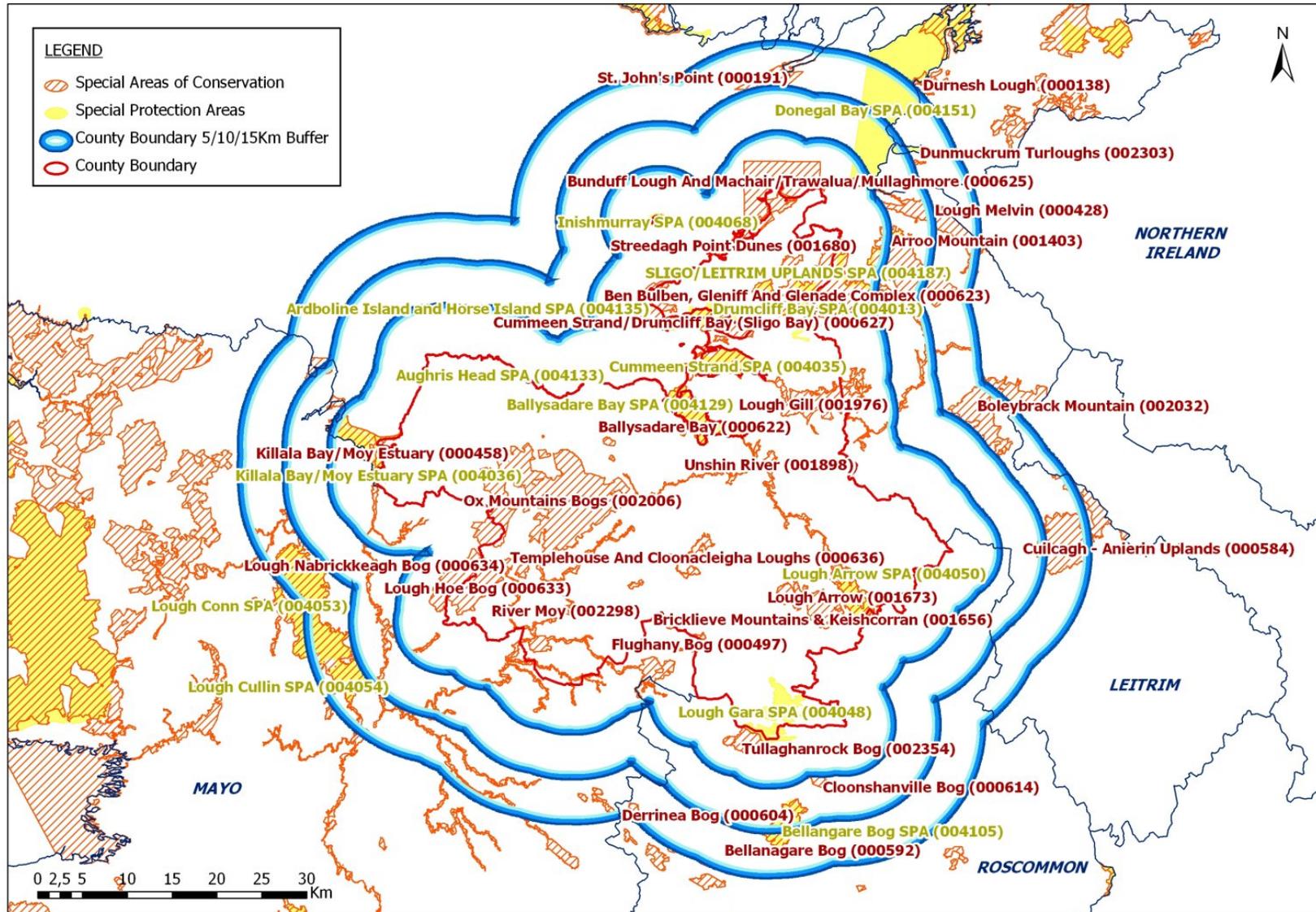


Figure 3.1: Natura 2000 Sites within Co. Sligo and 15km of the County Boundary

**Table 3.1a: SPAs in County Sligo**

Site Name and code	Conservation Interests	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
Drumcliff Bay 004013	Site is selected for: Barnacle Goose Sanderling Additional Special Conservation Interests: Wetland & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Barnacle Goose, Sanderling, Wetland & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Cummeen Strand 004035	Site is selected for: Light-bellied Brent Goose Additional Special Conservation Interests: Oystercatcher Redshank Wetland & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Light-bellied Brent Goose, Oystercatcher, Redshank, Wetland & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary 004036	Site is selected for: Ringed Plover Bar-tailed Godwit Additional Special Conservation Interests: Golden Plover Grey Plover Sanderling Dunlin Curlew Redshank Wetland & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Ringed Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Curlew, Redshank, Wetland & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Lough Gara 004048	Site is selected for: Whooper Swan Greenland White-fronted Goose Additional Special Conservation Interests: Wetland & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Whooper Swan, Greenland White-fronted Goose, Wetland & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Lough Arrow 004050	Site is selected for: Little Grebe Additional Special Conservation Interests: Goldeneye Wetlands & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Little Grebe, Goldeneye, Wetlands & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use

Site Name and code	Conservation Interests	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
Inishmurray 004068	Site is selected for: Barnacle Goose Arctic Tern  Additional Special Conservation Interests: Storm Petrel Shag Herring Gull	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Barnacle Goose, Arctic Tern, Storm Petrel, Shag, Herring Gull.	Inappropriate land management Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Ballysadare Bay 004129	Site is selected for: Light-bellied Brent Goose Bar-tailed Godwit  Additional Special Conservation Interests: Grey Plover Dunlin Redshank Wetland & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Light-bellied Brent Goose, Bar-tailed Godwit, Grey Plover, Dunlin, Redshank, Wetland & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Aughris Head 004133	Site is selected for: Kittiwake	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Kittiwake.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Ardboline Island and Horse Island 004135	Site is selected for: Cormorant, Barnacle Goose Additional Special Conservation Interests: Corncrake	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Cormorant, Barnacle Goose, Corncrake.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Sligo/Leitrim Uplands 004187	Site is selected for: Peregrine, Chough	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Peregrine, Chough.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management

**Table 3.1b: SPAs within 15km of the boundary of County Sligo**

Site Name and Code	Conservation Interests	Conservation objectives	Threats to site integrity
Donegal Bay004151	Great Northern Diver, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Common Scoter, Wetland & Waterbirds	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Great Northern Diver, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Common Scoter, Wetland & Waterbirds.	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Bellangare Bog 004105	Greenland White-fronted Goose Golden Plover	To maintain the Annex I habitat for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Depressions on peat substrates, Greenland White-fronted Goose, Golden Plover .	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Water quality/pollution / Changes in flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table/ Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents (WWTP) Recreation/Amenity Use Developments - marinas, fishing Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Lough Cullin 004054	Whooper Swan Golden Plover	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status. Whooper Swan, Golden Plover	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Water quality/pollution / Changes in flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table/ Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents (WWTP) Recreation/Amenity Use Developments - marinas, fishing Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management
Lough Conn 004053	Greenland White-fronted Goose Whooper Swan	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status. Greenland White-fronted Goose, Whooper Swan,	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Water quality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management

**Table 3.2a: SACs in County Sligo**

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary (000458)	1130 Estuaries 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 2190 Humid dune slacks 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand 1330 Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> )	<i>Phoca vitulina</i> <i>Vertigo angustior</i>	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Development of marinas and ports Disturbance to marine mammals Dumping at sea Direct loss of habitat to development Recreational/amenity use Agricultural improvements/Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction Erosion (natural and anthropogenic) Agricultural abandonment Overgrazing/undergrazing Bracken and scrub encroachment Tourism related development Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
Flughany Bog (000497)	7110 Active raised bogs 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion		Objective 1: To maintain and, where possible, enhance the present extent and quality of the core area of active raised bog (4 ha). Objective 2: To improve the quality of the active raised bog areas that show signs of drying out and are degrading and protect the present core area and increase the amount of good quality bog (40 ha). Objective 3: To maintain and enhance, where possible, the ecological value of seminatural habitats on the site, including the old cutover bog (14 ha) and scrub (1 ha). Objective 4: To maintain and, where possible, increase the population of important or protected species on the site, namely the Golden Plover and Red Grouse. Objective 5: To continue effective liaison between NPW and other interested parties (landowners, landusers, local authorities and any other interested parties) on management of the site.	Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Changes in local hydrology including drainage Peat Extraction Overgrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Increased pollution/reduction in water quality
Ballysadare Bay (000622)	1130 Estuaries 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes	<i>Vertigo angustior</i> , Common Seals	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Development of marinas and ports Disturbance to marine mammals

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
	2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 2190 Humid dune slacks			Dumping at sea Direct loss of habitat to development Recreational/amenity use Agricultural improvements/Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction Erosion (natural and anthropogenic) Agricultural abandonment Overgrazing/undergrazing Bracken and scrub encroachment Tourism related development Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex (000623)	4030 European dry heaths 4060 Alpine and Boreal heaths 8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation 8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels ( <i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i> ) 5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranuncullon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> Otter	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Peat Extraction Overgrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning
Bunduff Lough and Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore (000625)	7230 Alkaline fens 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) 21A0 Machairs (* in Ireland) 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia) (*important orchid sites) 1160 Large shallow inlets and bays 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with	Petalwort <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Development of marinas and ports Disturbance to marine mammals Dumping at sea Direct loss of habitat to development Recreational/amenity use Agricultural improvements/Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction Erosion (natural and anthropogenic) Agricultural abandonment Overgrazing/undergrazing

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
	herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 1170 Reefs 5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands			Bracken and scrub encroachment Tourism related development Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran (001656)	8120 Calcareous and calcshist scree of the montane to alpine levels ( <i>Thlaspietea rotundifolia</i> ) 6510 Lowland hay meadows ( <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba</i> <i>officinalis</i> ) 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates ( <i>Festuco Brometalia</i> ) (*important orchid sites)	White-clawed Crayfish <i>Euphydrys aurinia</i>	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates ( <i>Festuco</i> <i>Brometalia</i> ); Lowland hay meadows ( <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i> ); Calcareous and calcshist scree of the montane to alpine levels ( <i>Thlaspietea rotundifolia</i> ).  To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Euphydrys aurinia</i> .	Agricultural improvements/Reclamation Agricultural abandonment Overgrazing/undergrazing Direct loss of habitat to development Quarrying Bracken and scrub encroachment Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Peat Extraction Forestry Burning
Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) (000627)	1130 Estuaries 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) 5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands	<i>Vertigo angustior</i> Common Seal	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Development of marinas and ports Disturbance to marine mammals Dumping at sea Direct loss of habitat to development Recreational/amenity use Agricultural improvements/Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction Erosion (natural and anthropogenic) Agricultural abandonment Overgrazing/undergrazing Bracken and scrub encroachment Tourism related development Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog (000634)	7130 Active blanket bog		Management Plan not available on NPWS website	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Peat Extraction

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				Overgrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Lough Hoe Bog (000633)	7130 Active blanket bog 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> )	White-clawed Crayfish <i>Vertigo geyeri</i>	Objective 1: To maintain and, where possible, enhance the extent and quality of the priority habitat, active blanket bog (40% of the site). Objective 2: To maintain and, where possible, enhance the extent and quality of other habitats occurring within the site. Objective 3: To maintain and, where possible increase the populations of the Annex II species; White-clawed Crayfish, the Land Snail <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> and the Red Data Book species Arctic Charr. Objective 4: To maintain effective liaison between NPW, relevant authorities and interested parties on the management of the site.	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Peat Extraction Overgrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Increased pollution/reduction in water quality
Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Loughs (000636)	3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> )		Objective 1: To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status; Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with the benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. (27% area of the site) and water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation (6% area of the site) Objective 2: To maintain the extent, biodiversity and species richness of the site Objective 3: To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Changes in water flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents(WWTP) Recreation/amenity use Developments – marinas Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Turloughmore (000637)	3180 Turlough		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Agricultural improvements /Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				<p>water quality/pollution (including groundwater)                      Agricultural abandonment                      Overgrazing/Undergrazing                      Direct loss of habitat to development                      Bracken and scrub encroachment                      Impacts to local geology/geomorphology eg quarrying/rock blasting                      Introduction of alien invasive species                      Illegal Dumping</p>
Union Wood (000638)	91A0 Old Sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles		<p>Objective 1: To maintain the Annex I habitat for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status; Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles (38% area of the site).                      Objective 2: To maintain other habitats at favourable conservation status, such as mixed woodland, heath, exposed rock, old walls and streams.                      Objective 3: To maintain the populations of notable species on the site at favourable conservation status, such as Pine Marten, Otter, Red Squirrel, Badger and Bats.                      Objective 4: To increase public awareness and appreciation of the site.                      Objective 5: To establish a Nature Reserve within the cSAC.                      Objective 6: To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Direct loss of habitat to development                      Amenity/recreational use                      Invasive species                      Lack of/inappropriate woodland management                      Overgrazing (deer)                      Introduction of alien invasive species                      Illegal Dumping                      Felling/Removal of Trees</p>
Knockalongy and Knockachree Cliffs (001669)	8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation 8220 Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> 7130 Blanket bog (*active only) 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> )	Killarney Fern	<p>Objective 1: To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status - Killarney fern.                      Objective 2: To maintain the extent, species-richness and biodiversity of the entire site.                      Objective 3: To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology including drainage                      Peat Extraction                      Overgrazing                      Forestry                      Burning                      Direct loss of habitat to development                      Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table                      Agricultural reclamation                      Introduction of alien invasive species                      Illegal Dumping                      Increased pollution/reduction in water quality</p>

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				Quarrying/removal of sand
Lough Arrow (001673)	3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp.		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Changes in water flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents(WWTP) Recreation/amenity use Developments – marinas Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Streedagh Point Dunes (001680)	2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) 1330 Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritimi</i> ) 1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	<i>Vertigo angustior</i>	Objective 1: To maintain the Annex 1 habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status; e.g. Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (14%), Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (White dunes) (mapped with Fixed coastal dunes), Perennial vegetation of stony banks (2%), Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) (3%), Mediterranean salt meadows (mapped with Atlantic salt meadows) and Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (50%) Objective 2: To maintain the favourable conservation status of the Annex II invertebrate, the Land Snail <i>Vertigo angustior</i> within the site Objective 3: To maintain the extent, biodiversity and species richness of the site. Objective 4: To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities	Agricultural improvements/Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction Erosion (natural and anthropogenic) Agricultural abandonment Overgrazing/undergrazing Bracken and scrub encroachment Tourism related development Decrease in water quality/increased pollution Direct loss of habitat to development Tourism related development Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
Unshin River (001898)	91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation	Otter Atlantic Salmon	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Changes in water flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents(WWTP) Recreation/amenity use Developments – marinas Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Lough Gill (001976)	3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> -type vegetation 91e0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) 91a0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles	Sea Lamprey River Lamprey Brook Lamprey White -clawed Crayfish Atlantic Salmon Otter	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Changes in water flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents(WWTP) Recreation/amenity use Developments – marinas Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Crayfish Fishing
Ox Mountains Bogs (002006)	7130 Blanket bog (*active only) 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> 3160 Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ) 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Peat Extraction Overgrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Increased pollution/reduction in water quality
River Moy (002298)	7110 Active raised bogs 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	<i>Salmo salar</i> <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> <i>Lampetra planeri</i> <i>Lutra lutra</i> <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution Changes in water flow rates Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
	91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> )			water table Siltation Loss of fringe vegetation Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations Direct loss of habitat to development Loading from effluents(WWTP) Recreation/amenity use Developments – marinas Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Felling/Removal of Trees Crayfish Fishing

**Table 3.2b: SACs within 15km of the boundary of County Sligo**

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
St John's Point (000191)	1170 Reefs 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates ( <i>Festuco Brometalia</i> ) (*important orchid sites) 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) 7230 Alkaline fens 8240 Limestone pavements 8330 Submerged or partly submerged sea caves 1160 Large shallow inlets and bays		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Water quality/pollution (including groundwater); development of marinas and ports; disturbance of marine mammals; dumping at sea; direct loss of habitat to development; recreational/amenity use; agricultural improvements;/reclamation; agricultural abandonment; overgrazing/undergrazing; quarrying on esker ridges and limestone pavement; bracken & scrub development; drainage/changes in local hydrology; turf/peat extraction in fens; impacts of local geology/geomorphology (e.g. quarrying/rock blasting) for turloughs & groundwater fed fens. Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
Durnesh Lough (000138)	1150 Coastal lagoons 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> )		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Agricultural improvements/reclamation; drainage/changes in local hydrology including water abstraction; erosion (natural and anthropogenic); water quality/pollution; agricultural abandonment; overgrazing/undergrazing; direct loss of habitat to development; bracken & scrub encroachment; amenity/recreation use; tourism-related development; peat extraction; forestry; burning; arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table; agricultural reclamation. Introduction of alien invasive species

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				Illegal Dumping Aquaculture
Dunmuckrum Turloughs (002303)	3180 Turlough		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Agricultural improvements/reclamation; drainage/changes in local hydrology including water abstraction; erosion (natural and anthropogenic); water quality/pollution; agricultural abandonment; overgrazing/undergrazing; direct loss of habitat to development; bracken & scrub encroachment; amenity/recreation use; tourism-related development. Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Lough Melvin (000428)	3130 Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters	Atlantic Salmon Otter	Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Water quality/ pollution, changes in flow rates, arterial drainage/ water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table, loss of fringe vegetation, changes in seasonal water levels/ fluctuations, direct loss of habitat to development, loading from effluents (WWTP), recreation/ amenity use. Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Increased pollution/reduction in water quality
Arroo Mountain (001403)	7130 Blanket bog (*active only) 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> 8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) 8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels ( <i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i> )		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology including drainage, peat extraction, overgrazing, forestry, burning, direct loss of habitat to development, arterial drainage/ water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table, agricultural reclamation. Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Boleybrack Mountain (002032)	7130 Blanket bog (*active only) 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology, peat extraction, overgrazing, forestry, burning, direct loss of habitat to

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
	<p>3160 Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds</p> <p>4030 European dry heaths</p> <p>6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>)</p>			<p>development, arterial drainage/ water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table, agricultural reclamation.</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Increased pollution/reduction in water quality</p>
Cuilcagh Anierin Uplands (00584)	<p>7130 Blanket bog (*active only)</p> <p>3130 Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or of the Isoëto-Nanojuncetea</p> <p>3160 Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds</p> <p>4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i></p> <p>6230 Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)</p> <p>8220 Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation</p> <p>4030 European dry heaths</p>		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	<p>Changes in local hydrology including drainage</p> <p>Climate change (increased/reduced rainfall)</p> <p>Erosion, landslips</p> <p>Peat Extraction</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> <p>Forestry</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table</p> <p>Agricultural reclamation/improvement</p> <p>Recreational/Amenity Use (walking, horse riding, cycling, quads and motorbikes)</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Increased pollution/reduction in water quality</p>
Tullaghanrock Bog (002354)	<p>7110 Active raised bogs</p> <p>7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration</p> <p>7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i></p>		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	<p>Changes in local hydrology including drainage</p> <p>Climate change (increased/reduced rainfall)</p> <p>Erosion, landslips</p> <p>Peat Extraction</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> <p>Forestry</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the</p>

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				regional water table Agricultural reclamation/improvement Recreational/Amenity Use (walking, horse riding, cycling, quads and motorbikes) Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Cloonshanville Bog (000614)	91D0 Bog woodland 7110 Active raised bogs 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Climate change (increased/reduced rainfall) Erosion, landslips Peat Extraction Overgrazing/undergrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation/improvement Recreational/Amenity Use (walking, horse riding, cycling, quads and motorbikes) Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Felling/Removal of Trees
Derrinea Bog (000604)	7110 Active raised bogs 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Climate change (increased/reduced rainfall) Erosion, landslips Peat Extraction Overgrazing/undergrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table

Site Name (Site Code)	Annex I habitat	Annex II Species	Conservation Objectives	Threats to site integrity
				Agricultural reclamation/improvement Recreational/Amenity Use (walking, horse riding, cycling, quads and motorbikes) Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
Bellanagare Bog (000592)	7110 Active raised bogs 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>		Generic Conservation Objectives as outlined in Section 3.2 apply	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Climate change (increased/reduced rainfall) Erosion, landslips Peat Extraction Overgrazing/undergrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation/improvement Recreational/Amenity Use (walking, horse riding, cycling, quads and motorbikes) Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping

## Section 4 Assessment Criteria

### 4.1 Is the Plan Necessary to Management of Natura 2000 Sites?

The Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites in the County. However, it does include, inter alia, measures to protect, conserve and manage the County's natural heritage in a prudent and sustainable manner, including Natura 2000 sites, and to seek its enhancement where appropriate and feasible.

### 4.2 Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

As outlined in Section 2.1 of this report, one of the core aims of the Plan is to develop the full potential of each part of County Sligo to contribute to the optimal performance of the County as a whole – economically, socially and environmentally. In general, any development that may result from implementation of the Plan, such as construction of housing, roads, rail, water and wastewater infrastructure, gas, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure could lead to an infinite number of impacts depending on where development is sited, the scale of development and types and quantities of emissions. In practice and as outlined in the EU document "*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*", and the national guidance document '*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities*', impacts that could potentially occur through the implementation of the plan can be categorised under a number of headings

- Loss/Reduction of habitat area – e.g. as a result of development, transport infrastructure etc
- Disturbance to key species – e.g. as a result of increased public access to protected sites and increased recreational pressure such as development of footpaths and cycleways particularly along the coast.
- Habitat or species fragmentation – e.g. through land intensification and urbanisation
- Reduction in species density
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value such as decrease in water quality and quantity – e.g. through inadequate wastewater treatment, runoff of pollutants during construction and operational phases of development.

**Tables 4.1 and 4.2** identify any potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites. This table is derived from European Commission Environment DG document "*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*".

**Table 4.1: Potential Impacts - Natura 2000 Sites – SPAs**

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
Cummeen Strand/ Drumcliff Bay	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Lough Gara	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Lough Arrow	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Inishmurray	None anticipated	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	None anticipated
Ballysadare Bay	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Aughris Head	None anticipated	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Ardboline Island and Horse Island	None anticipated	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Sligo/Leitrim Uplands	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Donegal Bay	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Bellangare Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Lough Cullin	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Lough Conn	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated

**Table 4.2: Potential Impacts- Natura 2000 Sites – SACs**

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Flughany Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Ballysadare Bay	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	None anticipated
Bunduff Lough and Machair/ Trawalua/ Mullaghmore	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Cummeen Strand/ Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Lough Hoe Bog	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Loughs	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Turloughmore	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Union Wood	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Knockalongy and Knockachree Cliffs	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Lough Arrow	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Streedagh Point Dunes	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Unshin River	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Lough Gill	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Ox Mountains Bogs	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
River Moy	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
St John's Point	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Durnesh Lough	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Dunmuckrum Turloughs	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Lough Melvin	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Arroo Mountain	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Boleybrack Mountain	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Cuilcagh Anierin Uplands	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Tullaghanrock Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Cloonshanville Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Derrinea Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated
Bellanagare Bog	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated	None anticipated

### 4.3 Elements of the Plan with Potential to Give Rise to Significant Effects

In addition to screening Natura 2000 sites that potentially may be impacted by implementation of the Sligo Development Plan, the policies and objectives contained within the plan have also been screened. The results of this screening can be found in **Appendix A**. The screening process identifies whether these policies and objectives are likely to cause any direct, indirect or secondary impacts (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 network sites. During this assessment a number of factors were taken into account including the sites' conservation objectives and known threats. The overall aim of the assessment is to attempt predict the consequences that can be *reasonably* foreseen by implementation of a policy or objective.

The approach taken to this element of the screening process is iterative. Where potential impacts are identified, then avoidance measures contained as policies or objectives within the Plan are cited. In some cases it is recommended that the policy itself be modified to ensure the impact is mitigated. In this way, the plan is modified to remove or avoid elements that posed obvious risks. This highlights the iterative process of screening when new alternatives that may not have any impact are being considered.

Where possible, the specific sites that may be affected by a particular policy/objective were identified during the screening process. For example, **Chapter 4.4 (Tourism)** of the Plan contains the following objective **O-TOU-2** *Provide a walkway through Union Wood, subject to availability of resources*. As Union Wood is an SAC designated for Old sessile oak woods, provision of a walkway will lead to habitat loss and fragmentation. Therefore, it has been recommended that the objective should be modified as follows - *Examine the feasibility of providing a walkway through Union Wood, subject to availability of resources and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive*.

### 4.4 Elements of the Plan that will ensure the protection of the Natura 2000 network

From the outset, policies that will contribute to the protection of Natura 2000 sites in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive have been included by the plan makers in the Sligo County Development Plan. In particular, the plan includes commitments by Sligo County Council to *Protect and maintain the conservation value of all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and in other relevant international conventions, agreements and processes. This includes sites designated or proposed as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Ramsar sites and Statutory Nature Reserves (O-NH-1)*.

Also of particular significance are the following two objectives

**O-NH-2** *Assess, in accordance with the relevant legislation, all proposed developments which are likely to have a significant effect (directly or through indirect or cumulative impact) on designated natural heritage sites, sites proposed for designation and protected species.*

**O-NH-3** *When considering any plan or project, the planning authority must comply fully with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the EU Habitats Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments) and assess whether the plan or project is likely to have a significant impact upon the integrity, conservation objectives and qualifying interests of any Natura 2000 site.*

These objectives reiterate the commitment to ensure that all development that arises through implementation of this Plan and which would potentially have a negative impact on the Natura 2000 network, will be subject to assessment under the Habitats Directive.

In addition to the above mentioned objectives, other policies/objectives, which will serve to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive and the protection of the Natura 2000 network, have also been included in the Plan. These policies include the following:

**SP-SD-10** *Carefully manage development patterns in rural areas and facilitate sustainable activities or uses that help preserve the vitality of rural communities while protecting the environment and heritage of the County.*

### **Zoning principles**

The approach to zoning is based on the following Zoning Principles

**ZP-3** the core aim of protecting the environment, landscape setting and heritage in and around settlements

### **Strategic Zoning Policies**

**SP-Z-6** Protect designated nature conservation sites, landscape, archaeology, valuable natural amenity areas, water and natural resources through appropriate zoning designations, while allowing for the possible further expansion of settlements in the long-term.

### **Policies for agricultural diversification**

**P-AGD-3** Support mechanisms to reduce agricultural pollution and the eutrophication of rivers and lakes.

### **Tourism development policies**

**P-TOU-1** Promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria, the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and other planning considerations.

**P-TOU-2** Protect and conserve those natural, built and cultural heritage features that form the basis of the County's tourism industry, including areas of important landscape, coastal scenery, areas of important wildlife interest, historic buildings and structures and the traditional form and general appearance of towns and villages.

**P-TOU-4** Strictly control development that might be detrimental to scenic and heritage assets, in cSACs, SPAs, proposed NHAs, designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes and Visually Vulnerable Areas, and along designated Scenic Routes. The Council will use its other statutory procedures, particularly in relation to waste management, water and air pollution, to ensure that these natural amenities remain unpolluted and visually unspoilt.

### **Coastal zone tourism policies**

**P-CZT-1** Ensure that future caravan, camping and parking facilities in coastal areas will not be visually intrusive or impact on sensitive coastal environments (e.g. sand dune systems), by requiring, inter alia, appropriate siting, layout, design and natural screening.

**P-CZT-3** Promote awareness of the sensitivity of the coastal environment, amongst visitors and residents alike, through the provision of educational/heritage appreciation programmes, public information boards and other appropriate means.

### **Coastal zone tourism objectives**

**O-CZT-1** Manage and control car parking and vehicular and pedestrian movements on beaches and within dunes and other vulnerable areas. Management and control of carparking shall be carried out in compliance with the Habitats Directive where relevant.

**O-CZT-4** Provide a number of designated facilities and access points for controlled water-sports activities, in a manner that avoids conflict with nature conservation and activities such as swimming, sailing, fishing and mariculture.

## Rural Housing Policies

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:

**P-RHOU-1** Ensure that, in permitting one-off rural housing, key rural assets such as water quality, natural and cultural heritage and landscape quality are respected and protected.

**P-RHOU-3** Facilitate rural-generated housing in all areas of the County, while providing for urban-generated housing in Rural Areas in Need of Regeneration, subject to the policy considerations set out below:

- b. Control of rural housing in the coastal zone, especially between coastal roads and the sea.
- c. Protection of designated heritage sites, such as proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).
- e. Protection of key natural assets, such as surface and ground water and aggregate or mineral reserves.
- g. Ensuring that physical planning standards are met – e.g. soil conditions suitable for effluent disposal, availability of a suitable and reliable water supply, adequate flood control/avoidance measures. All proposed on-site wastewater treatment systems shall comply with the EPA document “Code of practice for Wastewater Treatment and disposal Systems serving Single House” (2009).
- h. Incorporation of existing natural and heritage features into the development, e.g. tree stands, significant hedgerows, stone walling, wetlands and streams.

## Sports, recreation and open space policies

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:

**P-SRO-11** Ensure that golf course development does not damage or encroach upon vulnerable dune systems and does not impinge on existing rights of way or walking routes.

## Natural heritage - general policies

It is the objective of Sligo County Council to:

**P-NH-1** Protect, sustainably manage and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, geological heritage, landscape and environment of County Sligo in recognition of its importance for nature conservation and biodiversity, and as a non-renewable resource, in association with all stakeholders.

**P-NH-4** Protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under the EU Habitats Directive, EU Birds Directive, the Wildlife Act and the Flora Protection Order.

## European and national designated natural heritage sites – objectives

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:

### Natura 2000 Network

**O-NH-1** Protect and maintain favourable conservation status and the conservation value of all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and in other relevant international conventions, agreements and processes. This includes sites designated or proposed as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Ramsar sites and Statutory Nature Reserves.

**O-NH-1a** Promote the maintenance and as appropriate achievement of favourable conservation status of protected habitats and species in association with NPWS.

**O-NH-2** Assess, in accordance with the relevant legislation, all proposed developments which are likely to have a significant effect (directly or through indirect or cumulative impact) on designated natural heritage sites, sites proposed for designation and protected species.

**O-NH-3** When considering any plan or project, the planning authority must comply fully with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the EU Habitats Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments) and assess whether the plan or project is likely to have a significant impact upon the integrity, conservation objectives and qualifying interests of any Natura 2000 site.

**O-NH-4** Consult with the relevant prescribed bodies and appropriate agencies when considering undertaking, approving or authorising developments which are likely to affect designated natural heritage sites or those proposed to be designated.

**O-NH-5** Establish and maintain an up-to-date planning register of all previously adopted and proposed plans/programmes and all granted and proposed developments which are likely to have a significant effect impact (directly or through indirect or cumulative impact) on European Sites within or adjoining the county, to allow for the appropriate assessment of potential 'ex situ' and 'cumulative/in combination' effects of proposed plans, programmes and projects on such sites.

**O-NH-5a** An appropriate assessment screening determination shall be made for all land use plans, related variations and projects in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.'

**O-NH-6** Support and co-operate with statutory authorities and others in support of measures taken to manage designated nature conservation sites in order to achieve their conservation objectives and where available specific regard shall be made to Conservation Management Plans and their conservation objectives/management practices where they exist.

**O-NH-7** Promote development for recreational and educational purposes that would not conflict with maintaining favourable conservation status and the meeting of the conservation objectives for designated sites.

### **Nature conservation outside designated sites – policies**

#### **It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:**

**P-NH-7** Ensure that development proposals, where relevant, improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and encourage the management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

### **Nature conservation outside designated sites – objectives**

#### **It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:**

**O-NH-11** Endeavour, where considered necessary, to improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 Network, by encouraging the preservation and management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as referred to in Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. These features include those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species

### **Inland waters policies**

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:

**P-NH-19** Protect rivers, streams and other water courses and their associated Core Riparian Zones (CRZ's) wherever possible and maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitat for fauna and flora.

**P-NH-20** Protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of river and stream corridors and valleys, maintain them free from inappropriate development and make provision for public access where feasible and appropriate.

**P-NH-24** Ensure that proposed developments do not adversely affect groundwater resources.

### **Inland waters objectives**

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:

**O-NH-18** Require that runoff from a developed area does not result in deterioration of downstream watercourses or habitats, and that pollution generated by a development is treated within the development area prior to discharge to local watercourses.

**O-NH-19** Ensure that an appropriate ecological assessment is undertaken for developments with the potential to impact on inland waters.

### **Protected species policies**

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:

**P-NH-28** Protect species and their associated habitats that require strict protection under the Habitats Regulations (S.I. No. 94 of 1997, 233 of 1998 and 378 of 2005).

**P-NH-29** Protect animal and bird species and their associated habitats protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

**P-NH-30** Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on plant, animal or bird species protected by law.

### **Policies for roads crossing Natura 2000 sites**

It is a policy of Sligo County Council to require any road project which involves crossing a Natura 2000 site to:

**P-N2000-1** Demonstrate the need for the project in light of a "do nothing" context.

**P-N2000-2** Examine the potential for intensifying or upgrading existing roads as an alternative to carrying out new road development affecting a Natura 2000 site.

**P-N2000-3** Develop and evaluate a comprehensive series of plausible alternative routes and design strategies (to include long-span and tunnel options).

**P-N2000-4** Demonstrate how each route has taken due account of, and accommodated ecological and legal considerations and legislative requirements, including the requirements of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive..

**P-N2000-5** Demonstrate that the chosen route will not cause any incursions onto or significant adverse effects on habitats in Natura 2000 sites.

### **Strategic water, wastewater and storm drainage objectives**

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:

**SO-W-2** Carry out measures to address deficiencies in existing water and wastewater infrastructure, so as to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

### **Water supply policies**

**P-WS-2** Conserve water supplies through the minimisation of leakage and wastage in the interests of efficiency and sustainability.

**P-WS-3** Promote public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures

**P-WS-5** Promote the inclusion of water conservation and sustainability measures so as to minimise the use of potable water in new developments.

**P-WS-6** Ensure compliance with the requirements of the EU Drinking water Directive 98/83/EC and the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No.2) Regulations, 2007 for all drinking water supplies.

## Wastewater policies

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:

**P-WW-1** Ensure sustainable collection, treatment and discharge of wastewater effluent generated within the County.

**P-WW-7** Ensure that public wastewater treatment infrastructure is in place, with adequate capacity, prior to developments being occupied.

**P-WW-10** Prohibit the discharge or disposal of domestic wastewater from one-off houses, following treatment, to surface water bodies.

**P-WW-13** Regulate discharges to local authority sewerage schemes to protect and improve groundwater and surface water quality in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

**P-WW-14** Ensure tertiary treatment (phosphorus removal) is provided in proposed upgrades to existing or new local authority wastewater treatment infrastructure.

## Wastewater objectives

**It is the objective of Sligo County Council to:**

**O-WW-6** Achieve compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment (Amendment) Regulations 2004 with regard to wastewater collection, treatment and discharge and implement the relevant recommendations set out in Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland for Population Equivalents Greater than 500 Persons – A Report for the Years 2006 and 2007 (EPA).

**O-WW-8** Achieve compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

## Water quality policies

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:

**P-WQ-1** Ensure that all development proposals have regard to the policies, objectives and measures detailed in the River Basin Management Plans.

**P-WQ-2** Ensure that all development proposals have regard to the policies and objectives of the Sligo Groundwater Protection Scheme to ensure the protection of groundwater resources and groundwater dependent habitats and species.

**P-WQ-3** Ensure compliance with the provisions of the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I.9 of 2010) and the Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC) on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration..

**P-WQ-4** Ensure compliance with the provisions of the European Communities (Quality of Shellfish Waters) Regulations and the objectives of Shellfish Pollution Reduction Programmes.

**P-WQ-5** Ensure compliance with the requirements of the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 (S.I. No. 79 of 2008).

**P-WQ-6** Protect the quality of estuarine, coastal and designated Shellfish Waters by controlling land-based discharges to these waters.

**P-WQ-7** Strictly limit and control new development in or near the catchment areas of water bodies, particularly salmonid rivers and those that are the source of the following drinking water supplies:

- Lough Gill
- Lough Arrow
- Kilsellagh Source catchment
- Lough Talt
- Lough Easky
- Gortnaleck and Lyle streams
- Riverstown Source Catchment
- GWS Source Catchments

**P-WQ-10** Prohibit any development which is likely to lead to the deterioration of water quality.

### **Water quality objectives**

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:

**O-WQ-1** Implement the management measures contained in the Western RBD, Shannon International RBD and North-western International RBD Management Plans.

**O-WQ-3** Ensure the continuation of measures to enforce water pollution legislation.

**O-WQ-6** Require farmers in high-risk areas to prepare nutrient management plans.

**O-WQ-8** Maintain existing satisfactory water quality and improve all unsatisfactory waters in the County in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC).

**O-WQ-10** Require that all discharges to waters and sewers be licensed in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 & 1990, European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009) and European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010.

### **Policies for coastal protection**

**P-CP-1** Ensure that regard is paid to visual and environmental considerations in the design of coastal defence works.

**P-CP-2** Ensure that any developments permitted within the coastal zone are appropriately sited, having regard to coastal flooding, vulnerability and the predicted rise in sea level.

**P-CP-3** Require that flood risk assessment is carried out in relation to development proposals within the coastal zones, where appropriate.

**P-CP-4** Establish development limits and natural buffers at the coast, particularly in conjunction with the preparation of local area plans and mini-plans.

**P-CP-5** Strictly control the nature and pattern of development on all promontories and headlands, and ensure that, if development is permitted, it is designed and landscaped to the highest standards. Landscaping will be of a type that is predominantly native to the area and sea-salt spray-resistant.

### **Policies for the provision of electricity**

**P-REN-2** Encourage and facilitate the sustainable production of energy from renewable sources, energy conversion and capture in forms such as wind power, hydro-power, wave-generated energy, biomass, solar technology and energy-efficient building design/servicing. All such development proposals will be assessed for their compliance with the Habitats Directive, potential impact on designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas, Scenic Routes and scenic views, as well as in accordance with strict location, siting and design criteria.

## Section 5 Recommended Changes to the plan

### 5.1 Changes to the Development Plan objectives and policies

Table 5.1 outlines changes to the wording of the policies/objectives of the Sligo CDP that were recommended following the screening exercise. The changes that were implemented are outlined in red type with the original wording in black.

**Table 5.1: Recommended Changes to Objectives and Policies**

<b>Objectives and Policies</b>
<b>Aquaculture, mariculture and fishing policies</b>
It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:
<b>P-AMF-1</b> Encourage and facilitate mariculture development associated with job creation, in a manner that is compatible with other uses of the Sligo coast, <b>and subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-AMF-3</b> Support and facilitate the development of the existing fishing industry, <b>where such development is compatible with provisions for the protection of the Natura 2000 network</b>
<b>P-AMF-4</b> Encourage the expansion of sport fishing, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-TOU-5</b> Provide signposting and improve roads, existing amenity and viewing areas, and provide for car parking, public facilities and access in scenic areas, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-TOU-6</b> In recognising the special amenity value of mountains, moorlands and forests, valleys and lakes, it is the Council's policy to encourage use of these areas for activities such as touring, sightseeing, mountaineering, and hillwalking, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.</b> This will be done in co-operation with state agencies and other interested bodies and local community groups. In this regard, the Council will, within financial resources, improve access and create public rights of way.
<b>P-TOU-9</b> Support and promote, with the co-operation of private landowners, public access to heritage sites and features of archaeological interest, coastal areas, mountains, rivers, lakes and other natural amenities, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-TOU-10</b> Promote the development of eco-tourism and other leisure activities, in an effort to diversify the range of tourist experiences available in the County and extend the tourist season, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Tourism development objectives</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-TOU-1</b> Secure the establishment of a flagship visitor attraction in the County, subject to normal development control standards <b>and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-TOU-2</b> Examine the feasibility of providing a walkway through Union Wood, subject to availability of resources and <b>compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-CZT-1</b> Ensure that future caravan, camping and parking facilities in coastal areas will not be visually intrusive or impact on sensitive coastal environments (e.g. sand dune systems), by requiring, inter alia, appropriate siting, layout, design and natural screening <b>and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-CZT-2</b> <b>Ensure</b> <del>Seek</del> continued compliance with EU Directives on water quality for all bathing beaches.
<b>P-CZT-5</b> Maintain and develop small piers and harbours along the Sligo Coast, subject to funding <b>and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Coastal zone tourism objectives</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-CZT-1</b> Manage and control car parking and vehicular and pedestrian movements on beaches and within dunes and other vulnerable areas <b>management and control of carparking shall be carried out in compliance with the Habitats Directive where relevant.</b>
<b>O-CZT-2</b> Develop green parking areas in appropriate coastal locations, i.e. soft areas that can be left in their natural state during out-of-season months and used to provide overflow facilities during peak periods. <b>The development of such carparking areas shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-CZT-5</b> Liaise with the National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee to investigate the possibility of providing a coastal path along the coastline of County Sligo. <b>Development of a coastal path shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>P-SRO-9</b> Preserve and improve access for the public to coastal, riverside, upland and other areas that have traditionally been used for outdoor recreation, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Landscape character assessment and protection policies</b>
It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:
<b>P-LCAP-8</b> Promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourist facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria and <b>compliance with the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Mobility - strategic policies</b>
It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:
<b>SP-MOB-6</b> Promote the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor from Athenry to Sligo, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>SP-MOB-9</b> Promote improved access to and sustainable development and operation of Sligo Regional Airport and Sligo Port. <b>Any development that occurs through the implementation of this policy shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>

<b>Objectives and Policies</b>
<b>Public transport policies</b>
It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:
<b>P-PT-4</b> Promote the development of the Western Rail Corridor, as a strategic transport corridor linking Sligo and the North-West with Mayo, Galway and Limerick. <b>Any development that occurs through the implementation of this policy shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.</b>
<b>Public transport objectives</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-PT-2</b> Examine the feasibility of a rail link between Sligo and Derry via Manorhamilton and Enniskillen, and the integration of such a rail link with new national road alignments and designs, i.e. N16 (Enniskillen Road). <b>Any development that occurs through the implementation of this policy shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Policies for roads and other linear infrastructure crossing Natura 2000 sites</b>
It is a policy of Sligo County Council to require any road project which involves crossing a Natura 2000 site to:
<b>P-N2000-1</b> Demonstrate the need for the project in light of a "do nothing" context.
<b>P-N2000-2</b> Examine the potential for intensifying or upgrading existing roads as an alternative to carrying out new road development affecting a Natura 2000 site.
<b>P-N2000-3</b> Develop and evaluate a comprehensive series of plausible alternative routes and design strategies (to include long-span and tunnel options).
<b>P-N2000-4</b> Demonstrate how each route has taken due account of, and accommodated ecological considerations and legislative requirements.
<b>P-N2000-5</b> Demonstrate that the chosen route will not cause any incursions onto or significant adverse effects on habitats in Natura 2000 sites.
<b>National roads objectives</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-NR-1</b> Facilitate programmed improvements to the National Road network including the programme of realignments and upgrades, as set out in Table 8.B, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Non-national roads and bridges objectives</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-NNR-3</b> Improve road access to Sligo Regional Airport, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-NNR-5</b> Carry out improvement works on regional and local roads, and in particular to the regional road network as set out in Table 8.C, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-NNR-6</b> Continue to maintain, repair, replace and preserve the considerable bridge stock of the county, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Cycling and walking objectives</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-CW-1</b> Provide, improve and extend cycle routes on existing roads, proposed roads, roads being upgraded and green corridors, where feasible, practical <b>and subject to compliance with Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-CW-2</b> Develop cycle routes from Strandhill, Rosses Point, Ballysadare and Collooney to Sligo City, <b>subject to compliance with Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Airports objective</b>
It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-A-1</b> Promote and support improved access to and expansion of Sligo Regional and Knock International Airports, so as to secure a better level and frequency of service and promote Sligo's accessibility to tourists and businesses, both nationally and internationally. <b>Any development that occurs through the implementation of this policy shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Water supply policies</b>
It is the policy of Sligo County Council to:
<b>P-WS-1</b> Ensure an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of good quality water for domestic, commercial and industrial use, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Water supply objectives</b>
It is the objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-WS-1</b> Complete the construction of the new water treatment plant at Kilsellagh <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-WS-2</b> Complete the planning and construction of the new water treatment plant at Lough Talt <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-WS-3</b> Extend the existing water treatment plant at Foxes Den (depending on future growth in the Sligo and Environs area) <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-WS-4</b> Carry out a strategic review of both North Sligo and Lough Easky Regional Water Supply Schemes. <b>Any development that occurs through the implementation of this policy shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-WS-9</b> Continue to implement the annual Rural Water Programme. <b>Any development that occurs through the implementation of this policy shall be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-WS-10</b> Advance all the schemes listed on the Water Services Investment Programmes, <b>subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Wastewater objectives</b>
It is the objective of Sligo County Council to:
<b>O-WW-2</b> Complete the planning and construction of the new water treatment plant at Ballintogher, Bunnanadden, Cliffony, Ballinacarrow, Mullaghmore and Ballygawley, subject to necessary approvals and <b>compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>O-WW-4</b> Complete the planning stage for upgrade works to Collooney and Ballymote WWTPs, subject to necessary approvals <b>and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive</b>

<b>Objectives and Policies</b>
<b>Objectives for coastal protection</b>
<b>O-CP-3</b> Monitor existing dune management schemes on an ongoing basis and effect appropriate repairs, improvements and extensions, subject to the availability of resources <b>and compliance with the Habitats Directive</b>
<b>Policies for the provision of electricity</b>
<b>P-REN-2</b> Encourage and facilitate the production of energy from renewable sources, energy conversion and capture in forms such as wind power, hydro-power, wave-generated energy, biomass, solar technology and energy-efficient building design/servicing. All such development proposals will be assessed for their <del>potential impact on Natura 2000 sites</del> their <b>compliance with the Habitats Directive</b> , potential impact on designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas, Scenic Routes and scenic views, as well as in accordance with strict location, siting and design criteria.

## 5.2 Screening the Mini-plans

### 5.2.1 Objectives

The Sligo County Development Plan contains thirty mini-plans. A mini-plan is a short document that indicates the specific policies and objectives applying to a settlement in addition to the strategic and general policies and objectives contained in the development plan. A mini-plan also contains a zoning map and a second map showing specific objectives for its area. General policies governing the Mini-plans are included in Section 13 of the development plan.

The settlements subject to mini-plans are:

Aclare, Ballinacarrow, Ballinacrow, Ballinacrow, Ballinacrow, Ballintogher, Ballygawley, Ballysadare, Banada, Bunnanadden, Carney, Castlebaldwin, Cliffony, Cloonacool, Collooney, Coolaney, Culfadda, Curry, Dromore West, Drumcliff, Easkey, Geevagh, Gorteen, Grange, Monasteraden, Mullaghmore, Ransboro, Rathcormack, Riverstown, Rosses Point, and Tourlestrane.

These miniplans, along with the accompanying maps have been screened for compliance with the Habitats Directive. A number of the mini-plans contain objectives that may lead to potential impacts on the Natura 2000 network such as the provision of riverwalks, construction of WWTPs adjacent to rivers and recreational facilities adjacent to the coast. In order to ensure that individual projects that may arise through implementation of the mini-plans are screened for compliance with the Habitats Directive, the following policy has been added to **Section 13.1 (Landscape, natural heritage, open space) policies** of the Development Plan, which outlines the General Policies relating to the mini-plans:

F. *When considering any proposed development within the mini-plan areas, the planning authority must comply fully with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the EU Habitats Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments) and assess whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact upon the integrity, conservation objectives and qualifying interests of any Natura 2000 site, notwithstanding any particular mini-plan objective that may apply to the relevant lands.*

### 5.2.2 Zoning

The purpose of land use zoning is to indicate the intended uses of all lands within the zoned settlements – in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Plan – to promote orderly development and to prevent the co-location of incompatible or conflicting uses. The Zoning Strategy for County Sligo seeks to ensure that adequate amounts of land are reserved at appropriate locations in order to allow the location of particular types of development as required to fulfil the aspirations outlined in this Plan.

A number of the mini-plan zoning maps show an overlap between the boundaries of Natura 2000 sites and zoned land, particularly where zoned land occurs adjacent to designated rivers. Where this occurs, it generally reflects current land use and would not necessarily lead to development within a designated site. Where zoning does not reflect current land use, but would in principle allow for development within or adjacent to a Natura 2000 site, any such development must comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, as outlined in Section 5.2.1 above.

In addition, all watercourses are protected by a buffer zone. The following policies, included in Section 13 of the Plan, outline how these buffer zones will be protected.

### 13.1 Landscape, natural heritage, open space policies

A. *Protect and enhance all river banks as wildlife corridors. In order to assist in this regard, the planning authority will establish a 20-metre wide river buffer zone along both sides of all rivers.*

B. *Require development proposals to maintain the river buffer zone free from development (apart from river bank enhancement works). Exceptions may also be considered in the case of brownfield sites and in cases where the maintenance of the zone is not practically achievable. In such cases, a reduced buffer width may be accepted. Any such cases will be assessed on an individual basis.*

C. *Ensure that river bank enhancement works and any other development along rivers are undertaken only after consultation with the North Western Regional Fisheries Board and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.*

### 13.3 Transport, circulation and parking policies

G. *Any proposal for the provision of pedestrian/cycle links along riverside areas shall be screened for the requirement of an appropriate assessment in compliance with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the EU Habitats Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments), and in accordance with the policies outlined in Section 7.1 of this Plan.*

### 5.2.3 Cumulative Impacts of the Mini-plans

Screening of the miniplans identified a number of Natura 2000 sites where cumulative impacts could potentially occur (Table 5.2). Additional policies have been added to the CDP to ensure that cumulative impacts will not adversely affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. These policies include the following:

13.1.F. When considering any proposed development within the mini-plan areas, the planning authority must comply fully with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the EU Habitats Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments) and assess whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact upon the integrity, conservation objectives and qualifying interests of any Natura 2000 site, notwithstanding any particular mini-plan objective that may apply to the relevant lands.

P-DCA-4 Any development proposal in coastal areas will be subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, including the assessment of potential cumulative, in-combination effects in association with other, plans, programmes, projects and works.

O-NH-5 Establish and maintain an up-to-date planning register of all previously adopted and proposed plans/programmes and all granted and proposed developments which are likely to have a significant effect (directly or through indirect or cumulative/in-combination effects) on European Sites within or adjoining the county, to allow for the appropriate assessment of potential ex-situ and cumulative/in-combination' effects of proposed plans, programmes and projects on such sites.

Detailed policies are also included in the CDP to ensure that specific impacts from implementation of the Mini-plans will not occur. These are outlined in detail in Table 2 of the Screening Report Appendix.

**Table 5.2: Natura 2000 Sites Potentially Affected by Mini-plans**

MiniPlan	Natura 2000 that may be affected
Aclare, Banada, Cloonacool, Curry	002298 River Moy
Ballinacarrow, Ballygawley, Ballysadare, Castlebaldwin, Collooney, Coolaney, Culfadda, Riverstown	001898 Unshin River
Ballinacarrow, Ballysadare, Culfadda	000622 Ballysadare Bay 004129 Ballysadare Bay SPA
Balinafad, Castlebaldwin	001673 Lough Arrow
Balinafad, Castlebaldwin	004050 Lough Arrow SPA
Ballincar, Carney, Rathcormack, Rosses Point, Drumcliff	000627 Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) 004035 Cummeen Strand SPA
Bunnanadden, Gorteen	000636 Templehouse And Cloonacleigha Loughs Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lough SAC
Cliffony, Mullaghmore	000625 Bunduff Lough And Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore.

## Section 6 Conclusions

The requirement for a Stage Two AA would arise if the Plan were likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. This screening report evaluates the Plan to see if it needs to be the subject of a Stage Two AA. It finds that the Plan has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, in accordance with the *Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, it is concluded that the Plan does not require any further assessment to demonstrate compliance with the Directive.

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<sup>1</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 plan to proceed; and
- (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.